

# **Richmond Co-operative Nursery School**

## **Parent Handbook**

**2017-2018**

# **Welcome to the Richmond Cooperative Nursery School**

## **HISTORY OF RICHMOND CO-OPERATIVE NURSERY SCHOOL**

Richmond Co-operative Nursery School (RCNS) is a non-profit pre-school, licensed by the Ministry of Education under the Child Care and Early Years Act and is inspected annually to ensure it is fully meeting all requirements.

RCNS was founded on January 7, 1975 in Richmond at St. Paul's United Church. The school moved to its current premises, in St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, in 1985.

## **WHAT IS A CO-OPERATIVE NURSERY SCHOOL?**

As a co-operative, the nursery school is owned and run by our parent members as a non-profit organization. An Executive Committee, comprised of parents (past and present) and staff, and is elected or appointed (select positions) each year. The Executive handles the business of running the nursery school and is assisted in the day-to-day operations and with special projects by committees made up of all the members.

In order to keep our co-operative nursery school operating in an efficient and effective manner, parents are required to help with the daily operation of the school facility, in addition to working on a designated committee or as a member of the executive.

## **PROGRAM STATEMENT**

The Richmond Co-operative Nursery School (RCNS) has been a valued member of the Richmond community for more than 40 years. We support local community partners by having visits from the librarian, field trips to the fire station and more.

The Richmond Co-operative Nursery School's goal is to create a positive foundation for your child's first learning. By experimenting in play, music and crafts children develop socially, emotionally, physically, creatively and intellectually. Children in our program are guided to interact and communicate with others in a positive manor, build friendships, celebrate differences, share thoughts and ideas and take pride in their own unique accomplishments.

As a co-operative, the nursery school is wholly owned and run by our parent members as a non-profit organization. We firmly believe that early learning is a shared

responsibility between our families and our educators. The RCNS views educators, parents and children as competent, capable and full of potential and works closely with our families to build positive strong relationships. The RCNS educators work closely with parents on a daily basis. Educators strive to have an open dialogue on all aspects of the child's experiences both at RCNS and at home. RCNS provides many opportunities to ensure that communication takes place between parents and educators via open daily communication, monthly newsletters, emails, Facebook, our website and various RCNS events.

The Richmond Co-operative Nursery School strives to promote a healthy safe program. We encourage all families to provide their child a nutritious, balanced snack. We also maintain strict hygiene standards for our classroom which includes handwashing, disinfecting tables (before and after snack) and regular cleaning of the toys.

RCNS educators encourage children to interact and communicate in a positive manor by modeling positive relationships with children, parents, caregivers, and members of the community. Children are encouraged to develop self-regulation skills by working closely with the educators to expand their ability to communicate needs, wants, and thoughts.

Our program is always striving to foster the children's interests in play through exploration and inquiry. Children are encouraged to learn by asking questions and working together to resolve problems. RCNS supports child-initiated learning experiences. RCNS provides the children opportunities to explore both in our classroom and in our play yard (weather permitting) on a daily basis. The program is always evolving based on observations and feedback from our families.

RCNS encourages and supports opportunities for our educators to participate in professional development.

Our program statement is reviewed annually by all educators, parents, and volunteers or when any changes are made.

## **PROGRAMS**

The Richmond Co-operative Nursery School offers program for children between the age of 18 months and 4 years old. The classes are divided into two programs; Toddler (age 18 month-2 1/2 years old) and Preschool (age 2 21/2 to 4 years old). The Toddler program runs on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 9-11am. The Preschool program runs on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings from 9-11:30am. We, at times, offer a Flex program (based on number of children who are registered in the Preschool program), where participants can attend one or two days of the week.

Our school year runs from September to June. We start off the school year with a staggered entry in order to help make the transition to school a little easier. This starts after Labour Day.

RCNS is closed for all statutory holidays and follows the Ottawa Public School board calendar ([www.ocdsb.ca/calendar](http://www.ocdsb.ca/calendar)) for Christmas break and March break. We do not close on PD Days.

## **FEES**

### **For All Programs**

- Membership Fee: \$50 (non-refundable)

### **Toddler Program, 2 days per week**

- Tuition school year: \$1,350 annually, or \$135 monthly

### **Preschool Program, 3 days per week**

- Tuition school year: \$1,850 annually, or \$185 monthly

### **Flex Program**

- One day a week: \$65 per month
- Two days per week: \$130 per month.

## **REGISTRATION**

### **Admission Policy**

A child is only considered registered once the Registrar has confirmed availability of space in the program and received the following:

- Completed registration forms found in the Registration Package (<http://www.rcns.ca/registration/>), including immunization forms.
- Tuition fees (10 post-dated cheques dated the first of each month for September to June or one lump sum payment for the yearly fee)
- Membership fee (non-refundable)
- Post-dated cheque dated for June 1<sup>st</sup> for community event participation. The cheque will be returned if the requirement is met.

Tuition is not pro-rated to a daily rate; however, if a child registers for a program after the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month the family is charged half the tuition fee for that month only.

## **Waiting Lists**

If an RCNS program is at capacity, families have the option of going on a waiting list. There is no fee for being placed on the waiting list. Spaces that become available will be filled in order that the requests to be wait-listed are received.

## **INTEGRATION**

Richmond Co-operative Nursery School is an inclusive school. We welcome children with a variety of special needs and make every effort possible to integrate them into our program. We work together with Children's Integration Support Services (CISS), a division of the Andrew Fleck Child Care Agency to ensure that all children receive a developmentally appropriate program. The Program Director will assist families requiring assistance from CISS. Children with identified special needs will be assessed by the Program Director, in advance of registration, to determine what program would be best suited for the child and to arrange for if required, from CISS.

The number of children with special needs admitted to our programs is dependent upon the ability of the staff to provide all children in the program with adequate attention and supervision. The number of children with special needs admitted to our programs is also dependent upon the identified child being provided adequate support from CISS. For these reasons, the number of children with identified special needs in each group/program will be limited.

It is ultimately the Program Director, in consultation with staff, Executive and/or Integration Advisor, who will make the decision on the number of children with special needs that each program is able to accommodate.

In the event that a child identified with special needs demonstrates great difficulty integrating and/or adjusting to the set Nursery School program or the Program Director feels that the program is no longer meeting the needs of all children, the Program Director will meet with the parents of the identified child to discuss all concerns. The Program Director will also notify the Board of all concerns and the action that has been taken. If the concerns continue, the Program Director may recommend to the Board that the family be given written notice of the termination of their membership.

If the Director deems termination is necessary, written notification of termination will be given from the President to the member. A verbal message of expulsion is not considered official notification. Upon termination, any remaining monthly tuition fees will be returned and all membership rights and responsibilities will cease. The membership fee will NOT be refunded.

## **STAFF**

At least one staff of RCNS is required to be a registered Early Childhood Educator or approved equivalent, as approved by the Ministry. In keeping our small class sizes, our staff consists of one director/teacher and one assistant teacher. The director/teacher is required to be a registered member (in good standing) with the College of Early Childhood Educators.

All staff is required to have standard first aid, including infant and child CPR as well as a valid Criminal Reference Check for the vulnerable sector on file with the school.

## **RELEASE OF STUDENTS - PICK UP POLICY**

Children will only be released to parents/legal guardians, or to those persons indicated on the registration form under Child Release, unless alternate arrangements are made. If a person indicated on the registration form under Child Release, other than the parent, is to pick up the child, verbal notice at drop-off time is requested

If alternate arrangements are required and a child is to be released to a person other than someone indicated on the registration form, written permission and verbal permission must be made. Parents are to call the school and inform the Director and/or Teacher of who will be picking up their child from school. The parent is also to send a written note or send an email to the Director informing the school of this change in release of their child. This note can be sent with their child or with the individual picking up the child. In the case of an emergency, exceptions will be made at the sole discretion of the Director.

Individuals who are arriving at the school for the first time to pick up a child must be prepared to show a piece of photo identification. This aids in ensuring the release of the child to the appropriate individual.

## **LATE PICK UP POLICY**

Children are to be picked up on time. The children in the toddler program are to be picked up at 11:00 a.m. and the children in the preschool program are to be picked up at 11:30 a.m.

If a parent or a person picking up the child is late, the first offence will be met with a verbal warning to the parent from a staff member.

A second offence will result in a written warning from the Executive Board, along with a fine of \$5.00 for any part of the first 5 minutes and \$1.00 per minute for every minute thereafter.

A third offence will result in the same fine and may be considered grounds for expulsion under the nursery school's by-law.

## **PROHIBITED PRACTICES**

**RCNS will not permit, with respect to a child receiving care at our school:**

- corporal punishment.
- physical restraint of the child for the purpose of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing the child from hurting himself, herself or someone else and is used as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent.
- locking the exits of the school for the purpose of confining a child or confining a child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of RCNS's emergency management policies and procedures.
- deliberate 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.
- deprivation of a child's basic needs of food, drink, shelter, toilet use, or clothing.
- inflicting any bodily harm on children including making a child eat or drink against their will.
- isolation of a child in a locked room or structure to confine a child should they need to be separated from other children.

### **Contravention of Prohibited Practices:**

Staff, parents and volunteers are expected to comply with our program's stated policies and procedures. Failure to comply with our program's stated policies and procedures could result in a verbal warning, a written warning and, if necessary, dismissal from the school.

## **PARENTS' ISSUES AND CONCERNS**

Step 1:

The parent or guardian will meet with the staff member involved in an attempt to resolve the issue or conflict. If for some reason, those involved are not satisfied with the results of Step 1, they will proceed to Step 2.

Step 2:

The parent or guardian and the staff member involved will meet with the Director in a further attempt to resolve the issue. Full documentation of these meetings will be recorded and placed in the child's file. If for some reason, those involved are not satisfied with the results of Step 2, they will proceed to Step 3.

Step 3:

If the issue is still unresolved, it will be referred to the Executive who will develop an action plan. The Director will notify the Program Advisor with the Ministry of Education of this situation. All persons involved in this matter will follow the action plan and will report the progress accordingly to the Executive.

## **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

RCNS has emergency management policies and procedures in place, which can be accessed in our Policy and Procedures Manual. It is reviewed yearly. In case of an emergency situation and once students have been moved to safety, parents of students will be contacted (by phone and/or email) to come and pick up their child at the designated place of shelter, Richmond Public School.

## **FIELD TRIP POLICY**

Throughout the year, field trips may be made to special places of interest. The “Activities and Field Trips Consent Form” is completed as part of the registration package. Details for field trips requiring transportation will be sent home prior to the trip itself. If transportation is required for a field trip, it is the parent’s responsibility to provide transportation to and from the destination of the trip. Parents must remain with their child on all field trips. Depending upon the field trip, siblings may or may not be able to join us.

Field trips also include local walks. Walks are at the Director’s discretion and do not require advance notice. A portable first aid kit will be taken on all field trips, regardless of distance.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY**

The Richmond Co-operative Nursery School is closed and classes are cancelled when school buses are not running according to the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority (OSTA), or at the Director’s discretion. Parents/caregivers can listen to the radio stations or check out the OSTA website for school bus cancellations and/or expect an email from the Director by 8:15am of that day.

This decision was made based on the safety of the children of the school, as well as siblings and parents, while en route to the school. Please note classes cancelled due to inclement weather will not be made up or added onto the school year.

## **SUPERVISION OF VOLUNTEERS AND PLACEMENT STUDENTS POLICY**

To meet the requirements as outlined under regulation O. Reg. 262 of the Day Nurseries Act (DNA) and by the Ministry of Education for the development and implementation of the supervision of volunteers and placement students at Richmond Cooperative Nursery School (RCNS):

- No child is supervised by a person under 18 years of age
- Only employees of RCNS have direct unsupervised access to children.
- Volunteers, program assistants and placement students may not be counted in the staffing ratio.
- RCNS is responsible for orientation procedures to help participating parents, placement students and volunteers understand the operation of the program and the expectations for their placement/volunteer experience, including, but not limited to, reading the Parent Handbook

(including program statement), Policy and Procedures Handbook and signing that they have read it prior to participating/volunteering/placement in the program.

- RCNS is responsible for the implementation, review and evaluation process of this policy.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Director is the designated person to supervise participating parents, volunteers and placement students.

The Director/teacher and teacher are responsible for the provision of effective orientation and mentoring of participating parents, volunteers and placement students under their supervision.

Staff, participating parents, volunteers and placement students are required to read the Parent Handbook and the Policy and Procedure Manual (which includes this policy) on an annual basis. They must acknowledge they have read the manual by signing and dating a letter stating this fact. (The letter is found on the last page of this manual.)

This policy aligns with the College of Early Childhood Educators Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice and O. Reg. 223/08 under the Early Childhood Educator's Act, 2007, Professional Misconduct.

## **WITHDRAWAL AND DISCHARGE POLICY**

### **WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURE:**

One month's (30 days) written notice must be given to the Registrar prior to withdrawal or one month's fee will be forfeited. No refunds will be made after April 1<sup>st</sup> or for holidays or absenteeism. (E.g. if you wish to withdraw your child on December 1st, written notice must be given no later than November 1st, or the December fee will be forfeited).

The membership fee is non-refundable in the case of a withdrawal from the Richmond Co-operative Nursery School Program.

### **DISCHARGE PROCEDURE:**

It should be noted that not all children are suited for group care. We will endeavour to do everything possible to help each child adapt and integrate into our program, using community resources which may be available to us. If, despite everyone's best efforts, the difficulties appear to be more than we can manage, the director may recommend to the executive that the child and the family be discharged.

Richmond Cooperative Nursery School will give parents a minimum of two (2) weeks notice that the child will be discharged. Some (but not limited to) possible reasons for ineligibility to remain in the program could be:

- The child is beyond the licensed age limits.
- The parent or guardian does not abide by the Policies and Procedures of the Richmond Cooperative Nursery School.
- The parent or guardian has demonstrated abusive, harassing and/or inappropriate behaviours towards any staff members or other parents.
- The parent or guardian has not paid the fees.
- In the opinion of the Director, the program does not or cannot meet the needs of the child. Steps listed below should be followed before any decision is reached.

In the case of a discharge of a child, the final decision will be made by the Executive. The decision will be presented to the parent or guardian in writing and may be delivered by regular mail or in person as is suitable to the situation. The letter will contain the reason(s) for the decision. The decision of the Executive is not subject to appeal. Richmond Cooperative Nursery School will not knowingly contravene any Human rights Legislation and/or Case Law. See Policy and Procedures Manual for the steps that will be followed as part of the process to determine if a child should be discharged from the program.

