



Southside Mothers'

SSMDO Parent Handbook - The Program

The information found in the section of the Parent Handbook is a brief overview of our programming policies. For more information, please speak to your child's educator, the Program Director, the Executive Director or ask to see the Operations Policy & Procedure Manual.

Curriculum

Based upon developmentally appropriate practices, as outlined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, educators will develop, organize, implement and evaluate curriculum with social and emotional health as the foundation; physical, intellectual, creative, cultural and developmental needs are explored in relationship to social and emotional competencies. This is completed in a child-centered, play-based environment by:

Being Intentional, Purposeful and Thoughtful

- **Observation:**
Using a variety of observation tools including photographs, quotations, and samples of children's work, educators will record children's knowledge, perspectives, curiosities and developing theories.
- **Reflection:**
Summarize observations and make hypothesis about children's interests, curiosities, and intentions.
- **Program Planning:**
Provocations are created to support children's development, to extend their curiosities and interests, and build relationships with each other, families, educators, and/or community. The schedule will include flexible routines and transitions that minimize stress and build critical thinking skills. Activities will incorporate a balance of group size (individual, small, or large), active/quiet play, and indoor/outdoor play. The environment will be used as the third educator, which means it is created to intentionally support and extend children's learning.
- **Documentation:**
Children's learning will be honoured through documentation panels and display of children's work in the classroom. Learning stories are written by educators, and are a reflection of children's impact, contributions and relationship to the community.

Supporting Families to Access Community Resources

Through observation & documentation, educators will continuously reflect on patterns of individual children's development in relation to typical developmental outcomes.

Should educators identify developmental concerns, or should a parent share concerns regarding their child's development, educators and/or the Executive Director and parents will discuss a plan of action. SSMDO will provide appropriate information to families about community services and social agencies.

SSMDO welcomes community resources and professional collaboration in the classroom.

Fieldtrips

Fieldtrips provide children with the opportunity to develop a sense of community and to make real life connections to their interests. Fieldtrips will vary each year and will differ for each program day, as they will be reflective of the interest areas for each group. Examples of fieldtrips may include but are not limited to: a trip to the grocery store, TELUS World of Science, Edmonton Public Library, a hair salon, or a veterinary clinic.

Written consent must be obtained for all offsite activities, including Neighborhood Walks. Verbal consent will NOT be accepted. All activities that are outside the 6-block Neighborhood Walk consent will require two weeks notice for parents/guardians.

When an offsite fieldtrip is undertaken, parent volunteers will be required to ensure appropriate supervision. Siblings of children whose parent is volunteering on a field trip may not attend the field trip.

Use of Technology

SSMDO restricts the use of TV, video, DVD, and/or film within the program. The purpose of such material would be to expand upon children's current interests and as a basis for discussion and/or an activity. Educators will watch material with the children and alternate activities will be made available to children during use of TV, video, DVD, and/or film within the program.

SSMDO does not permit the use of computers by children. From time to time, educator may use a laptop or iPad during an activity as a tool for extending the activity.

Educators will ensure the content is developmentally appropriate, unbiased and culturally sensitive, and does not contain violent or sexually explicit material and will be viewed previously prior to being shared in this form.

Daily Schedule

Establishing a routine is important for young children and helps develop feelings of security and order. Each classroom will create a routine that is flexible and adaptable to the changing needs of children while providing the basic structure of the day.

A daily routine schedule is posted in each classroom and at a minimum will include time for:

- Free play
- Outdoor or gross motor play
- Snack
- Lunch

- Hygiene practices
- Structured activities (i.e. circle time)
- Rest

Except for necessary routines or where safety is a concern, children are not forced to participate.

Rest/Nap Period

All children requiring an opportunity for sleep or an afternoon rest period (regardless of age) will be given the opportunity to do so in the specified rest room, to the maximum room capacity with the appropriate supervision.

All children who nap/rest must bring their own blanket and crib sheet. A soft sleep toy, and/or soother may be sent as needed by the child.

Educators are not permitted to provide beverages (i.e. bottles or sippy cups) to children on their mats while they are resting or napping.

Outdoor Play

Outdoor play is scheduled at least once per day per classroom. We feel it is important for the children to enjoy the fresh air and sunshine, get some exercise and develop gross motor skills. Outdoor play is also a great way to socialize, practice turn taking and engage in imaginative play. We go out in all kinds of weather!

Decisions about where to play outdoors are thought through critically. For example:

We use -20C (including wind chill) as a baseline for outdoor temperature, and then we critically think about: which children we have, children's weather appropriate gear, whether it's sunny or cloudy (-20 with sun feels different than -20 and cloudy). Once we have considered all of those variables, we'll look at whether it makes more sense to go play on the open field (typically more exposure to the wind chill) for a short period of time, or head to the ravine (quite sheltered from the wind - often several degrees warmer than temperature on open field) for a longer period of time. While outside we continue to assess the weather conditions and plan experiences accordingly: on colder days, children's outdoor time will be highly physical, this movement keeps their bodies warm; on warmer days, children and educators do more observation/drawing/journaling and may stay in one spot for longer. In addition to the weather, we also consider other environmental factors such as icy sidewalks, there are days that it might be relatively warm (-10) and may be too dangerous to walk on sidewalks, in those cases we either stay indoors or find the least icy spot on school property.

The same degree of consideration is taken when heading outdoors in the rain, or high heat.