



## BrightPath Early Learning and Child Care Program Statement

BrightPath Early Learning and Childcare Centres provide a program and curriculum that is consistent with the Ministry of Education's policy and guidelines. Our programs are consistent in our approaches with "How Does Learning Happen?" Ontario's pedagogy and vision for the early years.

Our core principles mirror the Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT) guiding principles taken from "How Does Learning Happen?" Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years. Our pedagogical approach requires educators to be partners, designers of the play environment, planners, recorders and communicators.

BrightPath offers a wide range of developmentally appropriate programs for children including Montessori, play based, emergent and fusion programs. With partnerships in curriculum, nutrition, technology and recreational fitness programming, we are committed to providing families with the very best care, programs and child development Canada has to offer.

### Mission Statement

BrightPath recognizes that children are **Competent, Capable, Curious and Rich in Potential**. All children are unique individuals and The BrightPath learning environment supports our children to discover new concepts, uncover hidden mysteries and imagine new possibilities. BrightPath offers a wide variety of developmentally appropriate programs for children including both child initiated and adult supported. Our team aims to provide a well-balanced learning environment where children are free to observe, question, experiment and explore.

Consistent with Ontario's vision for early learning and *How Does Learning Happen?* our programs are built around the following core principles that are important for children to grow and flourish to their fullest potential:

- **Develop the Mind**
- **Nourish the Body**
- **Inspire the Soul**

### 1. Develop the Mind

At BrightPath, we offer age appropriate, professional and well thought out curriculums, designed to establish a strong skill base and love of learning. Our learning environment is inquiry based, which supports our children to discover new concepts, uncover hidden mysteries and imagine new possibilities, all while allowing them to learn at their own pace. This allows children to experiment with and understand social roles and acquire problem solving skills by interacting with each other. The wide range of play opportunities through the day relieve stress and pressure for children and allow them to cope with their feelings. They control the experience through their imaginations, and they exercise their powers of choice and decision-making as the play progresses which promotes self-regulation.

Early learning enables children to develop the confidence to tackle problems, overcome obstacles and succeed. We understand the impact quality education can have on young children and are committed to fulfilling a high level of excellence within our centres. The core of that excellence begins with our educators who are trained and qualified to provide a superior level of instruction and teaching.



Our environment and educators ensure that:

- Each child shall have a sense of **Belonging**. They should feel connected to others, valued, and encouraged to form relationships with others within their community and the natural world. .
- Each child shall have a sense of **Well-being**: They will develop a sense of self care, self-regulation and wellbeing.
- Each child shall have the opportunity for **Engagement**. By being encouraged to be involved and inquire they will have the opportunity to explore their world and develop skills such as problem solving, creative thinking, and innovating.
- Each child shall have the opportunity for **Expression**. Communication is encouraged through their words, their bodies, or the use of materials and supports their creativity and problem solving.

In order to ensure the above, we recognize pedagogical documentation as more than recording events or observations. Our educators are committed to learning about how children think and learn.

## 2. Nourish the Body

Above all else, we believe that nothing should take precedence over the well-being and safety of our children. BrightPath is dedicated to providing the very best foundation for children to play, grow and develop. We recognize nutrition as a key element for this foundation.

Our nutritious menu plans are certified by a registered Nutritionist and Dietician to ensure they meet Canada's Healthy Eating Guidelines by providing our children with the proper nourishment for their growing bodies. All of our meals are made on site, fresh on a daily basis and made from scratch. The children are served a nutritious morning and afternoon snack and a lunch time meal. Our menus are posted in the centres and a copy is provided for your reference at home. We will work with parents to accommodate the dietary needs of our children.

Our meals are served family style allowing the children to serve themselves, further developing their self-regulation skills.

Infants under 12 months of age are fed in accordance with written instructions from a parent of the child. We will work with parents to assist in transitioning children onto table foods and our centre menu in readiness for their move to the toddler program.

All BrightPath Centres are Nut Free and Allergy Aware environments.

Our programs also develop and encourage a strong link between good physical health and outdoor play. Activity, fitness and play are all key elements to our program. With regular outdoor time and planned indoor activities, our children experience a world of movement, dance and recreation. At Bright Path, we have incorporated nutrition and physical fitness into our programs. Active children are healthy children and our outdoor learning environments, which are an extension of the classroom, allow the children plenty of opportunity for exploration, inquiry and creativity. They will learn to interact with and understand the natural world around them and have opportunity for social interaction with their peers, while boosting their confidence as they learn new things.

All of our children spend a minimum of two hours outside on a daily basis, weather permitting.

BrightPath's proprietary program, WeeMove™, was developed to incorporate intentional physical fitness into the learning curriculum. WeeMove™ is designed to engage the child on multiple levels, to make learning fun and instill a love of movement.

Generally, set to music and taught outdoors, all Casa children will participate in this program daily.



While we recognize that not all young children will need a mid-day nap, and that some children will need a longer time to relax and sleep than others, we believe that all young children benefit from an opportunity for rest to help balance their active play. Parents will be consulted respecting a child's sleeping arrangements at the time the child is enrolled and at any other appropriate time, such as at transitions between programs or rooms or upon a parent's request.

Our Sleep Supervision Policy ensures that all children are monitored on a regular basis during rest times and that those sleep checks are documented. Parents are required to provide details in respect to their child's sleeping arrangements upon enrollment and will also be consulted at other times, such as when transitioning to a new room, or upon a parent's request, to ensure the child's needs are being met. Staff will ensure that they communicate with parents as to any significant changes in a child's sleeping pattern or behaviour so that adjustments can be made if necessary.

Each of our infant programs has a separate sleep room with individual cribs adjacent to the playroom. We are obligated to ensure that children younger than 12 months are placed for sleep in a manner consistent with the recommendations set out in the Joint Statement of Safe Sleep (i.e. placed on their backs), unless otherwise recommended in writing by the child's physician.

To ensure consistency between home and childcare, infants follow their own individual nap schedules provided by their parents. When ready, our Educators will work with parents to transition the infants to one nap time per day in readiness for their move to the Toddler Program.

Each child in our toddler, preschool and kindergarten programs is provided with an individual cot for their rest period of up to two hours in length and they are permitted to sleep, rest or engage in quiet activities based on their individual needs, while ensuring that sleep patterns at home are not disrupted.

Safety is of the highest priority and BrightPath has a wide array of policies and procedures to ensure compliance with licensing legislation, including anaphylaxis, medication, fire and health & safety, and more. Our Educators review all policies on a minimum of an annual basis. Our centres are licensed by the Ministry of Education and we also receive regular inspections from the local Health and Fire departments. There is some form of security at the entrances and exits. Parents will have a key fob or pass code to enter the centres, and visitors are required to ring the doorbell.

Monthly Fire Drills ensure the children and Educators are familiar with emergency procedures. Our Educators are all trained in Standard First Aid and infant Child CPR. As a company we meet and exceed the requirements of all regulatory agencies.

### **3. Inspire the Soul**

The BrightPath environment encourages a child's individuality, creativity and exploration. We help develop children's social, emotional and physical needs as they grow, develop and mature throughout their journey. We promote freedom and independence while emphasizing the importance of team work and social skills. At BrightPath, we celebrate differences and emphasize inclusion, while maintaining a strong sense of connection within the communities we serve. BrightPath demonstrates and practices respect in our centres and classrooms, for each other and our families, while always representing a commitment to our values.

Our educators recognize self-regulation as the ability to effectively deal with a stressor and then recover. True to our goal of Inspiring the Soul, we develop the children's social and emotional needs throughout their journey. We follow a positive child guidance model that includes recognizing why a child behaves in a certain way, encouraging children to regulate their own behaviour by giving them choices. When necessary, children are given time away from the situation to reflect on their behaviour with the support of our educators and consider more appropriate responses. Our educators will ensure that they:

- Give a friendly greeting and departure to the children, families and co-workers.
- Model a calm and relaxed manner.
- Speak in a clear, pleasant and natural voice
- Use developmentally appropriate language and directions
- Initiate and build on conversations with children.
- Listen to children and use questions to clarify.
- Respond positively to children's emotions and help them identify their emotions.
- Use positive reinforcement to develop the children's self-confidence, self-esteem and decision making skills
- Deal calmly with conflicts and ensure that children are encouraged to solve problems when possible.
- Model positive and respectful relationships and interactions with co-workers.

**Prohibited Practices** at BrightPath include:

- Corporal punishment of the child;
- Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
- Locking the exits of the child care centre or home child care premises for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures;
- 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; or
- Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

In the event that the Management team observes or is made aware of staff using a practice that is not supported by BrightPath Kids Corp. they will address the situation with the staff member according to the procedures outlined in the Behaviour Guidance Policy and Disciplinary Policy.

**The Children's House Montessori Program Overview.**

The philosophy which guides everything we do in Montessori is to follow the child. It is applied to every child's education. Children learn at different paces and have different interests which is why an important part of the Montessori approach is the one-on-one relationship between the child and their Educator. By observing and engaging, the Educators know how each child is progressing and uses this knowledge to create and build upon their individual learning plan. The other key factor in Montessori education is the meticulously designed, extensive series of exercises in a prepared environment. Each exercise is part of a carefully planned progression, mastering one skill that is an essential ingredient of a more complicated skill. The philosophy is the result of ongoing research into the best ways of helping children learn.

A Montessori classroom is arranged to enable a child to independently choose activities which gives them the opportunity to develop their self-confidence and their ability to self-regulate; these skills foster a love of learning which they carry with them throughout their life.

*"Never help a child with a task at which he feels he can succeed"* – Maria Montessori.



Our progressive Montessori curriculum is complemented with an emergent curriculum. Through our daily 'Engage, Observe, Reflect' documentation, our Educators create a curriculum based on the children's interests and needs both in the inside and outside learning environments. These observations and reflections are recorded in weekly learning stories and available for parents to view.

### **The Bambini Program (ages 6 weeks to 18 months)**

The aim of the Montessori infant program is to foster the development of basic trust and to assist in the normal development of the personality. Basic trust develops in an environment where people respond appropriately to the infant's communication of needs to be loved, respected and accepted. Infants learn through their senses. They learn by watching and moving freely in the environment.

### **The Toddler Program (ages 18 months to 2.5 years)**

According to Montessori philosophy, learning is the most fun during the first three years of children's lives as they absorb their environment unconsciously. Our Educators lead classes using age-appropriate Montessori materials and activities that are designed to provoke interest and involvement. Classrooms are carefully planned to meet the needs of toddlers and organized for their convenience.

### **The Casa and KinderCasa Program (ages 2.5 to 6 years)**

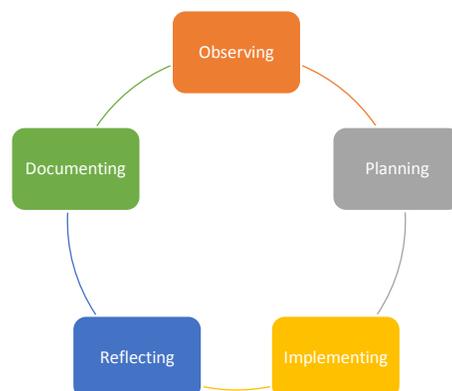
The core principles of the Montessori philosophy are found primarily in our Casa Program. Beginning with practical and social skills, children learn to take responsibility for themselves and their environment. Academics are introduced through concrete, manipulative materials which utilize all five senses and lay the groundwork for abstract thinking. The mixed age grouping in the Casa Program develops each child's initiative and leadership abilities. Children staying with us through their Kindergarten years will benefit from a continued Montessori Education with low child to teacher ratios and an increasingly challenging curriculum to meet their individual learning needs.

### **Before and After School Program.**

Our Before and After School Program allows each child to prepare for their day and unwind after school in a friendly and familiar environment, providing them with opportunities to interact and grow in a relaxing setting. The children and the educators collaborate to create experiences and projects throughout the week.

### **The Emergent Approach:**

Our emergent curriculum approach allows the educators to plan the environment, giving the children choices, based on their interests, skills and needs. It is child initiated and allows for student-led expeditions, inquiries and investigations. It further allows our educators to support children's learning and encourages consistent self-reflection and professional growth, so they may always improve the quality of the classroom experience





The emergent approach is successful because the learning process is more important than the end product and it allows the educator opportunities to reflect on what learning has taken place. The journey may occur over a series of days, weeks or months.

### Documentation

Documentation is a means to study children and give visibility to their competencies. It is a means to understand what children think, what they know, what they know how to do and what they are curious about.

In order to record and document the children's learning experiences our educators use a process called "**Engage, Observe, Reflect**".

**Engage:** What did I introduce/provoke?

**Observe:** What did I see? What did I hear?

**Reflect:** What can happen next?

Our Educators **Engage** with and **Observe** the children on a daily basis and as they **Reflect** upon their observations, they are able to prepare and plan activities that support the children's interests and developmental needs.

Documentation brings visibility to the children's learning and allows our Educators to record the children's learning experiences in order to analyze and reflect on these observations.

**BrightPath Connect** makes the documentation and reporting of children's learning and development in alignment with "Early Learning for Every Child Today" (ELECT) quick and easy so that our educators can spend less time on documentation and paperwork and more time with children.

We use BrightPath Connect, along with Learning Stories to record the children's learning, and share with the children and their families.

### Inter Curricular Program

The following programs are provided on a regular basis to enrich the children's learning: Yoga, Music, French, Mandarin.

### Building Positive Relationships among Children, Families, Staff and Community Partners.

BrightPath encourages regular and open communication with families. BrightPath Connect, our parent engagement tool, allows our staff to provide detailed reports about the children's day in regards to meals, rest, bathroom and activities.

Along with an open door policy, our annual parent survey provides the opportunity for parents to provide feedback and suggestions to us, allowing us to develop and improve our programs and services.

Monthly calendars and newsletters are provided to families to keep them updated with up-coming events and other information pertaining to the centres operations.

Regular special events, for example, Mother's and Father's Day Socials and Holiday Celebrations provide our parents the opportunity to spend time with their children at the centres, while connecting with our Educators and other families.

Where available, our Partners In Parenting Program brings together parents for educational workshops and information sharing between families.

BrightPath works closely with all local community agencies and partners to support children, families and staff and provide the very best care that we can.

We are proud to work with local colleges to provide practical work experience to students on placement.



## Professional Development

We recognize professional development as a key component of a high quality early years program. BrightPath will provide opportunities for all staff to learn and develop in their role.

Professional development is ongoing for staff and where available we engage in local program development initiatives, for example, Raising the Bar and Quality First, to ensure a commitment to best practices and to continually develop and ensure high quality environments and interactions for children in our programs.

Our RECE staff are required to take part in Continuous Professional Learning in order to maintain their membership with the College of ECE. BrightPath is committed to building the knowledge, skills and effectiveness of its staff through ongoing professional development that supports the achievement of our strategic directions and the aspirations of individual staff.

BrightPath has a Tuition Assistance Program to assist our educators in being able to further their knowledge and skills in areas related to both current and future job opportunities within the organization.

We believe that our Educators and children should be emotionally and intellectually engaged with each other in learning. Our Educators reflect and assess their program and environment daily to ensure that the program is meeting the individual needs of the children and the group and that their environment is set up according to the interests of the group.

## Document and Review

In addition to the evidence of learning (pedagogical documentation) that is displayed in our centres, BrightPath will review the impact that our approaches have in regards to meeting our goals and the needs of the children and families. This will be achieved in part through an annual parent survey, where parents will be invited to evaluate our school in regards to the program offered, learning activities, the skills their child learns, communication, nutrition and more. The survey results, give us an indication of the impact our strategies are having on the families and children.

The Program Statement is a living document and will be reviewed on a minimum of an annual basis to ensure it is meeting the needs of the children in our centres.

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