

**CENTRAL EGLINTON CHILDREN'S CENTRE  
SPECIAL NEEDS/INCLUSION POLICY**

**Date Policy and Procedures Established: July 26, 2022**

**Date Policy and Procedures Updated: May 24, 2023, March 29, 2024**

**INTRODUCTION:**

CECC believes that each child in its care is an individual with unique qualities and abilities. We are committed to offering comprehensive programmes that are reflective of the varying needs of the children and forming partnerships with our families to ensure, to the best of our ability, that all the children of CECC are supported and that they have access to meaningful inclusive learning opportunities.

At CECC, all children are recognized and encouraged to participate, at their own pace, in all learning and social experiences. Our programmes celebrate diversity of all forms and place an emphasis on trusting relationships and creating a sense of belonging.

**ADMISSION TO PROGRAMME**

Parents/guardians will receive an enrollment package that includes the following:

- A copy of the Family Handbook outlining the general practices of CECC.
- An application package which parents/guardians must complete.
- A "Permission to Share Information" form which permits CECC educators and School educators to share information (if applicable)

If possible, before a child begins a programme at CECC, a meeting will be arranged, at the centre or the child's home, between the educators who will be with the child and their family. The educators will gather information that is important to the child's daily care and document it on a daily care plan.

If, at the time of the meeting, a parent/guardian informs the educators that their child has an identified "Special Need," the educators will gather any information that will assist the child as they enter CECC's programme. If the child is already involved with another agency, the educators will ask the parent/guardian to sign a consent form that allows sharing of information between CECC educators and the agency. An **Individualized Support Plan** will be co created with the family, the educators and any other professionals involved. If no support is in place, CECC may be able to request assistance from its affiliated support agency (The City of Toronto's Every Child Belongs Unit)

If, after meeting with the family, the educators determine, in consultation with CECC's Directors, that the Centre may not be the best option for the child, CECC will try to help the parents/guardians make alternative arrangements, by working with our community partners, Toronto Children's Services, and if the child is school age, with the school.

**Individualized Support Plans**

CECC, parents/guardians and any support agencies involved will collaborate to complete an **Individualized Support Plan for a child with Special Needs** or an **Individualized Support Plan for a child with Medical needs**, using the template provided by the Ministry of Education. This is a plan that

outlines the child's needs, potential accommodations and strategies to meet their needs, using both internal and external support. It will include specific goals and strategies that address the child's needs or stressors and subsequent behaviour, short and long-term goals, each person's responsibility, and any adaptations to the programme. It may also include a daily parent/educator communication plan.

### **Child Safety Plan**

CECC, parents/guardians and any support agencies involved will collaborate to complete a Safety Plan. This is a plan that outlines the targeted behaviour that could compromise the child's, the educators or the other children's safety. Steps/Strategies to reduce the risk of the targeted behaviour and any procedures the educators must follow when safety is at risk are outlined in the plan.

### **When the educators are concerned about a child who is already enrolled at CECC, the following steps will take place:**

#### **1. Documentation**

The purpose of documentation is to look for the underlying cause of stress behaviour and to decipher what the child is trying to communicate. At the onset of a child displaying distress, the educator will record the child's actions using an ABC (antecedent, behaviour, consequence) chart and/or a confidential journal. Included will be any precipitating events, potential stressors, possible needs to be met, and the strategies used to support the child. The educators will inform the Directors of their observations and the strategies being implemented to support the child.

The information will be kept in a secure location, to be viewed by room educators and the Directors. The record will be used for reference purposes only, to help create an Individualized Support Plan or a Safety Plan and to track the efficacy of the strategies in place.

The educators may also complete an "Incident Report Form" for parents/guardians to sign. The form will be kept in the child's file; parents/guardians may also request a copy. When incidents occur, parents/guardians will be informed via phone call and /or an incident report.

#### **2. Meetings**

The Directors will arrange a meeting with the educators and the parents/guardians to inform them of their observations and subsequent concerns. They will gather information that is pertinent to the situation (i.e., if parents/guardians have the same concerns, changes in the child's routine, medical issues etc.)

If concerns persist, a formal meeting will be held with the parent/guardians, the educators, and CECC's Directors. Further insight and information will be gathered about the child to assist with planning and decision making. The group will develop an Individualized Support Plan or a Safety Plan. A copy of the plan will be kept in the child's file.

The plan will be shared with the educators supporting the child, and a copy will be given to the parent/guardians. The team will continue to collaborate to assess any progress, revise any strategies and/or goals or to address further concerns. Information in the file will only be shared between CECC and the parents/guardians. It will not be shared with the school or outside agencies i.e. The City of Toronto-Every Child Belongs Unit, Bloorview, Surrey Place etc. or personnel without parental consent.

### **3. Outside Agencies/Specialized Services**

On occasion, CECC may involve outside agencies to consult, assess, diagnose, or treat any behavioural or developmental need. Identification of resources and requests for referrals may also be considered. This is done in partnership with parents/guardians and only with their explicit consent.

### **4. Communication and Compliance with Eglinton Public School and St. Monica's Catholic School**

If the child attends Eglinton Public School or St. Monica's Catholic School, CECC will comply with each School's Safety and Security Policies, i.e. Suspension. CECC educators may, with parental consent, meet with their school educator to discuss the child's needs, or may meet as a team with the principal, school educator, Directors.

### **5. Alternatives(Suspension/Withdrawal)**

As a last resort, and, after all avenues have been exhausted, it may be determined, after consultation with the parent/guardian and team, that CECC cannot effectively meet the needs of the child. In these exceptional circumstances, CECC will do its best to work with the parents/guardians to find suitable alternative childcare arrangements. The child may remain in the Centre for the four-week period of notice, when possible.

If a child is asked to leave the programme, CECC will inform the City of Toronto Child Care Consultant, and in the case of families in receipt of City of Toronto Subsidy, Children's Services Subsidy Division.

## **SUPPORTS PROVIDED**

**THE INTERNAL SUPPORT TEAM:** Internal support is defined as support from within CECC (Directors,R.ECE etc). They are responsible for:

- Formulating and Implementing an Individualized Support Plan which includes accommodations required , strategies to meet the child's needs, responsibilities, contact persons and time frames.
- Identifying whether the child or situation warrants internal or external support (if external support is not already involved.) If external support is required, the Director,with parental consent, will submit a referral to The City of Toronto-Every Child Belongs Unit.
- Reviewing the established Individualized Support Plan on a regular basis, e.g., monthly, or bi-monthly as negotiated by its participants and making adaptations when necessary.
- When staffing permits and funding has been provided, an additional CECC educator may be placed in a room to enhance ratios.

**EXTERNAL SUPPORT TEAM** Occasionally children enrolled in CECC may require the assistance of a professional from outside agencies. External support is defined as support from an outside agency, special needs practitioner/consultant etc. These special needs practitioners/consultants will be supervised by CECC educators and never left alone with the children unless written consent has been given by a child's parent/guardian, the agency and CECC.

- Parents/Guardians will be required to sign a consent form permitting CECC to contact any outside agency such as; The City of Toronto-Every Child Belongs Unit.
- Once consent has been given, the Directors will submit a referral to The City of Toronto-Every Child Belongs Unit. A consultant affiliated with this unit will contact the Directors, as well as the family, to arrange a meeting with the team and the external agency/special needs practitioner for the purpose of establishing a plan based upon the needs of the child within CECC/school and home. Short- and long-term goals, responsibilities and timeframes will be included.
- A Consultant/representative from an agency or a special needs practitioner may visit the child at the childcare, and/or at school. They will observe the child and, in consultation with the parents/guardian and CECC, will develop and share their observations as well as their suggested strategies.
- Communication and documentation will continue between the CECC team and the external agency/special needs practitioner etc. A review of the Individualized Plan or Safety Plan will take place on a regular basis, e.g., monthly/ bi-monthly (as needed) and may be initiated by any team member.
- Documentation and other information provided by any external agency will be kept in the child's file for two years. It will be shredded after the two-year period.

The following are **some** examples of topics that may be discussed at a team/agency meeting:

- Identification of need, Home/CECC/school – if needs are different in each location.(i.e., physical, developmental, emotional, behavioural)
- Identification of resources, personnel or equipment required.
- How to access the resources, funding etc.
- Potential Visits to other agencies/schools/facilities
- Requests for referrals or further assessments through specialists, agencies etc.
- Short and long term goals
- Developing an Individualized plan or a Safety plan

## **EMPLOYEE SUPPORT**

CECC educators provide the day-to-day care of the children. In recognition of their role, CECC supports the educators through its policies and procedures in several important ways. These include:

- Short term enhanced child/educator ratios
- Time to research and develop resources.
- Time to meet with professional consultants and specialists.
- Time to visit specialized service agencies.
- Time and funds to attend workshops and courses.
- Assistance in developing Individualized support plans or safety plans.
- Time to participate in debriefing sessions
- Time to connect and collaborate with families