



Pakenham Community

EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre Parent Handbook

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History

Back in 1976, Linda Lowe recognized the need for quality childcare in Pakenham and began looking after several children in her home. The warmth and stability of Linda's childcare services quickly established itself, as well as the demand to meet the ever-increasing childcare needs of parents in and around the Pakenham community.

By 1983, Linda's childcare services, known as the Linda Lowe Daycare, had evolved into a provincially chartered, non-profit corporation, owned by the parent members, directed by Linda Lowe, and licensed under the Ontario Day Nurseries Act, now the Child Care Early Years Act. Between 1983 and 1989, PCELC expanded from its previous capacity of 24 children to a new capacity of 79 children between the ages of 6 weeks and 12 years. Our current license is for 79 children. Our current kindergarten/school age program is located in the Pakenham Public School and is licensed for 65 children ages 3.8 to 12 years. In early 2022, in the spirit of moving forward while continuing to acknowledge the past and with the blessing of Linda, LLDC was renamed the Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre.

In addition, since March 2022, PCELC has signed on to the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (CWELCCA) in order to support fee reductions for families. This funding is for children 0-5 years as well as those children who turn 6 years between Jan. 1, 2022, and June 30, 2022 (kindergarten aged). This funding is NOT available for children who turn 6 AFTER June 30, 2022 to 12 years old. Fees are expected to initially decrease by 25% and families will be rebated retroactive to April 1, 2022. There will be a further reduction to 50% by January 1, 2023, another reduction by September 2024 and a final reduction to \$10-a-day childcare, on average, by September 2025. This rebate will also be applicable to partially subsidized families.

The Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre continues to grow and to provide a stimulating program for our children in a happy, safe

environment. It is a place where children can develop their own potential at their own pace. For all members, it is our “home away from home”.

Program Statement

At Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre, we believe that every child is competent, capable, curious, and rich in potential. Children and their families deserve access to high quality care in an environment in which they are trusted and respected as individuals.

We promote the health, safety, nutrition, and well-being of the children. We limit the spread of illness by promoting good hand-washing habits and excluding ill children from care. We assist parents in instilling healthy eating habits by providing nutritious, homemade meals and snacks with a variety of familiar and unfamiliar foods. We encourage children to listen to their body’s hunger cues by providing open snack centres during free play. We facilitate children’s ability to evaluate and manage risk by allowing children to take age-appropriate risks while ensuring the environment is safe and secure. We provide for children’s physical and emotional well-being by meeting their physical needs as well as their need for affection using eye contact, physical touch, and/or a soft voice, depending on the child’s individual needs and preferences.

We support positive and responsive interactions among children, parents, childcare providers, and other staff by providing opportunities and space for personal relationships to develop both in and out of the classroom. There are comfortable spaces in the daycare for children, parents, and providers to interact in pairs or small groups. We plan events for families and staff to attend together, outside of the regular childcare routines. We keep parents informed of daily activities and upcoming changes through face-to-face conversations and our Tadpoles app.

We encourage children to interact and communicate in a positive way while supporting their ability to self-regulate. Educators facilitate

interactions among children while modeling appropriate communication and social problem-solving skills. Educators model positive relationships by interacting respectfully with children, families, and other educators. We support children's emerging ability to self-regulate by labeling emotions, meeting the child's emotional needs, and modeling appropriate self-regulation skills.

We foster children's exploration, play, and inquiry by ensuring each child receives ample time for free play and exploration. Children are provided with open ended materials and given long periods of uninterrupted time to explore these materials. Educators foster a culture of inquiry by observing the children's play and providing materials that will further expand upon the ideas' children are exploring.

We provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences by using children's ideas to guide the program. Children remain in control of their play at all times. Educators are always available and will observe children's play, providing additional materials and ideas as needed to continue the play. Educators support children's experiences by providing novel materials or environment changes that build on or challenge the ideas that children are exploring.

We plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported, including children with individualized support plans. Children and their ideas are respected at all times, and educators are aware of each child's individual abilities and goals. Educators provide experiences that support children's learning and development.

We incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest, and quiet time, into the day, and give consideration to the individual needs of the children receiving care. We provide children with a variety of indoor and outdoor experiences, including outdoor play in all but extreme

weather. All environments (classrooms and playgrounds) provide space for children to engage in active and quiet play, depending on their individual needs. Children are able to rest throughout the day as they require, and parents are consulted regarding their child's rest at the time of enrolment, and any time the child's needs change.

We foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children by maintaining open communication at all times. The Executive Director and other office staff greet families as they arrive each morning, and educators share information with parents at drop off and pick up times. Parents also receive daily reports containing information about their child's daily activities via the Tadpoles app. Children's learning is documented and shared with their parents on a regular basis through the use of documentation binders and display boards in the classrooms.

We involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families, and staff. We maintain working relationships with Lanark Early Integration, Language Express, Open Doors, and other community partners. We facilitate relationships between these partners and families by providing families with information about the services available and making referrals when necessary.

We support staff and others in relation to continuous professional learning by providing opportunities for reflective practice and professional development. We are a member of the Lanark Early Learning and Child Care Association and inform staff of all upcoming professional development opportunities. All educators are required to participate in ongoing professional development, and we engage in ongoing reflective discussions in formal settings such as staff and team meetings, as well as informal discussions throughout our days together. We assist educators with finding professional development related to their individual goals, in the form of workshops, presentations, webinars, podcasts, and reading materials.

We work to continually improve our program by documenting and reviewing the impact of the above strategies on children and their families. We conduct an annual review of our program statement following the completion of an anonymous parent survey. We review documentation of the children's learning to ensure we are providing high quality learning opportunities. Our staff meetings include time to review the impact of our program statement on the experiences of children, families, and educators.

How Does Learning Happen?

Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre follows Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years, known as "How Does Learning Happen?". For more information about this philosophy, please visit <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/pedagogy.html> or speak to your child's educator.

We strive to inform parents of their child's ongoing progress in their development through documentation. Staff spend a lot of time, thought, and energy on Learning Stories for parents and the children every month. Documentation is displayed throughout their class and in a binder so that it is visible for both parents and children. It is imperative that parents are involved in the Learning Stories process by sending in feedback about the documentation. It makes the connection between daycare and home life which is beneficial to the child, and everyone involved.

Programs

Infant Program

In the infant program each child's needs are met on demand. The educators ensure each child receives plenty of love and affection throughout the day. The following guidelines are implemented around each baby's individual eating and sleeping schedules. If a child is sleeping during a meal or snack, their serving will be saved for when they wake up.

Arrival Time, breakfast is offered to all children

Morning Snack, around 9:00

Naps as required

Outdoor Play, weather permitting

Lunch, around 11:00

Special Activities (water play, sensory, art, etc.)

Afternoon Snack, around 3:00

Outdoor Play, weather permitting

Home Time

The ratio in this program is one educator for every three children, and the maximum group size is ten.

Toddler Program

The toddler program focuses on constantly listening and talking to the children, while encouraging and modeling an age-appropriate vocabulary and activities designed to stimulate curiosity and discovery. Staff are responsive and supportive of the emotional needs of each child. The following is a typical day in the toddler room, although the routine changes depending on the needs of the children in attendance each day.

Arrival Time, breakfast is offered to all children

Morning Snack, around 9:00

Outdoor Play, weather permitting

Group Time, stories, and songs

Lunch, around 11:30

Nap, after lunch

Quiet Play, as children wake up

Afternoon Snack, around 3:00

Outdoor Play, weather permitting

Home Time

The ratio in this program is one educator for every five children, with a maximum group size of fifteen.

Preschool Program

Children in the preschool program enjoy a stimulating environment which encourages them to thrive emotionally, socially, creatively, physically, and intellectually. The preschool program is designed to enhance brain development with a multitude of age-appropriate experiences. The following is a typical day in a preschool room, although the routine changes depending on the needs of the children in attendance each day.

Arrival Time, breakfast is offered to all children

Morning Snack, around 9:00

Outdoor Play, weather permitting

Group Time, stories, and songs

Lunch, around 11:30

Rest time/Naps, after lunch

Quiet Play, as children wake up

Afternoon Snack, around 3:00

Outdoor Play, weather permitting

Home Time

The ratio in the preschool program is one educator for every eight children, with a maximum group size of sixteen.

Kindergarten and School Age Programs

The kindergarten and school age programs are licensed separately from the Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre program but are operated by Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre staff and follow the policies and procedures of the Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre. The programs are located in the Pakenham Public School. We also support other schools in the area and ensure children are put on and greeted off the bus during the school year. It is the parents' responsibility to make arrangements with the appropriate transportation company.

Before and After School Program

- 6:30 – 7:00 Early Program Arrival at the Daycare Centre
- 7:00 – Staff and children walk from the daycare centre to the Pakenham School
- 7:00 to 8:30 – Breakfast and free play
- 7:30 to 8:30 -Children escorted to busses as per schedule
- 8:30 to 9:10 – Outdoor play, weather permitting
- 9:10 – Dismissal to Pakenham School

- 3:35 – Dismissal from Pakenham School
- 3:35 – Snack and free play
- 3:30 to 4:30 – Children greeted off bussed as per schedule
- 3:40 to 5:20 – Indoor and/or Outdoor play
- 5:20 – Staff and children walk from the Pakenham School to the daycare centre.

Full Day Program

- 6:30 – Arrival at the Daycare Centre
- 7:00 – Staff and children walk from the daycare centre to the Pakenham School
- 7:00 to 9:00 – Free play, breakfast is available until 8:00
- 9:00 – Morning Snack is offered
- 9:30 to 11:30 – Outdoor Play

11:30 – Lunch

12:00 – Free Play

3:00 – Afternoon Snack is offered

3:30 to 5:20 – Outdoor Play

5:20 – Staff and children walk from the Pakenham School to the daycare centre

The ratio in the kindergarten program is one educator for every thirteen children, with a maximum group size of twenty-six. The ratio in the school age program is one educator for every fifteen children, with a maximum group size of thirty.

Staffing

The staff of Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre take pride in providing a stimulating and enjoyable environment for the children. All staff members have been selected for their ability to work effectively and creatively with the children as well as for their ability to communicate with and understand the needs of each daycare family.

Regardless of previous education and experience, staff members continue the study of, and training in, childcare techniques and early childhood practices in order to keep abreast of new knowledge. This training includes certification of first aid and CPR, as well as training related to the specific needs of the children in the daycare.

Presently, we are licensed for 79 children at the daycare, and 65 at the Pakenham Public School. Staff ratios are organized to include a suitable combination of the stated group ratios according to provincial standards. All of the Early Childhood Educators at Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre are registered with the College of Early Childhood Educators. For more information about the College, please visit www.collegeofece.on.ca.

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors ensures that the Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre is managed according to its stated constitution and by-laws, as well as the Child Care and Early Years Act. Directors are elected at the daycare's Annual General Meeting for a two-year term of office. The role of the Board of Directors is to:

- Ensure PCELC's smooth and effective management
- Administer and formulate policy on the membership's behalf
- Initiate new programs and projects of the organization
- Oversee the financial operation of the daycare centre
- Represent the daycare centre to the larger community

Supervision of Volunteers and Students

- Policies and Procedures are in place regarding the supervision of students and volunteers at Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre.
- Students and volunteers are required to complete the orientation process and provide a valid Vulnerable Sector Check.
- Students and volunteers are always supervised by an employee and never permitted to be alone with any child or group of children who receive childcare.
- Students and volunteers will not be counted in staff to child ratios.

Criminal Reference Checks

Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre requires a criminal reference check for the vulnerable sector from all employees, students, and volunteers. All others who may come in contact with children at the daycare, (contractors, consultants, program presenters etc.) must provide documentation as required by the Child Care and Early Years Act.

Prohibited Practices

Children are disciplined in a positive manner at a level appropriate to their actions, and their ages in order to promote self-discipline, ensure health and safety, respect the right of others, and maintain equipment. The following practices are strictly prohibited:

- Corporal punishment of a child.
- Physical restraint of a child, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself, or someone else, and is use only as a last resort, and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent.
- Locking the exits of the child care center for the purpose of confining a child, or confining a child in an area or room without adult supervision.
- Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame, or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity, or self-worth.
- Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing, or bedding.
- Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

Expulsion of A Child

Daycare policy states that repeated unacceptable behaviour of children will be documented and, when such behaviour does not respond to supportive and positive redirection or a behaviour guidance plan as agreed to by parents, the situation will be brought forward to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors then may exercise their right to remove the child from the program either permanently or until the behaviour improves.

Social Media

Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre has both a Facebook and an Instagram page. We invite you to 'like' or 'follow' us to keep informed and up to date. The purpose of our social media pages is to promote PCELC, communicate with parents, and encourage engagement while protecting our members' personal information.

Upon registration, parents are asked to confirm or deny consent to post photos of their children on our social media pages. We will never identify any child by name, and we will never post information about current or planned outings.

We welcome general comments and feedback on our social media but ask that if you have a specific issue or complaint you follow the standard procedure of speaking with your child's teacher and/or the director. Any abusive comments or attacks about staff on social media will not be tolerated and may result in contract termination.

Admission

The Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre is licensed for infant to school aged children, from the ages of 6 weeks to 12 years. The Director will arrange for admittance of new children. Parents make their application on line through our webpage: www.pcelc.com. Children are placed in the program according to space availability in the specific program, date of application, and preferred start date. Families who do not accept a space when offered are welcome to remain on the wait list for future consideration.

Registration Fee: Upon acceptance into the daycare, families are required to pay a registration fee of \$30 per child non-refundable.

Wait List

Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre does not charge or collect a fee or deposit for the placement of a child on the waitlist for admission to the centre. At Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre, the wait list is used primarily for planning purposes. Our goal is to meet the needs of families in our community, and therefore every effort is made to create space for children needing care without delay. In the event of limited space, priority will be given to children in the following order:

1. Children of employees
2. Siblings of children already attending the centre
3. New families

New Families can add their information to our wait list through the Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre Website: www.pcelc.com. Parents are also invited to speak with the Executive Director to determine their position on the waiting list.

Integration

To make the transition into daycare a positive experience for everyone we implement a gradual integration process.

Typically this would look like:

- Day 1: One hour visit with a parent/guardian
- Day 2: One hour visit without a parent/guardian
- Day 3: Child stays to have lunch
- Day 4: Child stays for lunch and nap
- Day 5: Child stays for a full day

This is only a general guide and it is completely flexible depending on the needs of the child. We will work with you to determine the best schedule for your child.

Holidays

Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre is closed on the following statutory holidays:

- Family Day
- Good Friday
- Victoria Day
- Canada Day
- Civic Holiday
- Labour Day
- Thanksgiving Day

During the Christmas holiday season, our last day is December 23rd and we are then closed until the first business day after New Year's.

Following one full year in attendance, each child is entitled to two weeks of vacation per year, at which time fees shall be waived. The Director must be informed two weeks prior to holiday withdrawal. No more than two weeks in one year shall be allowed except if a parent wishes to continue payment of fees in order to hold the child's space. Families taking excess of the allowable two weeks of holidays per year will be charged regular fees up to a cap of \$500 (pro-rated for part time attendance), per child to save their daycare space for a maximum of ten weeks per year. All other time off is considered to be payable.

Withdrawal

Parents are required to notify the Director two weeks prior to the final date of the child's attendance at the daycare.

Arrival and Departure

When arriving at the daycare, please ensure that your vehicle is turned off while you are inside the building. Also, please do not leave children unattended in your vehicle. If you need assistance bringing multiple children and backpacks to or from your vehicle, please let us know. We are always happy to help!

Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy and Procedure

Date Policy and Procedure Established: November 27, 2023

Date Policy and Procedure Implemented: January 1, 2024

Purpose

This policy and the procedures within help support the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care.

This policy will provide staff, students and volunteers with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for ensuring the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care, including what steps are to be taken when a child does not arrive at the child care centre as expected, as well as steps to follow to ensure the safe dismissal of children.

This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for policies and procedures regarding the safe arrival and dismissal of children in care.

Policy

General

- **PCELC** will ensure that any child receiving care at the child care centre is only released to the child's parent/guardian or an individual that the

parent/guardian has provided authorization the child care centre may release the child to.

- Where a child does not arrive in care as expected or is not picked up as expected, staff must follow the safe arrival and dismissal procedures set out below.

Procedures

Accepting a child into care

At the time of drop-off, a parent MUST walk their child to the classroom door. This allows an educator in the classroom to;

1. Greet the parent/guardian and child. This ensures that both the parent/guardian and an educator know the child has arrived safely to the program.
2. Ask parent/guardian how the child's evening/morning has been. At this time the parent/guardian can let an educator aware of any changes to pick up. When a parent/guardian has indicated that someone else will be picking the child up, the staff must confirm that the person is listed on the authorized to pick up list in the child's admission form or where the individual is not listed, ask the parent/guardian to provide authorization for pick-up in writing (e.g., note, email, or text), and
 1. write the change in pick-up in the communication book.
 2. sign the child in on the classroom attendance record.

Where a child has not arrived in care as expected

1. Where a child does not arrive at the child care centre and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off (e.g., left a voice message or advised the closing staff at pick-up), the staff in the classroom must:
 - inform the Executive Director, and either the Assistant Director or the Delegate must contact the child's parent/guardian no later than 10:00 a.m. the Executive Director, and either the Assistant

Director or the Delegate shall send a message via Tadpoles and if no response is received in an appropriate amount of time, they will call the number on the child's admission form and leave a message. Before and After programs would text or call no later than 15 minutes after bell rings.

Attempts to contact will be documented with the date, times contacted, how contacted and outcome on a safe arrival call form that will be kept in the child's file.

2. Once the child's absence has been confirmed, program staff shall document the child's absence on the attendance record and any additional information about the child's absence in the daily written record.

Releasing a child from care

The staff who is supervising the child at the time of pick-up shall only release the child to the child's parent/guardian or individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization that the child care may release the child to. Where the staff does not know the individual picking up the child (i.e., parent/guardian or authorized individual),

- confirm with another staff member that the individual picking up is the child's parent/guardian/authorized individual.
- where the above is not possible, ask the parent/guardian/authorized individual for photo identification and confirm the individual's information against the parent/guardian/authorized individual's name on the child's file or written authorization.

Where a child has not been picked up as expected (before centre closes)

Where a parent/guardian has previously communicated with the staff a specific time or timeframe that their child is to be picked up from care and the child has not been picked up an educator will call or text 30 minutes before closing, and advise that the child is still in care and has not been picked up.

- Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian, the staff must contact the authorized pick-up person. Where the individual picking up the child is an authorized individual and their contact information is available, the staff shall proceed with contacting the individual to confirm pick-up as per the parent/guardian's instructions or leave a voice message to contact the centre.
 - Where the staff has not heard back from the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was to pick up the child the staff shall call an alternate emergency contact.

Where a child has not been picked up and the centre is closed

Where a parent/guardian or authorized individual who was supposed to pick up a child from care and has not arrived by 5:30 p.m., staff shall;

1. Ensure that the child is given a snack and activity, while they await their pick-up.
2. The staff shall stay with the child, while the Executive Director/ Assistant Director or delegate calls the parent/guardian to advise that the child is still in care and require immediate pick up as the centre is now closed.
3. If the Executive Director/ Assistant Director or delegate is unable to reach the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the child, the Executive Director/ Assistant Director or delegate shall call an alternate emergency contact.
4. Where the Executive Director/ Assistant Director or delegate is unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized individual listed on the child's file (e.g., the emergency contacts) the Executive Director/ Assistant Director or delegate shall proceed with contacting the local Family and Children's Services 6:30p.m. The Executive Director/ Assistant Director or delegate will follow the direction with respect to next steps.

Hours of Operation

The regular hours of operation are 7-5:30, Monday through Friday. If scheduled in advance, early care is available beginning at 6:30am for an additional fee of \$3-5 per child per day.

The daycare closes at 5:30pm. Parents who are late picking up their children will be charged a late fee of \$2 per minute, per child until 6pm. Children at the daycare after 6pm will be charged \$10 per minute, per child. The daycare is closed on all statutory holidays and December 24th through January 1st, inclusive.

Absence

If your child will be absent for a day or more, please notify the Director as soon as possible. Notification can be sent through Tadpoles, or via email or telephone.

Change of Family Information

Please notify the Director immediately of any changes to information listed on the registration form for your child.

Health Care

For everyone's well-being, sick children cannot be admitted to the center. If the staff considers a child too sick to be exposed to other children the child will be isolated and the parent will be notified.

Parents will be called if:

If the child is unable to participate in the program

- Child has 2 diarrhea (runny like tea, sour smelling)
- Child has fever over 38°C or 100.4°F
- Child vomits and appears unwell

- Child has yellow discharge from eyes or continual clear discharge and pink eye(s).

The child can return:

- 24 hours after vomiting and/or diarrhea has stopped
- 24 hours after starting antibiotics for infection
- 24 hours after normal temperature is maintained

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

Parents/guardians must provide up-to-date and accurate contact information for themselves and their emergency contact people and notify the daycare staff immediately if their child becomes sick. If contacted that their child is unwell, the parent/guardian should make every effort are required to pick up the sick child within one hour.

If the parent, guardian, or designate is not able to pick the child up, they will receive a written warning. If it happens a second time, they will be charged a fee of \$20 /hour until the child is picked up. If there is a third incident, the child will be asked to leave the program.

Parents/guardians should follow any recommendations provided by daycare staff or health authorities regarding the child's return to the daycare.

PCELC MUST protect the other children in the program and staff.

Parental refusal to pick the child up or make alternate arrangements will result in being asked to find alternate childcare and CAS may be notified.

Medication

The staff are only allowed to administer prescription medicine from the original bottle provided by the pharmacy. If a child requires a non-prescription medication, this will only be administered on the written advice of the parents. For staff to administer both prescription and/or non-prescription medicine, the parents must complete a form describing the

dosage, frequency and other measures required. These forms may be obtained in the office when you drop off the medication. All medication must be stored in one of the two locked boxes. One in the fridge, and the other in the office. Be sure to inform staff or office staff of the time of last dose of medication given at home, and of any medication you want given at daycare.

All medication must be handed to the staff upon arrival, there can be no medication left in the child's backpack or diaper bag.

Serious Accidents

If a child has a serious accident, she or he will be taken to the hospital immediately. Parents will be notified immediately, and arrangements will be made for a staff to meet the parent(s) at the hospital. In event of a physical accident or emergency illness, if the parent is not immediately available, the daycare may hospitalize, secure proper treatment for, order injections, blood transfusions or anaesthetics, or any other treatment as noted by the Doctor to be needed for the child, as well as transportation to the emergency department of the nearest hospital.

Smoke Free

Smoking is prohibited on the property of Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre as well as immediately in front of the property at the main doors and/or the play yards.

Head Lice

If we find evidence of head lice, we will let you know immediately so it can be treated. Children must be treated and all nits removed before returning to the center. Please notify us immediately if your child has head lice so we can treat any soft surfaces at the center and check the other children.

Toilet Training

Toilet training is a co-operative effort between child, parent, and daycare staff. When a child is ready for toilet training, parents will be asked to bring plenty of training pants to take home to be laundered each day to be returned for the next day.

Field Trips

Community outings are included in the daycare programs. Older groups may be included in outings. Bus services will be hired, and higher staff ratios will be obtained to ensure higher safety while off site. Parents will be notified in advance of any admission or other fees involved in the outings. Parent volunteers are always appreciated on field trips. Parents are expected to obtain a Vulnerable Sector Check before attending any field trips. Any parent wishing to obtain a VSC for this purpose will be provided with a letter in order to acquire one free of charge.

Clothing

For your child's comfort, please ensure that he or she is well-prepared for their day. As we typically we engage in a variety of new experiences, some of which can be very messy, we strongly encourage clothing that can get dirty; we can't guarantee that clothing won't become stained at some point. Each child needs to have at least one change of clothing (including socks and underwear), as well as appropriate seasonal clothing.

Outdoor Play

The Child Care Early Year's Act (CCEYA) requires that children spend at least 2 hours a day outside, weather permitting. At Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre we play outdoors the majority of the day when possible.

This means that each child will need a sun hat in the summer, a snowsuit in the winter, and splash pants and rubber boots for spring and fall. During the summer months, parents are asked to apply sunscreen before arriving to the centre in the morning and provide a supply that can be used as required in the afternoon. Parents will be asked to sign a permission form for staff to apply sunscreen.

Food

At Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre, the children are provided with breakfast, a hot nutritious lunch and two snacks daily. Breakfast is served until 8 am. Due to severe peanut allergies, we do not allow food from home and ask parents to not give their child any peanuts or peanut butter on their way to the Centre. The daycare strives to be an allergy safe environment.

Infants are provided with homogenized milk, if not on formula or breast milk. Toddlers are also provided with Homogenized milk. Once in the preschool program 2% milk is served to all older age groups. Weekly menus are posted on the door of the kitchen for your convenience to see what the children are having at daycare.

The children are encouraged to feed themselves and try everything that is served at each meal. While we encourage good eating habits, the child is the one in control, so we will keep you informed if your child is not eating well at daycare.

All food allergies and sensitivities are accommodated within Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre’s meal plan. Any child who has an allergy or sensitivity to a food being served will be offered an alternative meal that meets their dietary restrictions. Parents are responsible for ensuring that Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre is kept informed of any changes to their child’s restrictions.

Families who choose to provide their own food for their child are required to follow the “allergy safe” environment of Pakenham Community Early

Learning Centre. Their food arrives at the daycare in labelled containers and is stored in the kitchen refrigerator.

Kindergarten and School Age Program

For Kindergarten and School aged children, Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre will provide breakfast and an afternoon snack on regular school days and breakfast, morning, and afternoon snack on school holidays when full daycare is provided. Children are required to bring their own lunches unless otherwise notified (e.g. special pizza day etc.) Families are again required to follow the “allergy safe” environment of Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre and are also required to provide cold packs to ensure that food is kept at the correct temperature.

Sleep

Each child in the daycare has their own crib or cot. All beds are labelled with the child’s name, and children over one year of age may have a blanket from home to use while they are resting. Children under one year of age must be put to sleep in a manner consistent with the recommendations set out in the Joint Statement on Safe Sleep: Preventing Sudden Infant Deaths in Canada document. Therefore, they are placed to sleep on their backs with no blankets or other items in the crib. Infants less than a year old who are to be placed to sleep in a position other than on their back must have a written recommendation from their doctor stating an alternate sleeping position.

While children are sleeping, staff will perform a regular visual check. Staff will take immediate action to respond to any signs of distress such as excessive coughing, laboured breathing sounds, cold or overheated to touch, etc.. Any significant change to sleeping patterns or behaviour will be reported to parents and adjustments will be made to ensure the child’s safety.

Parent Involvement

As a member there are many opportunities to be involved at PCELC. We have two groups that parents may join to help with the operation of the daycare. The first group is the Board of Directors, who are always happy to welcome new members. The second group is a Parent Support Committee. The role of this committee is to assist in planning and executing events and fundraisers for the daycare. The commitment to this group is minimal, and they are always looking to recruit new members. If you are interested in joining either of these groups, please speak to the Executive Director.

Decision Making

All parents and staff at the Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre are members of the daycare. An Annual General Meeting is held at least once a year to inform members of overall policy matters and to introduce new Board of Directors from the membership whom the power of decision-making rests. The Board of Directors is comprised of elected members and the Executive Director.

Meetings of the Board occur monthly, except December. Notice of meetings will be posted one week prior to the meeting day. Agenda items may be submitted when the agenda is posted. If a parent or staff member wishes to make a written submission, it may be left with the president or Executive Director. Considerations will be given to special situations which do not conform to the previously mentioned policies and procedures.

Billing and Payments

Billing Cycle

All parents and guardians will receive monthly invoices for service no later than the last Wednesday of each month. This monthly invoice will include all expected childcare expenses for the following month, as well as any

early care, casual care, added days, or other schedule changes from the current month.

Payments

All childcare payments are due on the first Tuesday of each month. Parents and guardians are encouraged to make a single payment at the beginning of each month, however alternate payment schedules will be accepted provided the balance is fully paid on or before the due date. Payments can be made as an e-transfer or automatic debit.

Overdue Accounts

Parents and guardians who have maintained their account in good standing but are not able to meet the payment deadline due to exceptional circumstances may apply to the Executive Director for an extension of not more than two weeks. Any extension request beyond two weeks must be presented, in writing, to the Board of Directors.

Failure to meet the payment deadline will result in a written warning. If fees remain unpaid one week after the due date, a \$25 late fee will be applied to the account. If fees remain unpaid two weeks after the due date, services will be terminated. If the parent or guardian wishes to resume services at PCELC, the remaining balance must be paid in full and the first month’s fees paid in advance prior to the child’s first day of attendance.

Emergency Management

Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre has policies and procedures in place for emergency management. In the event of an emergency, parents will be notified via Tadpoles’ Emergency Notification system. This system sends a brief text and email to all parents and guardians.

Serious Occurrence

At any time that the Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre has experienced a Serious Occurrence, a “Serious Occurrence Notification Form” will be posted on the front Communication Board. A serious occurrence is defined as:

- Death of a child
- Alleged abuse / mistreatment
- A life-threatening injury or illness to a child attending the center
- Missing child
- Disaster on the premises that poses unplanned disruption to normal operations

Parking Availability

Parking is available for parents in front of the daycare building. When entering and exiting the parking area, parents are asked to be mindful of children who may be in the area. Please enter and exit the parking area slowly, and always travel on the right-hand side of the street.

Inclement Weather

Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre operates as normal during school bus cancellations. Kindergarten and school age children who would normally take a bus to school will remain at the Pakenham School for a full day program. In the event that Upper Canada District School Board schools are closed due to inclement weather, Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre will also be closed. Parents will not be billed for any daycare closures.

Parent Issues and Concerns

General

Parents and guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our childcare centre and regularly discuss what their children are experiencing with our program. As supported by our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, families, and educators, and we foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with families about the program and their children. Our staff are available to engage families in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction.

All issues and concerns raised by parents and guardians are taken seriously by Pakenham Community Early Learning Centre and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties as quickly as possible.

Issues and concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally or in writing, upon request. The level of detail provided to the parent or guardian will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within one business day. The person who raised the concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process. Investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial, and respectful of all parties involved.

Confidentiality

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially, and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents, guardians, children, staff, students, and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for

legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of ECEs, Law Enforcement, or a Children’s Aid Society).

Conduct

Our centre maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication, and role-modelling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated from any party.

If at any point a parent, guardian, or employee feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused, or belittled they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the Executive Director or designate.

Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a Child

Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, is required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. If a parent or guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact the local Children’s Aid Society directly. Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to CAS as per the “duty to report” requirement under the *Child and Family Services Act*.

For more information, visit

www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/english/childrensaid/reportingabuse/index.aspx

Escalation of Issues or Concerns:

Where parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may escalate the issue or concern by emailing PCELC’s Board of Directors at PCELCboard@outlook.com.

Issues/concerns related to compliance with requirements set out in the *Child Care and Early Years Act., 2014* and Ontario Regulation 137/15 should

be reported to the Ministry of Education’s Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch.

Issues/concerns may also be reported to other relevant regulatory bodies (e.g. local public health department, police department, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Labour, fire department, College of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario College of Teachers, College of Social Workers etc.) where appropriate.

Contacts

- Program Advisor: Lori Hickling, Ministry of Education, 613-328-6387
- Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care Help Desk: 1-877-510-5333, childcare_ontario@ontario.ca
- Tammy Kealey-Donaldson, County of Lanark, Children’s Services Manager – 1-613-267-4200

In Conclusion...

- We want you to know, to understand, to discuss with us, our goals.
- We want you to look often into our busy, happy, noisy, creative classrooms and see your child at play.
- We want you to realize the validity of the play and the importance of what your child is learning.
- Parents and teachers can help your child develop to his or her full human potential.
- It takes a truly committed team to raise a child.
- Remember this daycare is YOUR Daycare. Please bring any concern or questions to the Executive Director.

Community Partners

Here are some of the agencies we work with:

Open Doors- an accredited child and youth mental health centre delivering services throughout Lanark County

Telephone: 1-877-232-8260

Email: admin@opendoors.on.ca

Website: <https://www.opendoors.on.ca/about-us/>

ConnectWell Community Health- provides community-based primary health care and health promotion programs and services and a range of developmental and social services in Lanark, Renfrew, and Leeds and Grenville counties.

Telephone: 613-259-2182

Email: info@connectwell.ca

Website: <https://connectwell.ca/>

Language Express- provides services for preschool children with speech, language and communication difficulties. These services are free and available to children from birth until Junior Kindergarten.

Telephone: 1-888-503-8885 or 613-283-2742

Email: language.express@healthunit.org