

School-Based Early Years and
Child Care Partners **in Peel**

Partnership Handbook



integrated
shared
space
school
families
children

community
partnership
collaboration

September 2019 Update



This handbook was developed in collaboration with these agencies

The Handbook is intended to support a collaboration between Early Years and Child Care providers and School Board staff that complements existing formal agreements.

School-Based Early Years and
Child Care Partners **in Peel**

Partnership Handbook

“Service System Managers and early years service providers work in partnership to deliver high quality and inclusive early years programs that are child and family centred and contribute to children’s learning, development, and well-being. In keeping with the provincial government’s schools-first approach, school boards also have a role to play in ensuring the success of programs that are located in schools. The school and early years programs are intended to complement one another, providing a seamless day for children and their families.”

*Ministry of Education’s Early Years Accommodations
in Schools Reference Guide 2018*

“The Ministry of Education supports an integrated Early Years and Child Care system in which school board and child care professionals work in partnership to provide seamless, high quality programs for children throughout the day. With the legislated requirement for schools to provide before- and after-school programs for students in Kindergarten to Grade 6 where there is sufficient demand, there is an increased emphasis on the need for school principals, child care supervisors, recreation providers and staff to work together to ensure that shared space is available on an ongoing basis to provide consistent and seamless learning and care environments for children.”

Ministry of Education’s Working Together in Shared Space 2017-18

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1

Purpose of the Handbook

School-based early years and child care¹ programs are intended to provide a seamless transition between early years programs and school, foster strong connections between programs and provide a continuum of learning and care for families with children aged 0 to 12 years.

The Peel Partnership Handbook (the Handbook) is a guide to support cooperative, collaborative and positive working relationships among staff at the school, Early Years and Child Care Providers², and other community programs to encourage consistency and continuity for children and families.



Children and families benefit from



Smooth transition between school and early years and child care programs.



Planned activities that foster development and time to explore and consolidate learning together.



Involvement with their school community.

- 1 Early years and child care programs include licensed child care centres, including before and after school programs, authorized recreation programs, camps, EarlyON child and family centres (previously known as Ontario Early Years Centres, Parent and Family Literacy Centres and Child Care Resource Centres)
- 2 Agencies with a service agreement with the Region of Peel that provide early years and child care programs in schools.

2

Communication and Collaboration

Ongoing, clear communication is paramount in establishing and maintaining collaborative relationships between all partners working in schools.

This section offers some key considerations on how School Boards and Early Years and Child Care Providers can **work together to create a welcoming environment and an integrated culture** for children, families, and educators. More information on Communication and Collaboration can be found in the Ministry of Education documents (Appendices E and F).

Communication Considerations

All Early Years and Child Care Partners should:

- **Encourage the school and early years and child care program staff to familiarize themselves with one another's work**, to build relationships and networks (e.g., joint invitations to School Council meetings, Early Years and Child Care Providers' Board of Directors meetings, invitations to joint professional learning opportunities, visiting each other's programs).
- **Develop ongoing communication strategies to support staff that are using the shared space³** (e.g., a communication book, an orientation checklist, advance notice of any scheduling changes).
- **Disseminate the Handbook to principals/teachers and program staff** to support ongoing communication and relationship building of using the 'shared space.'

3 Shared space is school space that is used by an early years and child care service provider during instructional days and during non-instructional days (e.g. summer break, March break, Professional Development days, evenings or Saturday). *Early Years Accommodations in Schools Reference Guide, 2018*

- **Post Handbook on websites** for easy access and provide hard copy in staff room for reference.
- **Develop a process for communicating with temporary or casual staff** to ensure their understanding of the information outlined in the Handbook.
- **Provide opportunities for sharing information** between schools and early years and child care programs:
 - Shared information can take form as a newsletter or on websites.
 - Include early years and child care providers in School Staff directed communication channels (e.g. via emails, dedicated mailbox) as well as inviting them to participate in school events.
- **Ensure consistent use** of the general *Consent for Informal and Ongoing Sharing of Information Form* (Appendix D) for enhancing communication between School Staff and Child Care Providers.
 - The *Consent for Informal and Ongoing Sharing of Information Form* is to be completed for every child registered in the child care program during the registration process.
 - The Child Care Provider will provide the completed Consent Form to the School Principal to be filed in the Ontario Student Record.
- **Develop a clear process to manage and address areas of disagreement/conflict** that is fair to the respective parties. In cases where escalation is required, appropriate representation from each party should be engaged.

Collaborative Planning Considerations

This section offers suggestions for shared planning and collaboration between Schools and Early Years and Child Care Providers for a mutually beneficial, ongoing and supportive relationship that benefits children, families and staff.

- **Partners are encouraged to work together to schedule and plan for regular leadership meetings** throughout the year at the system level to support and nurture a shared culture and to discuss shared opportunities, challenges and important updates that may impact each other's programs.
- **Early years and child care program staff and school administrator/school staff meet regularly** throughout the year and review the ***Orientation Checklist*** (Appendix A). Suggested times include prior to the start of the school year, prior to the December break, prior to the March break and/or as requested by either party. At these meetings review:
 - Sections in the Peel Partnership Handbook
 - Relevant health and emergency procedures, and mandatory requirements through the *Child Care and Early Years Act* and *Education Act*
 - The School Board 'Must Do' checklist which is also provided to school staff
- In addition to reviewing the ***Orientation Checklist***, it is important to **share information in a timely and continual manner** as it relates to:
 - Introductions of new and current staff
 - Updates to program operations/room locations
 - Completion of *Contact Information and Program Overview forms* (Appendices B and C)
 - Potential professional learning opportunities
 - School event calendars (e.g., parent/teacher interviews)
 - Confirmation of space needs and availability
 - Security measures/access to school
 - Child care provider parent handbook
 - Custodial updates (e.g., flushing for lead process review, water testing, evidence of testing of fire safety equipment, clearing of walkways, and child care staff access to building prior to start of program)
 - Sharing/storage of equipment and materials
 - Plans for construction or renovation
 - Any changes to a child care licence including a provisional licence

- Schools may consider including a representative from the **early years and child care program as the community representative on the School Council**. Their participation will provide opportunities for improved communication, a shared approach to planning, and support the development of understanding of school-based early years and child care programs.
- **Schools and Child Care Providers develop a ‘Transition Plan’** for new children attending before/after school programs (e.g. list of children shared between teacher/provider).

3

Sharing of Space and Facilities

One of the advantages of early years and child care programs in a school is the opportunity to share respective space in the community. Collaboratively, **School Boards and Early Years and Child Care Providers are committed to ensure quality early years programs** for children and work together to support children through the shared use of space.

Shared space is school space that is used by Early Years and Child Care Providers during instructional and non instructional days, and can include the classroom, gym, library, staff room, and outdoor space.

All space used for child care programs is licensed by the Ministry of Education. Space used by EarlyON programs does not have licensing requirements but are overseen by the Region of Peel.

Schools determine room or space allocations based on the needs of the children and families attending the program.



When possible, where space is shared before and after school, the room selected should be a room used by the same age group as during the school day. This encourages a seamless day for children.

Assigning early years and child care programs to vacant classroom space, close to entrances where feasible, has been the most successful model. If such space is not available, Early Years and Child Care Providers, in consultation with the School, may use alternate space (e.g. gym, classroom, library).

For licensed child care programs, ensure primary and alternate spaces are licensed to allow flexibility in relocating programs.

It is important that **Schools and Early Years and Child Care Providers collaborate** to facilitate a common understanding of using the shared space to support the child, family, and educator.

Use the shared space to support the:

Child	Family	Educator
 <p>Respects their right to have access to the same materials and experiences throughout their day.</p>	 <p>Creates a welcoming environment.</p>	 <p>Encourages collaborating to create conditions of trust and respect in order to effectively share space and materials integral to learning for all.</p>

4

Program Expansion or Relocation

The School Board and Early Years and Child Care Providers will collaborate to ensure a quality early learning environment. Schools should also consider the development, renewal, and design of outdoor learning spaces in an intentional and thoughtful manner with input from children and families.

Changes to program space should only take place when necessary and the Early Years and Child Care Provider has been given sufficient notice of the relocation.

While the relocation of early years and child care programs to alternate space should be minimized, Schools and Early Years and Child Care Providers should work together to relocate respective programs to an alternate space where absolutely necessary. This should be done in a timely manner to avoid disruptions to the program, children and families.

When a need for an early years and child care program expansion or relocation is identified, the Principal and School Board will determine space availability. Once that is confirmed, the School Board must be contacted about rental agreements. For child care only, any space must be inspected and licensed to meet licensing requirements prior to use.



5

Sharing Materials and Equipment



It is the responsibility of both the early years and child care program staff and school staff to ensure equipment and materials are well maintained and stored safely.

Schools and Early Years and Child Care Providers should collaborate on a procedure for replacing missing items and purchasing materials (excluding furniture). As well, Schools and Early Years and Child Care Providers will follow their respective process/policies for purchasing and replacing electrical appliances.

Schools and Early Years and Child Care Providers should collaborate on identifying suitable storage solutions, as well as regularly assess and dispose of stored items/materials that are not used.

It is a requirement of Kindergarten programs to share all resources between both the school and child care programs, excluding consumables. Consumables are outside of the agreement and remain the responsibility of the Early Years and Child Care Provider or School Board.

Materials/equipment purchased by School Boards are shared. Schools should ensure Early Years and Child Care Providers have access to all shared materials/equipment in all areas of the school for use by the before/after school programs and EarlyON programs during instructional days and non-instructional days, including summer programming and weekends where applicable.

Materials/equipment shared between School Boards and Early Years and Child Care Providers include:

In the classroom



Building blocks



Toys



Tables and chairs



Sand and water tables



Electronic equipment
as appropriate
(e.g. smart board, computer, LCD)

In the school



Gym equipment



Playground equipment
including
outdoor bunker
and outdoor toys

In order to maintain shared materials and equipment, a high standard of hygiene is essential. Schools must ensure Child Care Providers have access to designated locked/out of reach storage space for cleaning material and equipment, and other hazardous substances in order to meet mandatory licensing requirements.

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Health and Medications

There are common and distinct health regulations and policies in the *Child Care and Early Years Act*, and *Education Act*.

Administration of Medication

For school programs, medication is administered per the School Board policy. Within the child care programs, medication will be administered according to the Child Care Centre policy, as per the licensing requirements.

Reportable and Communicable Disease

All partners must ensure timely communication to the School and to the Early Years and Child Care Providers regarding reportable communicable diseases as per the Peel Public Health requirements.

Management of Allergies and Concussion

School Boards and Early Years and Child Care Providers should follow their own policy/procedure regarding anaphylaxis, asthma, and concussion protocol.

Health and Safety Committee

Early Years and Child Care Providers will cooperate with the School's Joint Health and Safety Committee to ensure the School has met the Labour requirements under the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

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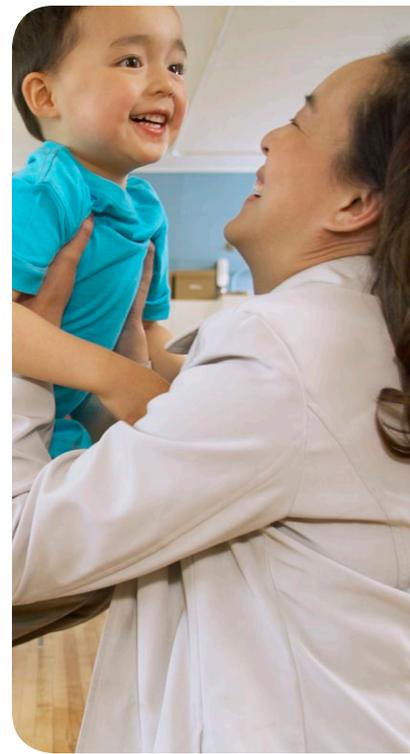
Safety and Security

The security and safety of early years and child care staff, as well as families and children are an important concern.

Schools should give consideration to the location of before/after school and EarlyON program space so they are close to entrances, where feasible, to avoid walking through the school.

Schools shall ensure that the walkways used by child care/ EarlyON staff and families attending programs during instructional days, as well as non-instructional days, are cleared of snow/ice in a timely manner, in the mornings as well as throughout the day, to support safe use.

School Boards should also ensure that there is sufficient lighting on school grounds for staff and families attending the before/after school program, and/or EarlyON programs in evenings.



For new school construction

School Boards shall give consideration to the following elements of safety during the planning and design of the building, where feasible:



Keypads and/or buzzers
at entrances close to planned program space (dedicated and shared space), where possible

EARLY YEARS AND CHILD CARE



Separate entrance
for early years and child care programs, where possible



Cooling stations to prevent heat-related illness

For existing schools

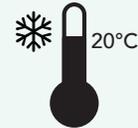
Early Years and Child Care Providers and School Boards should work together on a case-by-case basis to include the following:



Keypads and/or buzzers
at entrances close to
the program classroom,
where possible



**Access to cooling
stations** for summer
programming
and before/after
school programs



**Access to air
conditioning**, such
as in staff rooms and
dedicated space, for
early years and child
care programming
in the summer and
on instructional days
during program hours
when appropriate.

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Emergency Procedures

Schools shall share their safety and emergency procedures with Early Years and Child Care Providers at the beginning of the school year when reviewing the Orientation Checklist, or as requested, and discuss areas where alignment is required.

Refer to the Appendix A: *Orientation Checklist* for more information.



Policies/procedures may include:

	<p>Inclement Weather Policy</p>
	<p>Lockdown Procedure</p>
	<p>Hold and Secure Procedure</p>
	<p>School Closures Policy</p>
	<p>Evacuation Procedure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where possible, Schools and Early Years and Child Care Providers align their respective evacuation location.
	<p>SPEAR (School Police Emergency Action Response)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools will ensure that early years and child care program space is identified in the SPEAR's submission.
	<p>Fire Evacuation Procedure/Fire Equipment Testing/Fire Alarm Systems and Annual Fire Safety Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under the licensing requirements, Child Care Supervisors or designates must implement fire drills once per month. The school is not required to participate in the child care program fire drill. • EarlyON and child care programs are required to participate in the school fire drill.

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Hours of Operation



School-based child care before and after school programs generally operate on instructional days. EarlyON programs generally operate on instructional days with some evenings and Saturdays.

Some child care and EarlyON programs also offer programs on non-instructional days (e.g. Professional Activity Days, Christmas break, March break, summer break, including Easter Monday). Early years and child care programs do not operate on statutory holidays.

Early Years and Child Care Providers may submit requests for the use of such space to the appropriate facility management departments at each School Board. Such requests will be considered in accordance with applicable School Board policies and procedures.

To facilitate the transition of children from school to the child care program at the end of the school day, child care staff must be **advised by school staff if children are going to be delayed more than 10 minutes**. In the event a **child has not been picked up** from the child care program by 6:00 p.m. (or by the **time the program is closed**), **child care staff will remain with the child** and be responsible for developing and implementing the emergency procedures as required by licensing requirements.

Schools shall provide access to the building for child care staff approximately 10 minutes prior to the start of the child care program to support licensing requirements (e.g. Flushing and Water Testing for Lead etc.) and program set up, where possible and within the working hours of the custodian.

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Flushing and Water Testing for Lead

Each partner will be responsible to adhere to the guidelines per the Ministry of Environment. The School Board will provide the results of daily flushing and water testing to the Child Care Supervisor or designate upon request.



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Visitors and Families

Families and other community professionals may visit early years and child care programs.

Visitors to child care programs are required to report to the school office before proceeding to the program location. When the office is closed, visitors should use an entrance that is designated and mutually agreed upon by the school and the child care program.

EarlyON programs should confirm with the School Principal as to the expectations for families entering/leaving the school, who participate in EarlyON programs within the school, as well as expectations around EarlyON families using school facilities (e.g. washrooms) and requirements for identifying themselves (e.g. wearing a lanyard).





Inclusion of Children with Special Needs

The inclusion of all children, including those with special needs is a **shared priority for Schools and Early Years and Child Care Providers**. Some children have special needs that require supports beyond those ordinarily received in the school setting. Children with special needs are defined under the Ontario Regulation 138/15, as a child whose cognitive, physical, social, emotional or communicative needs, or whose needs related to overall development, are of such a nature that additional supports are required for the child.

School Boards must develop an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for every identified student.

Every child care licensee shall ensure that an up-to-date Individualized Support Plan (ISP) is in place for each child with special needs. This provision requires that licensees take all necessary steps to support and encourage children with special needs to actively participate in the child care program.

Schools and Child Care Providers are encouraged to:

- **Align/share the strategies** identified for the child through the school's IEP and the child care program's ISP, where parental consent is provided.
- **Align processes/programming/strategies** for a more coordinated approach to ensure parents are sharing relevant information once to effectively support the child.
- **Have parents sign** a more detailed *Consent for Sharing Information Form* to obtain more child specific information in order to better help the child's success and seamless transition.

- As per the general *Consent for Sharing of Information Form* (Appendix D) which directs: *“If it becomes necessary to refer to clinical records, developmental reports and/or Ontario Student Record (OSR) documents, parents or legal guardians will be asked to sign appropriate consent forms (in addition to the general consent provided) before such information is shared as between the Agency and the School.”*

Schools are also encouraged to inform parents of the option to include child care staff (who have previously supported the child or who are/will be supporting the child) in the consultations/ discussions to support the child's success and seamless transition.

Where applicable, specialized equipment/materials which are recommended (and purchased through the Ministry of Education funding) for use by the child in the school are required to remain with the child and be accessible to the before/after school programs and summer programs to support the child's success and seamless transition. Similarly, where applicable, specialized equipment/materials which are recommended (and provided by the parent) for use by the child in the child care program should be shared with the school to support the child's success and seamless transition.

Orientation Review Checklist

Please arrange a **time at the beginning of the school year** for the School Principal and Early Years and Child Care Provider **to review this checklist**. Each partner will communicate the contents of this Handbook to the staff within their respective organization.

Date:
School Name:
Name of Principal:
Child Care Supervisor/Designate:
EarlyON Supervisor/Designate:

Check each box as reviewed:

Review sections of the Peel Partnership Handbook

- Purpose
- Communications and Collaboration
- Sharing Space/Facilities and Program Expansion/Relocation
- Sharing Materials and Equipment
- Inclusion of Children with Special Needs
(Child Care program only)
- Hours of Operation
- Safety and Security
- Visitors and Families

Review Emergency Procedures

- Inclement Weather
- Lockdown
- Hold and Secure
- Evacuation
- Fire
- School Closure
- SPEAR (School Police Emergency Action Response)

Review Health and Medication Procedures

- Administration of Medication (Child Care program only)
- Reportable and Communicable Diseases
- Management of Allergies and Concussions
- Flushing and Water Testing (Child Care program only)

Appendices

- Early Years and Child Care Partners Contact Information (FOR COMPLETION)
- Early Years and Child Care Program Overview (FOR COMPLETION)
- Consent for Informal and Ongoing Sharing of Information (FOR COMPLETION)
- Ministry of Education article: "Early Years Accommodation in Schools Reference Guide"
- Ministry of Education article: "Child Care & Schools – Working Together in Shared Space"
- Licensing Requirements
- Links and Resources

Principal Signature:
Child Care Supervisor/Designate Signature:
EarlyON Supervisor/Designate Signature:
School Name:

Early Years and Child Care Partners Contact Information

Date:
School Name:
Name of Principal:
Child Care Supervisor/Designate:
EarlyON Supervisor/Designate:

Position	Name	Phone and Email
Principal		
Vice-Principal		
Vice Principal		
Office Staff		
Office Staff		
Office Staff		
School Staff (after hours contact)		
Custodian		
Custodian		
Teacher/Educator (of the shared room)		
Program Director/ Manager/Supervisor (off-site designate contact)		
Program Supervisor: Kindergarten Before/After Program (on-site designate)		
Program Supervisor: School-age Before/After Program (on-site designate)		
Program Supervisor: EarlyON Program (on-site designate)		
Staff 1 Program		
Staff 2 Program		
Staff 3 Program		
Staff 4 Program		

Early Years and Child Care Program Overview

Day	Program Start Time	Program End Time
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		

Room Locations of Program:

Program Type	Room Locations of Program	Primary Space Capacity	Alternate Space Capacity (If Applicable)
Child Care (dedicated program)			
Kindergarten Before/After Program			
School-age Before/After Program			
EarlyON Program (dedicated)			

Details about Site Access (entrance and exit doors):

Location of Evacuation Site for Early Years and Child Care Program:

Location of Evacuation Site for School:

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Location(s) of the Anaphylaxis Plan (posting and availability)

Program Type	Room Locations of Program	Location of Posted Anaphylaxis Plan
Child Care (dedicated program)		
Kindergarten Before/After Program		
School-age Before/After Program		

Note: EarlyON programs are exempt

Sample Consent Form

CONSENT FOR INFORMAL AND ONGOING SHARING OF INFORMATION

TO: _____ (Child Care Agency, or the Agency)

AND TO: _____ (School Board)

To best serve children's needs, there are times when it is appropriate for the School and Early Years and Child Care Agency to exchange information about children while they are participating in programs offered by the Agency (including Full Day Kindergarten) and attending the School.

The kind of information shared may include, but is not limited to, matters involving attendance, participation in educational programs, educational testing, illness, health, transportation and/or behaviour. Procedures for sharing such information are explained to parents and are followed consistently. The Agency and the School will comply with all applicable legal obligations regarding the collection and protection of such personal information.

If it becomes necessary to refer to clinical records, developmental reports and/or Ontario Student Record (OSR) documents, parents or legal guardians will be asked to sign appropriate consent forms (in addition to the consent provided below) before such information is shared as between the Agency and the School.

Your consent permits the sharing of information concerning your child between the School and the Agency while your child is registered in the programs offered by the Agency and attending the School.

CONSENT: _____

I am the parent or one of the parents or a guardian of the child named below.

I give permission to the Agency and the School for the exchange of personal information about my child named below while such child is enrolled in the programs of the Agency at the School. I understand that I can refuse to sign this consent, or withdraw my consent at any time, so long as my withdrawal of consent is given to the School and Agency in writing.

Name of Child (please print)

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian

Name of Parent/Guardian (please print)

Date of Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian

Ministry of Education's Early Years Accommodations in Schools Reference Guide

The following 14 pages are the Ontario Government Ministry of Education's Early Years Accommodations in Schools Reference Guide

Early Years Accommodations in Schools

Reference Guide

Ministry of Education
*Informed by the Working Group
on Early Years Accommodation Costs in Schools*



Ministry of Education

Spring 2018

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Introduction

Ontario's vision for the early years and child care is that all children and families have access to a range of high quality, inclusive, and affordable early years and child care programs and services that are child and family centred and contribute to children's learning, development and well-being.

- Ontario Renewed Early Years and Policy Framework, 2017

The government's schools-first approach has prioritized schools as the preferred location for early years programs in communities. Schools are viewed by the community as secure and trusted centres for children, and therefore are natural sites for early years programs. Many children are introduced to the school environment through early years programs, and the transition from early years programs to school can be facilitated by fostering strong connections between programs, providing a continuum of learning and care.

The prioritization of schools as the preferred early years locations has resulted in the need for a provincewide, flexible, and transparent early years accommodation cost methodology, and the need to share best practices related to early years service providers operating in schools.

In March 2017, the Ministry of Education established a Working Group on Early Years Accommodation Costs in Schools (herein referred to as "Working Group"). The Working Group was comprised of representatives from school boards, Consolidated Municipal Service Managers and District Social Services Administration Boards (CMSMs and DSSABs), and licensed early years service providers from across the province. The Working Group's mandate was to provide advice and recommendations to the ministry on early years accommodation cost transparency and methodology in schools, and best practices related to early years programs operating in schools.

The following document was developed in consultation with the Working Group and is envisioned to serve as a source of relevant information related to early years accommodation costs and agreements in schools.

The ministry encourages school boards, CMSMs and DSSABs, and early years service providers to review the guiding principles and key considerations for school-based early years programs, and further supports the development of integrated, efficient, transparent, and accessible approaches to costs for early years service providers operating in schools.

Responsibilities for School-Based Early Years Programs

CMSMs and DSSABs, and early years service providers work in partnership to deliver high quality and inclusive early years programs that are child and family centred and contribute to children's learning, development, and well-being. In keeping with the provincial government's schools-first approach, school boards also have a role to play in ensuring the success of programs that are located in schools.

The **Ministry of Education** sets the legislative, regulatory, policy, and funding framework for the early years, which includes the provision of capital and operating funding to CMSMs, DSSABs, and school boards to support their respective roles in the early years and education system.

Consolidated Municipal Service Managers and District Social Services Administration Boards (CMSMs and DSSABs) are designated service system managers for early years programs under the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*, responsible for the planning and managing of services at the local level, and have a duty to cooperate with school boards and other partners for the purpose of implementing service plans. All CMSMs and DSSABs receive funding from the Ministry of Education to support community planning processes which include representation from school boards, early years service providers, and other community partners. CMSMs and DSSABs have flexibility to determine how to allocate early years program funding to best meet the needs of children, families, and early years service providers within their community.

School boards are responsible under the *Education Act* for the provision of junior kindergarten to Grade 12 education and have a role to play in working with partners in enhancing student achievement and well-being, closing gaps in student achievement, and maintaining confidence in the province's publicly funded education systems. School boards identify appropriate staff (e.g., school board Early Years Lead, Principal, Community Outreach Coordinator, etc.) to support early years programs. In consultation with local CMSMs and DSSABs, school boards may identify sites and space for early years capital investments in some schools. As outlined in the *Education Act*, school boards are required to ensure delivery of extended day programs where there is sufficient demand, through direct delivery or partnership with an early years service provider, for all children from junior kindergarten through age 12. School boards are also responsible for facility management of their properties.

Early years service providers in schools may be non-profit organizations, for-profit organizations, municipally operated or registered charities with a board of directors governance model, typically comprised of community members. Some school boards operate early years programs in schools. CMSMs and DSSABs may enter into service agreements with early years service providers for early years programs for children 0 to 12 years of age.

Guiding Principles for School-Based Early Years Programs

The school and early years programs are intended to complement one another, providing a seamless day for children and their families, embracing the following five overarching principles to early years accommodation costs in schools.

Access

Early years service providers should aim to offer accessible, affordable, high-quality, child-centred services. Early years accommodation costs should recognize costs to access year-round and extended day program services, where required and/or possible and feasible. Early years accommodation costs should be flexible to allow for localized needs, exceptional circumstances, and geographic variances while supporting regional equity, where possible. Working together, early years service providers, CMSMs and DSSABs, and school boards will seek to provide access to space where appropriate and as required. When identifying space for early years programs, consideration will be given to the age group being served, the purpose of the program using the space, and the ability to license the space.

Inclusion and Integration

Recognizing the ministry's schools-first approach, early years space should be seen as part of the school, inclusive in the school community and infrastructure. Where possible and appropriate, space should be shared between schools and early years programs. Integration should be encouraged between school boards and early years service providers to support the coordination of facility services and on-going operations, and to promote sharing of services where cost effective.

Efficiency

Early years accommodation cost models should be multi-year, flexible, and responsive to policy and program changes. Efficiency and effectiveness is achieved by sharing knowledge and best practices, expertise, and resources between schools and early years service providers.

Transparency

Early years accommodation costs should be fully transparent and disclose financial information in a timely and systematic manner using existing, available financial reporting mechanisms. Transparency, equity, participation, accountability, and integrity should guide the development of early years accommodation costs.

Alignment

Aligning early years accommodation costs with other government and sector-wide policies, guidelines, and initiatives will help to ensure effective approaches to facility costs. The Ministry of Education, school boards, CMSMs and DSSABs, and early years service providers should align goals of integrated service system planning and be open to sharing strategies for success.

School Facility Cost Recovery Model

School boards are encouraged to use the Ontario Association of School Business Officials (OASBO) developed model, or another similar mechanism, to provide evidence-based, transparent costs of occupying school buildings or premises for early years programs.

This model or another tool developed by a school board should be discussed and shared with the early years partners in advance of implementation. If another tool is used to determine the cost of using the space, the guiding principles for school-based early years programs in schools (page 5) should be observed. It is recommended that a school board-wide approach be used rather than a school-level approach. Furthermore, to assist with long-term planning, it is also beneficial for school boards to provide early years service providers with a multi-year horizon (e.g., a minimum of three to five years) for the cost of occupying school buildings or premises.

The Ministry of Education's *Community Planning and Partnerships Guideline (2015)* established that school boards are not expected to take on additional costs to support facility partnerships. There are some school boards which, based on their local student achievement strategy, financially support some partnerships, including but not limited to early years programs. The *Community Planning and Partnerships Guideline* as well as this reference guide does not seek to alter these arrangements. However, when school boards seek to cover costs in the fees charged to early years service providers, fees should cover the operations and facility renewal costs, including administrative costs and property taxes (if applicable), to the school board of the space occupied by the early years service provider. Regardless of whether a school board financially supports early years programs operating in its schools, the school board should calculate its cost for the early years program occupying the school space in order to ensure transparency in the fees charged and expenses incurred.

Representatives from the OASBO, building on work from the 21st Century School Fund and the University of California-Berkeley's Center for Cities and Schools, developed a Community Use of Schools School Facility Cost Recovery Pricing Model (herein referred to as "the model") to support the determining of evidence-based lease rates that are transparent and accountable. The model uses individual school boards' data which considers direct and indirect costs that are associated with the use of space, using valid, reliable, and consistent data reported by school boards to the ministry. The rate generated illustrates the annual cost per square foot per year, and is customizable, using individual school boards' data and policies.

The model is currently used by a number of school boards to calculate the cost to the school board of using or sharing space in schools, for both early years service providers and other community groups. The rate determined by the model provides evidence to aid internal decision-making about the cost to use the space, and may be used as a starting point for early years partners in negotiating agreements.

The initial set-up for the model may be time consuming, and some time-lag exists. Additional information about the model is available within the 'Instructions' tab of the tool itself, which can be accessed at: [Limestone District School Board](#), and [Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board](#).

Questions for Reflection When Using the Model

- How does your school board's facilities-related decisions reflect the ministry's vision for the early years? How do your school board's decisions reflect its student achievement strategy?
- What type of early years space is being occupied (see page 8) and how does that impact the cost inputs used in a model?
- What multi-year horizon for the cost of occupying school buildings or premises is suitable given the school board's facilities-related decisions?
- How is your school board using a pricing model to support cost transparency for early years partners?

Types of Early Years Space in Schools

In order to operate an early years program in a school building or premises, be it licensed child care or an EarlyON Child and Family Centre, the early years service provider may have an agreement with the school board. This agreement provides a mechanism for defining and establishing the use of the space and costs (e.g., the early years program may have independent or shared entrance, hallways, washrooms, mechanical, HVAC, custodial, outdoor play space, etc.). There are five different types of early years spaces as identified by the Working Group. The type of space being occupied should be considered when determining the cost input figures which are used in the pricing model.

Dedicated Purpose-Built Space (i.e., purpose-built within or onto the school)

Space that was specifically built to accommodate an early years program within or onto the school.

Stand-Alone Structure (i.e., separate building/campus)

A separate building/campus that is physically separated from the school.

Dedicated Retrofitted Space (i.e., conversion of school space)

School space that was not required for student accommodation and has been retrofitted for an early years program.

Shared Space – Extended Day and Before and/or After School

School space that is used by an early years service provider to deliver before and/or after school child care program during instructional days.

Shared Space – Non-instructional Day

School space that is used to an early years service provider during non-instructional days (e.g., summer break, March break, professional development days, Saturday or Sunday).

Key Considerations When Working Together in Schools

Cooperative and collaborative relationships among staff at the school, early years service providers, and other community programs encourage consistency and continuity for children and families. Ongoing, clear communication is paramount in establishing and maintaining positive relationships between all partners working in schools. These considerations are reflected in the Guiding Principles outlined earlier in this document.

Many school boards, CMSMs and DSSABs, and early years service providers across the province have worked in partnership to establish policies or protocols to ensure effective practices when working together in schools. These practices recognize and value that educators from all programs are responsible for organizing and implementing their respective programs within the context of legislative and local policy requirements.

This section offers some key considerations from existing practices in schools on how leadership and staff from schools and early years programs can work together to create a welcoming environment and an integrated culture for children, families, and educators.

Communication Considerations

- Schedule and plan for regular leadership meetings throughout the year at the system level (e.g., between school boards, CMSMs and DSSABs, and early years service providers, where appropriate) to support and nurture a shared culture and to discuss shared opportunities, challenges and important updates that may impact each other's programs.
- Build and foster relationships through regular opportunities for staff from the school and early years programs to get to know each other and understand each other's work (e.g., joint invitations to school council meetings, early years service providers' board of directors meetings, invitations to joint professional learning opportunities, visiting each other's programs).
- Develop ongoing communication strategies to support staff sharing space (e.g., a communication book, an orientation checklist, advance notice of any scheduling changes) including a conflict management process that is clear to all.
- Develop a process for communication with casual or supply staff to ensure understanding of transition procedures between school and early years programs.
- Provide opportunities for shared information from school and early years programs to be posted in the school or in newsletters and websites.
- Establish a process to notify early years service providers in a timely manner if a program needs to be relocated to an alternate space for any reason. Relocation of early years programs should be minimized.

- Provide as much advanced notice as possible if an early years program is required to relocate from a school location (e.g., during the summer months or school holidays due to construction or maintenance work, due to a fire or a pupil accommodation review, etc.).
- Include early years partners, including CMSMs and DSSABs, in processes related to pupil accommodation reviews, where appropriate.

Health, Safety, and Security Considerations

- There are common and distinct health, safety, and security regulation and policies in the *Education Act* and *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*. This includes, for example, emergency evacuation and inclement weather procedures, fire plans, etc. that need to be established and understood among staff at the school, early years programs, and other community programs.
- Review school board policies and procedures regarding access to schools in the event of school closures or other emergencies (e.g., access, keys, etc.).
- Establish alternate licensed space which may be available in schools, if needed. This includes developing procedures for cases where children in the regular day school may need access to licensed space occupied by an extended day program earlier or later than scheduled.

Logistical Considerations

- Determine room or space allocations based on the needs of the children attending the program. In cases where space is shared before and after school, if possible, the room selected should be used by the same age group during the school day to encourage a seamless day for children.
- Consider the development, renewal, and design of outdoor learning spaces in an intentional and thoughtful manner with input from children and families.
- Consider a handbook to guide and support all staff working in partnership in schools to serve children and families.
- For licensed child care programs, ensure primary and alternate spaces are licensed. When an early years service provider is required to relocate, work to support the relocation of the early years program to another suitable space.

For more considerations, please consult: *Child Care and Schools: Working Together in Shared Space (2017)*.

Glossary

Agreement refers to a contractual agreement by which one party conveys a cost in property to another party, for a period of time, subject to various conditions, in exchange for something of value, but still retains ownership. Other comparable terms include: lease agreement, license agreement, occupancy agreement, permit, and partnership agreement.

Before and/or after school programs refer to licensed child care before and/or after school for students aged 6 to 12.

EarlyON Child and Family Centres refers to the consolidation of the following ministry-funded programs: Ontario Early Years Centres (OEYCs), Parenting and Family Literacy Centres (PFLCs), Child Care Resource Centres (CCRCs), and Better Beginnings, Better Futures (BBBFs). As part of Ontario's early years modernization plan, these four programs have been integrated and transformed to establish EarlyON centres. EarlyON centres serve children aged 0 to 6 years and can be accessed by children and caregivers at no cost.

Early years programs refers to licensed child care (including extended day programs) for children 0 to 12 years of age, and EarlyON centres for children aged 0 to 6 years. The Ministry of Education asks CMSMs and DSSABs and school boards to prioritize not-for-profit early years service providers for the purposes of funding and delivery of early years programs.

Early years service providers in schools refers to non-profit organizations, for-profit organizations, municipally-operated or registered charities with a board of directors governance model, typically comprised of community members. Some school boards operate early years programs in schools. CMSMs and DSSABs may enter into service agreements with early years service providers for early years programs for children 0 to 12 years of age.

Extended day programs complement what happens during the regular school day in the full-day kindergarten program. Registered early childhood educators are responsible for the before and/or after school programs. As outlined in the *Education Act* and regulations, school boards are required to ensure delivery of extended day programs where there is sufficient demand through direct delivery or partnership with an early years service provider for all children from junior kindergarten through age 12. The majority of programs are offered through a third party service provider, and may be offered directly by a school board.

Facility renewal costs refer to costs for the maintenance (e.g., re-painting walls, refinishing flooring, brick and asphalt repair), repair and replacement of existing building systems (e.g., roofs, windows, doors, HVAC systems).

Appendix 1: Resources

A number of school boards and CMSMs and DSSABs have developed local policies, handbooks, resource manuals, and reference guides to support early years partnerships and accommodations in schools. Many of these documents can be found publicly on school board, and CMSM and DSSAB webpages.

Additionally, the Ministry of Education has policies, regulations, and supporting resources, including:

The ***Child Care and Early Years Act (2014)*** is legislation that regulates child care in Ontario. Regulations under this Act includes: child care licensing standards including age groupings, ratio group size, staff qualifications. Provisions regarding local service system planning and funding for early years programs are also set out in regulation. Regulations under this Act can be found at: [Ontario Regulation 137/2015: General](#), [Ontario Regulation 138/2015: Funding, Cost Sharing, Financial Assistance](#).

The ***Education Act*** and its regulations set out duties and responsibilities of the Minister of Education and the duties and responsibilities of school boards, school board supervisory officers, principals, teachers, parents, and students in the province of Ontario. [Ontario Regulation 221/11 Extended Day and Third Party Programs](#) outlines the regulations for before-and-after school programs for students in junior kindergarten to Grade 6. It also sets out requirements with regard to reporting and program content for before-and-after school programs and additional considerations to support the implementation of these programs. [Policies and Guidelines for School Boards: Before and After School Programs Kindergarten to Grade 6, 2017](#).

Community Planning and Partnerships Guideline (2015) is a guideline which assists school boards in establishing more facility partnerships, and to support effective planning with community partners. School boards are expected to revise or develop their own policy/policies that are consistent with these guidelines.

Ontario's Renewed Early Years and Child Care Policy Framework (2017) sets a vision for a system in which all children and families have access to a range of high-quality, inclusive, and affordable early years programs and services that are child and family centred and contribute to children's learning, development, and well-being.

Achieving Excellence: A Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario (2014) outlines the four key goals for education in the province of Ontario including: achieving excellence, ensuring equity, promoting well-being, and enhancing public confidence with plan of action to assess progress towards each goal.

How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years (2014) is a resource guide about learning through relationships for those working with young children and families. It articulates a view of children, families, and educators as competent and capable of complex thinking and is designed to support pedagogy and

program development in the early years. As set out in the Minister's policy statement issued in June 2015, all licensed child care programs are required to have a program statement that is consistent with this resource.

Putting How Does Learning Happen into Practice: Program Expectations for Licensed Child Care is an e-module intended to support child care programs in meeting the program requirements under the *Child Care Early Years Act, 2014*. It is divided into five segments with modules available in both English and French.

Think, Feel, Act: Lessons from Research About Young Children (2013) is a compilation of research briefs that highlight key research findings related to seven elements of early years program quality from leading experts in the field of early childhood. Accompanying video segments are also available.

The new ***Child Care and Early Years Act: What Providers and Parents Need to Know Factsheet*** answers questions about key changes that will affect licensed and unlicensed child care providers in Ontario regarding the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*.

The ***Child Care Licensing Website*** is designed to support child care providers, licensees and early years professionals and anyone who is interested in learning more about provincial requirements for licensed child care centres. It provides an overview of Child Care Licensing System, *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* Licensing Standards, an interactive *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* self-test, resources, sample forms, helpful links, and more.

The ***Kindergarten Program (2016)*** provides the pedagogical approaches and program considerations for kindergarten in Ontario. Overall expectations are provided in the context of four frames: Belonging and Contributing, Self-Regulation and Well-Being, Demonstrating Literacy and Mathematics Behaviours, and Problem Solving and Innovating. ***Growing Success: The Kindergarten Addendum (2016)*** describes the policy for assessment, evaluation, and reporting for kindergarten and how relates it to the policy for Grades 1 to 12, as set out in *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools, 2010*.

The ***Before-and-After School Programs Kindergarten-Grade 6: Policies and Guidelines for School Boards (2017)*** summarizes the provisions set out in the *Education Act* and regulations for before-and-after school programs for students in kindergarten to Grade 6. It also sets out requirements with regard to reporting and program content for before-and-after school programs and additional considerations to support the implementation of these programs.

The ***Child Care and Schools: Working Together in Shared Space (2017)*** offers some key considerations from existing practices in schools on how leadership and staff from schools and early years programs can work together to create a welcoming environment and an integrated culture for children, families, and educators.

Appendix 2: Membership of the Working Group on Early Years Accommodation Costs in Schools

The Working Group on Early Years Accommodation Costs in Schools was comprised of members from the following school boards, service system managers, and early years service providers:

- Conseil scolaire public du Nord Est de l'Ontario
- Ottawa-Carleton District School Board
- Conseil scolaire catholique MonAvenir
- Toronto District School Board
- Halton Catholic District School Board
- Rainbow District School Board
- Upper Grand District School Board
- York Catholic District School Board
- District School Board of Niagara
- City of Toronto
- Municipality of Chatham-Kent
- District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board
- Regional Municipality of Peel
- Family Day
- Umbrella Child and Family Centres of Hamilton
- Centre éducatif rayon de soleil

The following individuals contributed to the Community Use of Schools School Facility Cost Recovery Pricing Model revisions:

- Charlyn Downie (Limestone District School Board)
- Brandt Zätterberg (Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board)

Ministry of Education's Working Together in Shared Space

The following 5 pages are the Ontario Government Ministry of Education's Working Together in Shared Space document.

Child Care and Schools – Working Together in a Shared Space

Information and considerations for Child Care Licensees, School Boards, Schools, Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs) and District Social Service Administration Boards (DSSABS)

Ontario's Vision for the Early Years and Child Care

All children and families have access to a range of high-quality; inclusive and affordable early years and child care programs and services that are child and family centred and contribute to children's learning, development and well-being.

The Ministry of Education supports an integrated early years and child care system in which school board and child care professionals work in partnership to provide seamless, high quality programs for children throughout the day. With the legislated requirement for schools to provide before- and after-school programs for students in Kindergarten to Grade 6 where there is sufficient demand, there is an increased emphasis on the need for school principals, child care supervisors, recreation providers and staff to work together to ensure that shared space is available on an ongoing basis to provide consistent and seamless learning and care environments for children. The following resource is meant to support collaboration in creating a welcoming environment for children and families.

Ontario's View of Children:



All children are competent, capable of complex thinking, curious and rich in potential and experience.

Opportunity for reflection:

If we hold this view of children, then we respect their right to have access to the same materials and experiences to extend their thinking, learning and meaning-making throughout their day.

How is the child's experience being considered?

The following principles are intended as a guide for creating a seamless and integrated culture where well-being is valued and children experience a strong sense of belonging, engagement and freedom to express their ideas:

- Children are invited to share their thoughts about important considerations for shared space.
- Decisions about room/space selections and existing resources meets the needs of the children attending the before/after program. Whenever possible, the room chosen for before and after school programs should be used by the same age group during the school day. The purpose of this principle is to encourage a seamless day where children stay in the same classroom throughout their day. Therefore programs for 4 & 5 year olds, in particular, should be located in kindergarten classrooms.
- Strategies are developed collaboratively to share, prepare and care for the environment/materials so children can work on projects over an extended period of time.

- Shared expectations are discussed and reinforced (i.e., use of cubbies/materials) to promote inclusion and nurture a culture of shared rights, responsibilities and respect for the environment, belongings and each other throughout their day.
- Schedules are coordinated among professionals with the input of children and families for use of shared space beyond the classroom (e.g., gymnasium, playground, kitchen facilities, library, staff room etc.).
- Collaboration is intentional for the thoughtful development, renewal and design of the outdoor learning space with the input of children and families.
- Pedagogical documentation is developed in shared spaces with the children and their parents/caregivers to enable ideas to grow and to ensure educators' work will be mutually supported.



Learning and development happen within the context of relationships among children, families, educators, and their environments.

The Kindergarten Program, 2016

Ontario's View of Families:



Families are composed of people who are competent and capable, curious, and rich in experience. Families love their children and want the best for them. Families are experts on their children. They are the first and foremost powerful influence on children's learning, development, health and well-being.

Opportunity for reflection:

If we hold this view of families, **then** we invite parents/caregivers to be a part of their child's learning and strive to create an environment that welcomes children, their families and their ideas, perspectives and contributions.

How is the family's experience being considered?

The following principles are intended as a guide for creating a seamless and integrated culture where well-being is valued and families experience a strong sense of belonging, engagement and freedom to express their ideas:

- Parents/caregivers are invited to offer their perspectives about important considerations for shared space.
- Communication boards, newsletters and information on websites are developed collaboratively across programs where information is accessible and meaningful to parents/caregivers.
- Intentional spaces are created for pedagogical documentation to invite parents/caregivers to reflect on experiences throughout the day and to make visible children's thinking, learning and relationships with their environment and the educators. Share spaces for pedagogical documentation in ways that invite parents to contribute their ideas as partners in the learning process.

- A common philosophy is established to reinforce classrooms/schools as community space throughout the day where children and their families feel a strong sense of belonging.

Ontario's View of Educators:



Educators are competent and capable, curious and rich in experience. They are knowledgeable, caring, reflective and resourceful professionals. They bring diverse social, cultural and linguistic perspectives. They collaborate with others to create engaging environments and experiences to foster children's learning and development.

Opportunity for reflection:

If we hold this view of educators, **then** we will collaborate to create conditions of trust and respect in order to effectively share space, materials and pedagogical documentation which is integral to learning for all.

The Kindergarten and Before and After School Program, "is a single program with a single pedagogical and curriculum approach, planned and delivered by qualified educators using common space and resources."

Pascal, 2009 p. 18

How is the educator's experience being considered?

The following principles are intended as a guide for creating a seamless and integrated culture where well-being is valued and all educators experience a strong sense of belonging, engagement and freedom to express their ideas:

- Educators invest in developing reciprocal relationships and have a voice in collaborating upon conditions for working together in ways that honour and respect children, families and each other.
- Educators work together to establish a shared culture where reflective practice is nurtured and regular opportunities to meet for shared learning and professional dialogue is supported.
- A shared space is created for accessing relevant research/ documents for shared study and dialogue by all educators.
- Curriculum documents and relevant resources e.g. *How Does Learning Happen?, Think, Feel, Act; Early Learning Framework, The Kindergarten Program (2016)* are shared and promoted across programs to build cohesion.
- Professional learning opportunities include educators from both programs whenever possible and as appropriate and involves the study of pedagogical documentation to better identify, understand and support children's learning strategies.
- Educators are welcomed to visit each other's programs in order to strengthen program alignment, relationships and to build a strong sense of well-being, belonging, engagement and expression for all professionals.

Build and foster relationships through:

- Regular opportunities for staff from school and child care to get to know each other
- Opportunities for secretarial, custodial and other staff to meet with the child care staff in an effort to build collective understanding of this shared culture. Regularly scheduled leadership meetings throughout the year to support and nurture a shared culture as well as to provide updates that may impact either program.
- Consider sharing invitations to school or child care special events.
- Consider the inclusion of all staff working with individual children in case conferences or transition meetings for children as appropriate, with parent permission.



Evidence from diverse fields of study tells us that children grow in programs where adults are caring and responsive. Children succeed in programs that focus on active learning through exploration, play, and inquiry. Children thrive in programs where they and their families are valued as active participants and contributors.

*How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's
Pedagogy for the Early Years, 2014*

Logistical Considerations:

- Develop a handbook as a guide to support all staff focused on the partnership/relationship between child care and schools.
- Ensure exterior and interior signage is inclusive of school, child care and families.
- Develop a conflict management process that is clear to all staff sharing the space.
- Develop processes for communication with casual or supply educators to ensure understanding of transition procedures.
- Establish strategies to notify child care in a timely manner when the child care program must be relocated to an alternate, licensed space due to parent interviews or other school events.
- Develop strategies for efficient set up and clean up routines for the incoming school or child care program.
- Ensure primary and alternate spaces to be used by the child care is licensed, including lunch rooms, the library, the gymnasium and staff room (if applicable) and minimize any relocation of the child care program but if necessary relocate only to licensed alternate space with mutual agreement.

Health, Safety and Security Considerations:

- Establish emergency evacuation and inclement weather procedures for both regular day and before- and/or after-school programs and ensure that fire exits are mapped and posted and ensure fire plan updates include the child care program.
- Ensure, when possible, child care is notified in advance and that the child care is included in any fire, lock down or evacuation drills.
- Ensure licensing requirements are maintained when emergency relocation of the child care program to an alternate space in the school is needed.

- Develop inclement weather procedures, when children in the regular day program may need to enter the classroom earlier than scheduled.
- Discuss an approach to address health and safety issues (e.g., joint management of allergies, EPI-pen procedures etc.) and review potential security issues (e.g., parent drop off/pick up, intercom systems etc.).

Ministry of Education Supporting Resources:

Professional resources such as the following are available to support you and your team in critical reflection and continuous learning:

- ***How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years, 2014*** is professional learning resource to support program development and pedagogy in child care and child and family support programs. Based on an understanding of children as competent, capable, curious and rich in potential, it includes goals for children and expectations for programs organized around four foundations of belonging, well-being, engagement and expression. Pedagogical approaches highlight the importance of learning through exploration, play and inquiry.
- ***The Kindergarten Program, 2016*** describes critical information about the curriculum itself, the appropriate pedagogical approaches as well as the curriculum expectations which reflect the knowledge and skills children are expected to demonstrate by the end of this two year program.
- ***Think, Feel, Act: Lessons from Research about Young Children, 2013*** includes research briefs and videos on topics such as, environment, self-regulation, relationships, pedagogical documentation, pedagogical leadership, inclusion, and parent engagement.

For other relevant information and resources:

- ***Achieving Excellence: A Renewed Vision for Education In Ontario, 2014***
- ***Ontario's Renewed Early Years and Child Care Policy Framework, 2017***
- ***The Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014***
- ***Regulations under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*** includes licensing standards including age groupings, ratios group size and staff qualifications. Provisions regarding local service system planning and funding for child care and early years programs are also set out in regulation.
- ***Minister's Policy Statement on Programming and Pedagogy*** sets out *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years* as the document to be used for the purpose of guiding licensed child care programs.
- ***The Education Act and Ont. Regulation 221/11 Extended Day and Third Party Programs***
- ***Policies and Guidelines for School Boards: Before and After School Programs Kindergarten– Grade 6, 2017***

Licensing Information

The *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* (CCEYA) is the law governing child care in Ontario. The CCEYA applies to a number of programs including licensed child care centres; authorized recreational and skill building programs; camps and EarlyON child and family centres.

The information outlined below is intended to provide a summary only of the major aspects of the regulations of the Licensing Requirements. If clarification or interpretation is required about the specific wording of the Licensing Requirements, advice from the Ministry of Education should be considered. Please note that this Appendix is not intended as a substitute for the legislation. Reference should be made directly to the CCEYA and its regulations.

Licensee Responsible

The licensee who is issued a licence is responsible for the operation and management of the child care including the program, financial, and personnel administration. The licensee may appoint someone to act on his/her behalf. Every child care program shall have a supervisor who plans or directs the child care programming, oversees the children, and is responsible for the staff of the childcare. The licensee will ensure that the policies, procedures and individualized plans are always implemented. Every licensee will ensure that there are policies and procedures for monitoring compliance and contravention. The licensee will provide access to families to their child and premises unless the parent is danger to the child or staff. Every parent or guardian who pays a childcare fee will receive a receipt stating what they paid free of charge.

Ratios and Group Size

Every licensee shall ensure that children are placed in groups according to their age categories set out in Schedule 1. The licensee must ensure the approved ratio of employees to children, maximum number of children in each group and the proportion of employees that must be qualified in each room. Mixed age grouping may be approved by the Director. The ratios between employee and children may be reduced 90 minutes from the start of the program and 60 minutes before the program ends and at rest periods. The reduced

ratio shall not be less than two thirds of the required ratio. Both mixed age grouping and reduced ratios does not apply to the infant program room.

Schedule 1

Number of age category	Age range of age category	Ratios of employees to children	Maximum number or children in group
Infant	Younger than 18 months	1:3	10
Toddler	18 months or older but younger than 30 months	1:5	15
Preschool	30 months or older but younger than 6 years	1:8	24
Kindergarten	44 months or older but younger than 7 years	1:13	26
Primary/Junior School age	68 months or older but younger than 13 years	1:15	30
Junior School age	9 years or older but younger than 13 years	1:20	20

Building, Equipment and Playground

For the purposes of building and accommodation requirements, before- and/or after-school programs located in schools are considered to be part of the school. These programs are not required to demonstrate compliance with child care specific building and accommodation requirements because the building is already subject to school specific requirements and the school requirements are deemed sufficient for these programs.

If the licensee or child care centre staff notice unsafe outdoor play structures or have concerns with the safety of the building, they must take steps to address the issue. The school and/or school board should be contacted immediately so that action can be taken to remedy any safety concerns and make necessary repairs.

If unsafe outdoor play structures cannot be repaired immediately, licensees should take steps to ensure children are offered other outdoor play experiences and not permitted to use unsafe equipment.

Each child care centre must have:

- at least 2.8 square metres (30 square feet) of unobstructed indoor play space for each child in an infant, toddler, preschool or family age grouping program based on licensed capacity.
- 2.58 square metres of unobstructed indoor play space for each kindergarten, primary/junior school age or junior school age program based on licensed capacity. A Director may approve a smaller amount of space than required for a child care centre located in a school, provided that the room or area to be used by a licensed age group is used by the school for children who are the same age as the age category of the licensed age group.

Licensee must ensure that all room location, window glass and light illumination and indoor temperature requirements are always met.

Other requirements include:

- separate play activity room for each licensed infant room including a separate sleep room. Separate play activity room for toddlers, preschoolers, kindergarten, primary/junior and junior school age children.
- designated storage space for food, toys, indoor and outdoor play materials and equipment, and required records
- designated locked storage space for medical supplies, cleaning material and equipment, and other hazardous substances.
- For programs that operate more than 6 hours a day there must be designated space for eating and resting, meal prep., staff room, storage of beds and linens, office area and outdoor play
- Materials are adequate to serve the licensed capacity of the program, a variety of different materials that allow for rotation, accessible to children throughout the day and allow children to make choices, encourage play and exploration and developmentally appropriate.
- All materials, furnishings and equipment must always be kept in safe conditions and a good state of repair with adequate storage

Playground (for full day programs operating six hours or more)

Playground safety policies based on the Canadian Standards Association that include a daily, monthly and annual inspection must be kept up to date. An issue log and repair log must also be kept up to date.

Requirement include:

- at least 5.6 square metres/child (60 square feet) based on licensed capacity of outdoor play space
- no more than 64 children are permitted to use a fenced area at one time
- playground is to be at ground level and adjacent to the premises
- fenced to a minimum height of 1.2 metres (4 feet) and designed to allow for constant supervision with one or more gate that is securely locked
- All outdoor equipment must meet CAN/CSA standards and be inspected annually

Shared space confirmation must be kept on file and made available to Ministry staff when requested. The shared space confirmation must include information on all rooms available for use by the child care program, regardless of whether they are currently using the rooms or not. It must also include the primary use of each room during the school day and be signed by the child care centre's supervisor and a representative of the school board (e.g., principal).

Health and Medical Supervision

The licensee must comply with any and every recommendation or direction given by the local Medical Officer of Health. The licensee must have policies and procedures related to sanitary practices in the child care. There must be a first aid kit and manual on site.

Each licensee will create policies, procedures and individualized plans, in conjunction with the child's family and medical practitioner, for any child with an anaphylactic allergy and/or medical needs. Where the licensee agrees to administer medication to a child she/he must ensure:

- A written procedure for the administering of any drug or medication and for keeping the drugs or medication.
- All drugs and medications on the premises are stored and administered in accordance with the instructions on the label, inaccessible to children at all times and kept in a locked container.
- One person must be in charge and accountable for the dispensing of the medication.
- Written permission from the parent is required.
- Medication may only be administered from the original container as supplied by a pharmacy.

Nutrition

Children attending six hours or more of child care, a meal is to be served at meal time and two nutritious snacks. Drinking water must always be made available.

Program for Children

Every licensee will have a Parent Handbook for families that outlines the services provided, age groups served, fee schedule, times when services are provided and closures, admission and discharge policies. A copy of the Program Statement policies surrounding volunteers and students, parental issues and concerns, a list of prohibited practices, emergency management policies and how parents will be contacted in case of emergency, all need to also be included in the Parent Handbook. The Parent Handbook is to be provided free of charge to any prospective families and families in receipt of care at your centre.

The licensee will ensure that the program is inclusive of all children and that individualized support plans are in place for any child with special needs in receipt of care. The ISP needs to be created in conjunction with the parents and health professionals that support the child.

Staff Qualifications

Every supervisor must be a registered Early Childhood Educator, with at least two years experience and must be approved by the Ministry of Education, or otherwise approved by the Director of the Ministry of Education. Before starting employment, the Supervisor will ensure all staff have completed a health assessment and immunization as recommended by the Medical Officer of Health.

Policies and procedures will be in place to support staff training and professional development. Every licensee will ensure all staff will have a valid certification in standard first aid including infant and child CPR issued by a training agency approved by the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board.

Staff Screening Measures and Criminal Reference Checks

Every licensee of a child care centre will obtain a Vulnerable Sector Check from every employee before he/she begins employment and every student or volunteer attending the program. A new Vulnerable Sector Check needs to be obtained on the fifth anniversary of the original. An offense declaration needs to be completed every calendar year for each Vulnerable Sector Check and no later than 15 days from the expiry date. Every licensee shall ensure there are policies and procedures obtaining, submitting and the confidentiality of vulnerable sector checks and offence declarations.

Emergency Preparedness

Every child care premises will be equipped with a telephone service or other approved method of obtaining emergency assistance. There must be a written fire safety procedure approved by the fire department and posted in each room. There must be a fire drill at least once per month and the results must be recorded and kept on file. In addition, there must be a designated place of shelter in the event of an emergency. Emergency numbers for the fire, hospital, ambulance, poison control, police and taxi must be posted and accessible.

The licensee will ensure that there are policies and procedures regarding the management of emergencies that address roles and responsibilities, additional support for children with special needs,

a place of evacuation and supervision requirement. Also, the inclusion of how parents and the appropriate local emergency response agencies will be contacted. Policies and procedures surrounding the recovery from an emergency and support that may be needed for children and staff who are experiencing distress.

Administrative Matters

The operator must maintain, in full force, insurance that includes the following:

- comprehensive general liability coverage and personal injury coverage including, where applicable, coverage for the employees
- motor vehicle coverage for all vehicles owned by the operator

Each licensee must maintain up-to-date records on each child. The attendance record must document the arrival and departure of each child.

Statistical information regarding the operation, enrollment and program services may be collected at any time.

The licensee must post a copy of the licence and decal in a conspicuous place that is visible to all families.

Other Legislation

Drinking water that is supplied to a child care that is not from a Municipal water source must comply with the *Safe Drinking Water Act 2002*. Child care centres are required to comply with the rules for lead testing as set out in the *Safe Drinking Water Act 2002*.

Child care centres are required to comply with the requirements under the *Smoke-Free Ontario Act 2017* which prohibits smoking tobacco, medicinal marijuana, and electronic cigarettes at a child care.

Enforcement

If the Director or inspector believes on reasonable grounds that a person is not in compliance with a provision of this Act or the regulations a compliance order may be made:

- ordering the person to comply with the provision
- have the person refrain from doing what is in the order
- provide a time line of how long the person is to refrain or do what was ordered

If the Director or inspector believes on reasonable grounds that there is imminent threat to the health, safety or welfare for any children for whom child care is provided, the Director or inspector will make a Protection Order which will stop the licensee from operating the child care until the Director is satisfied the order has been met, order the licensee to remove the threat or shall suspend the licence.

Links and Resources

Information on Child Care and the Early Years provides resources on supporting positive learning environments for child care and EarlyON.

The *Child Care and Early Years Act (2014)* is legislation that regulates child care in Ontario and replaces the *Day Nurseries Act*. Regulations under this Act includes: child care licensing standards including age groupings, ratio group size, staff qualifications.

The *Education Act (1990)* and its regulations set out duties and responsibilities of the Minister of Education and the duties and responsibilities of School Boards, School Board supervisory officers, principals, teachers, parents, and students in the province of Ontario.

Child Care and Schools: Working Together in Shared Space (2017) and *Early Years Accommodations in Schools Reference Guide (2018)* offers some key considerations from existing practices in schools on how leadership and staff from schools and early years programs can work together to create a welcoming environment and an integrated culture for children, families, and educators.

Child Care and Early Years Act: What Providers and Parents Need to Know Factsheet answers questions about key changes that will affect licensed and unlicensed child care providers in Ontario regarding the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*.

Child Care Licensing Website is designed to support child care providers, licensees and early years professionals interested in learning more about provincial requirements for licensed child care centres.

Ontario's Renewed Early Years and Child Care Policy Framework (2017) sets a vision for a system in which all children and families have access to a range of high-quality, inclusive, and affordable early years programs and services that are child and family centred and contribute to children's learning, development, and well-being.

How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years (2014) is a professional learning resource for those working in child care and child and family programs. It supports pedagogy and program development in early years settings that is shaped

by views about children, the role of educators and families, and the relationships among them. It builds on foundational knowledge about children and is grounded in new research and leading-edge practice from around the world. Child Care licensees now have access to the E-Module: *Putting How Does Learning Happen? into Practice: Program Expectations for Licensed Child Care* which will assist early years professionals to understand connections between *How Does Learning Happen?* and the program requirements under the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*.

Community Planning and Partnerships Guideline (2015) encourages school boards to share planning information with community organizations and is a guideline which supports effective planning with community partners.

Achieving Excellence: A Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario (2014) continues to focus on basics like reading, writing and math, while placing a new emphasis on higher order skills like critical thinking, communication, collaboration and entrepreneurship. It also recognizes the importance of student well-being inside and outside of school.

Think, Feel, Act: Lessons from Research About Young Children (2013) is a compilation of research briefs that highlight key research findings related to elements of early years program quality from leading experts in the field of early childhood.

The Kindergarten Program (2016) sets out what four- and five-year-olds across the province will learn in Ontario's Kindergarten program. It also describes how educators will help children learn through play and inquiry. Based on the most up-to-date information about child development and how children learn best, the Kindergarten program provides a smooth transition from home or child care settings and a strong foundation for learning in the years to come.

Growing Success: The Kindergarten Addendum (2016) describes the policy for assessment, evaluation, and reporting for kindergarten and how relates it to the policy for Grades 1 to 12, as set out in *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools, 2010*.

Before-and-After School Programs Kindergarten-Grade 6: Policies and Guidelines for School Boards (2018) summarizes the provisions set out in the *Education Act* and regulations for before-and-after school programs for students in kindergarten to Grade 6. It also sets out requirements with regard to reporting and program content for before-and-after school programs and additional considerations to support the implementation of these programs.

Planning for EarlyON Child and Family Centres in Peel provides an overview of the formation of EarlyON Child and Family Centres (previously known as Ontario Early Years Centres, Parent and Family Literacy Centres and Child Care Resource centres) and describes the key areas of action to provide families with access to high quality early years programs.

