



## Program Statement 2016-17

Alpha's Preschool Academy and Child Care Centre follows the guidelines set out in the Ministry of Education's "*How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years (2014)*" in order to create a quality early years program for children 12 months to 5 years old.

At Alpha's Preschool Academy and Child Care Centre, we believe that all children are competent, capable, curious and rich in potential. We strive to help each child reach their potential in a warm, inclusive environment where every child is valued for their individual strengths. We are truly committed to each and every child. We have created an exceptional program to develop the whole child through an academic play-based curriculum. We provide child-initiated and teacher-supported learning experiences to foster children's natural curiosity, exploration, play and inquiry. We follow the children's individual interests and plan activities to maximize learning and children's well-being.

Our programming is organized around four foundations that children naturally seek for themselves to learn and grow: **Belonging, Well-Being, Engagement and Expression.**

### Well-Being

Before a child can be engaged, have a sense of belonging or express themselves, they need to feel safe and develop a sense of self, health and well-being. Our goal at Alpha's Preschool Academy is to nurture children's healthy development and support their growing sense of self by providing a clean, safe environment, nutritious meals, physical activity and an opportunity for quiet/rest time.

### Health and Safety

We create positive learning environments that promote the health, safety and well-being of children. As a licensed centre, we meet and strive to exceed all Ministry of Education and Peel Health and Safety Regulations and Guidelines to provide a clean and safe environment for the children. We do this by

conducting health and safety checks of all indoor and outdoor play spaces on a daily basis. We clean and sanitize toys and equipment on a daily basis and ensure proper hand-washing routines are followed. We perform health checks when children arrive and have policies in place to ensure that sick children stay home. Our teachers are all trained in First Aid to ensure children receive proper care. We arrange our classrooms to maximize safety and ensure that all toys and equipment are in good working condition.

### **Nutrition**

We offer nutritious meals and snacks that follow Canada's Food Guide to healthy eating. Our meals incorporate all the food groups and our menus are reviewed by a registered dietician. We post our menus on our website for parents to view. We can accommodate any special dietary requirements for all the children in our program. We offer flexibility and provide substitutions for picky eaters to ensure that they have had enough to eat. Meal times are a great opportunity to develop self-help skills and we encourage children to be independent based on their capabilities. We create a positive family-style eating environment and encourage conversation.

### **Physical Activity**

We provide opportunities for outdoor play twice per day. We have created a safe and stimulating outdoor play space which offers various challenges to develop physical skills such as climbing, jumping, running and pedaling a tricycle. We provide opportunities for children to explore the outdoors with their minds, bodies and their senses. In the event that we cannot use the outdoor space, the teachers develop a variety of physical activities indoors to encourage physical well being. Inside the classroom, we encourage children to be physically active through various activities such as music and movement.

### **Rest and Quiet Time**

Children are given an opportunity for rest or quiet time in the afternoon each day. Children who do not want to sleep are given quiet table activities such as reading books, writing and puzzles.

### **Engagement**

Alpha's Preschool Academy offers a program that achieves academic success by observing children and following children's interests to build academic skills such as reading, writing, math, French, and science through play-based activities, exploration and inquiry.

### **Exploration and Inquiry**

We believe that children learn through meaningful play experiences. Play is a child's work. While playing, a child is constructing knowledge and learning about the world around them. At Alpha's Preschool Academy, we have created a learning environment that encourages children to freely explore and choose which materials they would like to use independently in each planned interest area such as blocks, reading, writing, dramatic, science, sensory and art areas. While exploring in the interest areas, children will develop physical, cognitive, language and social skills. This is the ideal learning environment as children are encouraged to explore, inquire and make choices and decisions whenever possible. Teachers work with each child individually to build on their strengths and support their development.

### **Literacy, Math and Science Exploration**

We build the academic skills that children will need to be successful in school. We place a large emphasis on building literacy skills through programs such as the highly acclaimed Jolly Phonics literacy program. Learning to read and write are vital skills for children. The Jolly Phonics program has been proven to encourage early reading and writing skills in a fun, playful and creative way. The Jolly Phonics program focuses on learning letter sounds and formation through songs, then blending those sounds to read words.

We are proactive and progressive when it comes to learning. We focus on skills in the early years that we know many children struggle with once they reach the school system. At Alpha's Preschool Academy, we focus on developing math and science fundamental skills such as problem solving, matching, sorting, counting and spatial awareness by observing children, following their interests and extending their learning.

### **Creative Expression**

Our learning environment is designed to encourage children to explore using their natural curiosity about the world around them as well as express themselves creatively through music, dance and visual art. They independently use various mediums to express themselves in creative ways. Children participate in an age-appropriate award-winning Kindermusik program once per week.

### **Languages**

Our students come from various backgrounds and speak many different languages. Many parents recognize the importance of introducing children to Canada's second official language, French. Our

preschool offers French language activities every day starting at the age of 2.5 years. Children love to sing French songs to learn the alphabet, numbers, colours and basic words to communicate in French.

### **Positive Learning Environment**

In order for children to thrive, they need to be in a stimulating environment that meets their daily needs. Our bright and cheerful classrooms offer a wealth of opportunities to explore and spark the child's curiosity and inquiry. Equipment, toys and books are selected to help develop skills including problem solving, literacy, independence and social skills. Our indoor and outdoor spaces are designed to promote active exploration and learning opportunities. Our stimulating learning environment is focused on supporting the child's learning and development.

Teachers at Alpha's Preschool Academy create positive learning environments that meet the unique needs of the children in the classroom. Teachers regularly make adjustments to the classrooms to respond to children's needs and create an inviting space for everyone. Schedules are flexible to allow more time for activities that children enjoy and minimize transition times as much as possible. Alpha's Preschool Academy strives to create an inclusive environment for children of various abilities and cultures. Our classrooms reflect our diverse community within Mississauga.

### **Expression**

It is only when a child feels loved and secure that they will develop the confidence to express themselves, explore and learn. Children are encouraged to interact and communicate in a positive way. We encourage the development of self-regulation in each child.

### **Positive Relationships among Children and Teachers**

Our teachers are hand-picked for their loving, gentle nature and wealth of experience working with children. Our teachers are co-learners and play partners for the children, which helps to extend and expand on their learning experience. We use positive language, consistency, give choices and become "tuned-in" to children's needs and emotions. Our teachers respond to both verbal and non-verbal communication. When it comes to the preschool and daycare environment, we know that qualified ECE teachers play an important role in supporting children's learning and providing the child with a nurturing, caring and positive role-model. Our teachers build trust with children by consistently meeting

their needs on a daily basis. We model appropriate ways to resolve conflicts, encourage problem solving strategies and develop responsibility while developing social skills.

### **Partnerships with Parents**

We know that parents know best when it comes to their children. We develop partnerships with parents to ensure that we meet the individual needs of each child. Communication with parents is very important to us and we communicate with parents daily, weekly and monthly. We offer daily verbal reports, weekly photo sharing and classroom updates and monthly newsletters. We also utilize social media and encourage parents to follow us on Facebook and Twitter as well as our blog posts on our website. Parents are welcome to visit the facility at any time of the day and we encourage participation and suggestions to improve our program. Our teachers work with families as a team. We foster relationships based on trust - between parents, teachers and children - working together as a team.

### **Positive Self-Regulation**

At Alpha's Preschool Academy, we encourage children to develop self-regulation skills. They learn how to remain calm and return to a state of calm in stressful situations. This allows them to control their emotions, pay attention and ignore distractions. Our teachers coach children on how to handle stress and support them in expressing their emotions.

## **Belonging**

Children demonstrate a sense of belonging when they feel included and safe in the program. We aim to develop partnerships between children, parents, teachers and the community to support children.

### **Community Partners**

We believe that it takes a community to raise a child and we form partnerships with various community-based organizations to support our families and children. We partner with organizations in our local community like the local library as well as Erin Oak, Community Living and Peel Inclusion Resource Services (PIERS). We are members of the Raising the Bar Program in Peel and work with the Region of Peel, Child Development Resource Connection Peel (CDRCP) and many other community-based programs. We connect parents to resources in the community to meet the needs of each child. We partner with colleges and universities to give students and volunteers the opportunity to experience working with children under our supervision.

## **Supporting Staff Learning**

Alpha's Preschool Academy is committed to hiring and training teachers to reach their full potential by providing continuous learning opportunities. Our teachers regularly attend training sessions to expand on their knowledge of child development and learn new strategies to teach children. Our ECE teachers are registered members of the College of Early Childhood Educators as well as other professional associations related to the child care field.

## **Documentation**

Alpha's Preschool Academy uses pedagogical documentation as a way for our teachers to learn about the children. Teachers make daily observations of children and use this information to plan the program for each child individually as well as for the group. Teachers use the documentation to reflect on what the children are learning as well as how to extend that learning further. This documentation is used to communicate children's learning to the parents. Each child's documentation includes photos, videos and notes made by the teachers.

Alpha's Preschool Academy and Child Care Centre's Program Statement is reviewed by all new staff, students and volunteers at the start of their placement/employment . The Program Statement is communicated to all parents when they start at the centre and when any changes have been made. The Program Statement is reviewed annually by all staff or when any changes have been made.

Approved by Alpha's Preschool Academy and Child Care Centre on: July 20, 2016

Updated: November 21, 2016

**Please sign and return to Alpha's Preschool Academy Office. Thank you.**

**I/We the undersigned acknowledge that we have read the Program Statement of Alpha's Preschool Academy.**

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Print Name

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Signature

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Office: Date Received \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Signature \_\_\_\_\_