

Program Statement

December, 2016

Lilliput Land Cooperative Nursery School (“Lilliput Land”) provides a positive and safe environment for the children in our care, in which they can grow intellectually, physically, emotional and socially.

Children are competent, capable, curious, and rich in potential

Our primary goal is to assist each child in developing a sense of belonging, self, community, health, and well-being. We want the children in our care to achieve self-discipline and self-control, while keeping in mind that each child is a unique individual who brings their own experiences and abilities to the program. All children deserve to be encouraged to try new things and to explore their developing sense of self. Play-based classroom activities which are child-initiated and adult-supported provide the platform for flourishing imaginations and budding friendships. Our programming is reflective of the need to provide stimulating and developmentally appropriate challenges for the individual child in a warm, secure environment.

Our daily routine incorporates:

- dramatic play
- language and literacy
- active play in the gymnasium
- quiet activities and spaces
- visual arts
- music
- science/math
- a healthy snack

Lilliput Land Nursery School incorporates the four foundations of learning: Belonging, Well-being, Engagement, and Expression as found in the pedagogical document *How Does Learning Happen*, into our everyday program.

Belonging – refers to a sense of connectedness to others, an individual’s experiences of being valued, of forming relationships with others and making contributions as part of a group, a community, the natural world.

Well-being - addresses the importance of physical and mental health and wellness. It incorporates capacities such as self-care, sense of self, and self-regulation skills.

Engagement – suggests a state of being involved and focused. When children are able to explore the world around them with their natural curiosity and exuberance, they are fully engaged. Through this type of play and inquiry, they develop skills such as problem solving, creative thinking, and innovating, which are essential for learning and success in school and beyond.

Expression – or communication (to be heard, as well as to listen) may take many different forms. Through their bodies, words, and use of materials, children develop capacities for increasingly complex communication. Opportunities to explore materials support creativity,

problem solving, and mathematical behaviours. Language rich environments support growing communication skills, which are foundational for literacy.ⁱ

Our Staff

Are highly qualified:

The two teachers at Lilliput Land are registered with the College of Early Childhood Educators (CECE), have up to date vulnerable sector police record checks, food safety training and Level C first aid/CPR training.

Are facilitators:

We are committed to planning and creating a safe, warm, nurturing, child-centered learning environment and experiences in which each child's individual needs for learning and development will be supported. We encourage children to be creative, active and engaged learners through interaction with and exploration of their daily environment. Teachers observe the children's interests and needs and provide new experiences and activities daily, often scaffolding on to the interests of previous days.

Are committed learners:

Each staff commits to at least 20hrs of professional development a year, whether it be through online classes, seminars and workshops or book studies, they are constantly learning.

Communication with Families

Lilliput Land Nursery School has an open-door policy. We work to provide positive and responsive interactions among the children, family members, community partners, and all Lilliput Land staff. Communication between staff and family members regarding the program and their child's activities within the classroom is available daily on our program sheets which are posted in the hallway. Parents are encouraged to talk to staff regarding any matters they wish to discuss either in person, over email, or by phone. We update our public Facebook page on an ongoing basis with pictures of our activities within the classroom to keep parents as well as the community informed of our programming.

Community

Through our partnership with Inclusion Support Services we provide information on community programs to further assist and support the children and their families as required.

We occasionally enjoy visits from members of the community which support our interests in the classroom. We also encourage family members to come in and share any talents they may have with us. We may have a firefighter visit the class to talk about fire safety or a parent join us and share an instrument or read a special story. On our parent board outside the classroom we also post community event information.

We encourage a feeling of community with all our Lilliput families by having special family events throughout the year. Parents can participate with their children and get to know the other families through these events including our year end picnic.

Documenting and reviewing

We understand that pedagogical documentation is a way for our staff to observe how children think and learn. We make up to date observations of children in the program and use this information to inform our future planning. Our intention is to find the meaning in what children do and experience and reflect that back to the families. You may see notes posted around the classroom with observations and quotes from the children, these help our staff keep track of all the amazing activities and conversations the children are having. From there, we can see patterns and make connections. We take a lot of pictures and post them for the children to see and reflect on.

Program Assessment and Reflective Practices

Educators reflect and assess the program and environment daily to ensure they are meeting the individual needs of the children and the group. They also provide an environment that is set up according to the interests of the group and make changes as needed. Our community partners (Inclusion Support Services, Guelph-Wellington Quality Childcare Initiative) support ongoing training opportunities for our educators. Educators are expected to participate in the CPL (continuous professional learning) modules through the CECE. We are committed to our growth as educators.

This program statement will be reassessed and expanded once yearly at a minimum, staff will be asked to sign off annually acknowledging they have read the document. Parents will always be informed when changes have been made to the document.

These program principles are aligned with “*How Does Learning Happen? Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years (2014)*” and supported by the Lilliput Land Policies, which detail our procedures to ensure the health, safety, nutrition and physical and social well-being of our children.

ⁱ Ontario Ministry of Education (2014). *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years*. Queen’s Printer for Ontario. 7-8.