

Rowan Tree Children's School



PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

We are delighted to have you join the Rowan Tree Children's School community as part of the Preschool class!

1545 Monaghan Rd. Peterborough, Ontario (in The Mount Community Centre)
www.rowantreeschool.ca | info@rowantreeschool.ca

Updated August 2023

LETTER FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL:

Greetings Rowan Tree Children's School Families:

It is with great excitement that I write this letter of introduction as the newly appointed Head of School at Rowan Tree Children's School. I am honoured to step into this leadership role and continue to be part of this beautiful and vibrant school community.

For me, this work is rooted back in the rural village next to the Rideau River—on the outskirts of Ottawa—where I spent my childhood playing in the spring floods, catching frogs, and building fairy houses. Time spent at summer camp and on canoe trips was formative, instilling in me a love of the outdoors and a deep appreciation for wild places. My wish is for all children to have the opportunity to learn in an environment that prioritizes and nurtures connection with nature, and lays the foundation for the environmental stewardship of the future.

I attended Concordia University where I earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Film Production and went on to obtain a Bachelor of Education from Queen's University in Outdoor and Experiential Education. This year will mark my 13th year working in education, where I have served as an outdoor educator, classroom teacher, French teacher, Lead Kindergarten teacher, Curriculum Co-ordinator, and in an administrative capacity as a member of the Leadership Team.

I wholeheartedly believe in the holistic approach to education at Rowan Tree Children's School, and it is my goal to ensure that our children continue to receive a quality education in an environment that is safe and nurturing every day. I am committed to working in partnership with our families, staff, board of directors, and community to support our children's learning and development.

In closing, I look forward to the upcoming school year together learning and growing with our amazing students, dedicated staff, supportive parents and community.

Sincerely,



Sabrina Hale, Head of School
sabrinahale@rowantreeschool.ca



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WELCOME TO ROWAN TREE CHILDREN'S SCHOOL:

The Rowan Tree Children's School Faculty, Staff and Board of Directors extend a warm welcome to all new and returning families. We respect the trust that you have shown us by placing your child in our school and look forward to working together for the benefit of your child.

Founded in 2004, Rowan Tree Children's School currently offers a Preschool program for ages 2.5 to 4 years, plus a Nature Kindergarten class (4-5 yrs) and a Grade School program (grades 1-7). Our school programs run Monday through Friday, from 8:50 am to 3:20 pm.

In 2011, our Preschool became a provincially licensed day care centre and in 2017 the Rowan Tree Children's School became an incorporated non-profit school, run by a Board of Directors.

Our Nature Kindergarten opened in the fall of 2019. Followed by the addition of our Grade School program in the fall of 2020. Rowan Tree Children's School is listed as a Private School with the Ontario Ministry of Education.

Our community-based school has flourished with the participation of new families who offer diverse ideas, skills and experiences. Parents are an integral part of the fabric of the school and each family's participation is welcome and essential to the continued strength of our school community. Here are a few of the possibilities for involvement:

Enhance your child's classroom experience: Parents are welcome to work with the teacher to share a celebration or festival and/or share knowledge and experience in support of the class curriculum in many different areas.

Strengthen the school's governance structure: Parents and community members are welcome to join Committees of the Board such as Marketing, Fundraising and Community Development, Finance and Space, among others.

Join an intentional and collaborative community: Parents are welcome to all social events such as festivals, class plays, assemblies, class parent meetings and school parent engagement events.

Parents often reflect upon how their involvement provides a holistic contribution to their family's experience at the school. Getting involved is a great way to get to know other parents, teachers, staff and the wider community. Most importantly, our children sense the meaningfulness that comes with their parents' contribution to the school. It cultivates a sense of belonging in them that includes not just themselves, but their whole family.



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MISSION:

Our mission at Rowan Tree Children’s School is to instil a sense of wonder and curiosity in our students, leading to a deepening interest in the world around them, reverence for nature, respect for each other, and finding purpose in their actions.

Our teachers lead with integrity, respecting each student and inspiring them, igniting a fire and guiding them on their path towards a love of learning and meaning making.

Our teachers aspire to bring their students into a Waldorf-inspired learning environment, steeped in the Waldorf and Forest School principles, dedicated to the task of educating the whole child, the head, heart and hands.

Our curriculum and principles allow the students to begin with inquiry-based outdoor experiences that awaken students to their own unique ways of learning and growing towards their educational goals.

We strive to build confidence, resilience, sense of self-worth, trust in community, lasting connections and love for the earth through our Waldorf curriculum and Forest School principles.

Our values are interconnected, interwoven, creating a ‘riverbed’ that supports education.

Our students discover a path towards freedom, the freedom to shape their own destiny.

INCLUSIVITY, DIVERSITY, EQUITY, ACCESSIBILITY:

Our Rowan Tree Children’s School community embraces and invites students and families of all cultures, faiths, genders, abilities, and backgrounds. We celebrate each student’s unique individuality. We strive to create equal opportunities for all learners through thoughtful differentiation and collaborative programming to support diverse learning needs. ALL are welcome. We are committed to anti-discrimination and addressing bias in our teaching and learning. We aim to be accountable to this statement and we are working on accountability processes. We strive to affirm, celebrate, and uphold the beauty and the good found in all children of the world.

Rowan Tree Children’s School is committed to the following principle from the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America:

"Waldorf schools foster social renewal by cultivating human capacities in service to the individual and society. Waldorf schools foster development so that, throughout life, individuals are motivated to serve humanity with



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strength of will, depth of feeling, clarity of thought, and the ability to work with others. The educational program is designed to strengthen these fundamental human capacities in our students. Schools are committed to enacting Waldorf education in a place-based manner as a vehicle to foster social renewal for the future. Thus it is essential that schools actively engage in diversity, equity, and inclusion, emphasizing truth and reconciliation and/or racial justice, in school policies and practices."

MESSAGE FROM JESSICA LINDEMAN, EARLY CHILDHOOD LEAD TEACHER

Hello dear preschool families,

As the lead early childhood educator I would like to officially welcome all preschool families to Rowan Tree Children's School! Our doors open wide on Sept. 5th! We are hard at work planning for the fall and developing a dynamic and beautiful preschool environment and curriculum that will surround the children in warmth and magic and invite them into their 'new home away from home'.

I look forward to meeting many of you at our parent orientation event on Sept. 1st. Don't miss it. You will have a chance to meet some of our teachers and other families. You would have already received the invitation for this event from the school. Check your inbox if you haven't already done so.

I have worked as an early childhood educator for over 15 years and received my Waldorf Early Childhood training from the Rudolf Steiner Institute in Thornhill, Ontario. I also have my BA from Trent University in Anthropology and Indigenous Studies and diploma from Fleming College in graphic design. I also attended art school in Portland Maine. I am also a musician and hope to play my cello this fall with the Peterborough Symphony Orchestra. I live in Peterborough with my husband Jacob Rodenburg, executive director of Camp Kawartha and with our daughter and her dog Nova. Dogs are the best!

My Waldorf roots reach back to my childhood where I attended both the Green Meadow Waldorf School and the Hawthorne Valley Waldorf School in upstate New York, graduating there at the end of grade 8. Both of my parents were passionate Waldorf teachers.

The Waldorf early childhood pedagogy remains close to my heart as I strive to build an inviting preschool environment that protects the forces of childhood, surrounds children in beauty, songs, stories, imaginative play, friendships, nature walks, hands on creative exploration while instilling curiosity and wonder and a love of learning. We steep the children in the peacefulness and wholeness of the natural world and provide them with gross motor challenges that instil a love of movement and adventure and develop their will forces!



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I am happy to introduce our other early childhood educators including Dera Chan and Elise Gamble who have received their diplomas from Fleming College and are seasoned teachers in our preschool program. Both are registered early childhood educators. The children will love their new teachers!

*We all look forward to welcoming you on opening day!
See you at our meet and greet orientation on Sept. 1st.*

Kind regards,

*Jessica Lindeman
Early Childhood Lead
Rowan Tree Children's School
705-930-0908*

SECTION 1: PRACTICAL INFORMATION

We strive to provide a safe, warm, and nurturing environment to foster your child's development, working together with children, parents and teachers. This handbook is a summary of information about our school and unique aspects of our Waldorf Preschool program. Should you have questions or concerns regarding your child and their day-to-day life at school, please speak to your child's lead teacher.

Meet Your Preschool Team:

A very warm welcome to the Preschool Program at Rowan Tree Children's School from the Preschool Faculty of 2023-2024:

- **Jessica Lindeman (705) 930-0809, jessicalindeman@rowantreeschool.ca**
Early Childhood Lead Teacher
- **Dera Chan**
Registered Early Childhood Educator, Monday and Tuesday
- **Elise Gamble**
Registered Early Childhood Educator, Tuesday to Friday

*Please phone/text the Early Childhood Lead Teacher if your child will be late or absent. *



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During school hours, if you are unable to reach the Preschool faculty by phone, please text or call: **Sabrina Hale (705) 768-9967**

The Administration of Rowan Tree Children's School also welcomes you warmly:

- **Sabrina Hale**, sabrinahale@rowantreeschool.ca
Head of School
- **Elaine Kempt**, info@rowantreeschool.ca
Administration and Finance Co-ordinator

Administration is available from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm Monday to Friday. Our administrators look forward to keeping in touch with parents and community members.

For general, financial, enrolment and administration enquiries: info@rowantreeschool.ca

About Our Preschool Program:

Rowan Tree preschool is a licensed program under the Child Care and Early Years Act and with the Ministry of Education.

Rowan Tree Preschool is a gentle start into the world of peers for children ages Two and a half to four years old. Children in this age group are often still very much in their own world, absorbing their environment through independent play. Our role as teachers is to create a learning setting in which children can explore the world through play. As the year progresses and the children naturally become more sociable, they will grapple with sharing, communication, and problem solving. We support the children through attentive observation and gentle intervention, making their interactions with their environment and their peers healthy and meaningful.

In line with Waldorf philosophy, the Rowan Tree Preschool room remains very simple, free from excessive toys and visual/auditory distraction. We strive to create a home-away-from-home atmosphere, complete with daily rhythms and chores, shared snack time, circle, and story. Children imitate the adults engaged in happy and purposeful work around them. Joyful music and verse mirrors the rhythms of their heart, breathing, and the cycles of the year. Circle time provides children with specific exercises in gross and fine motor development. Our stories, told through puppetry, assist children in forming strong inner images, and model healthy language development. Both circle and story time, and our daily activities are strongly tied to the seasons and the rhythm of the natural world.

Program Hours:

The Preschool program begins **Tuesday, September 5th**. The school day runs from **9 am to 3 pm**.



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Drop-off / Pick-up Information:

Parking:

Parking for all Rowan Tree Children's School families is located to the west of The Mount Community Centre buildings. To access the parking lot, follow the driveway all the way to the end (beside the community garden). Once you have parked, please walk your child(ren) to the Preschool classroom. Your child(ren)'s teacher(s) will be waiting to greet you indoors.

Please DO NOT park in front of the building or along the driveway. These are fire routes and need to be accessible at all times.

Drop-off:

The drop-off for the program is in the Preschool room. Please phone / text your child's Lead Teacher if your child will be late or absent.

- **Jessica Lindeman (705) 930-0809**

Pick-up:

Pick-up time is at 3:00 pm. We will have your child's backpack and belongings outside with us at pick-up time. A brief check-in with parents / guardians at this time allows teachers to convey any important information about your child. If a longer conversation is required, your child's teacher will coordinate a time to connect with you by phone outside of program hours.

Some Important Notes about Drop-off and Pick-up:

- Please be sure to **connect with one of the teachers at both drop-off and pick-up** ensuring the teachers are aware of each child's arrival and departure.
- If your child is going to be late or absent from any of our programs, please contact their Lead Teacher as soon as possible.
- Please strive to be punctual at pick-up time. Teachers and Administrative Staff have meetings and duties after school and are usually unavailable to supervise children after this time. If you are unavoidably delayed, please call the Lead Teacher. Children who remain at school past 3:10 PM will be included in After Care.
- To ensure the safety of all students, please supervise your child once they are dismissed from their teacher's care. Playground rules continue to apply after school. Parents will receive seasonal playground rules via email.
- During early childhood, our children live in the present moment and are unable to recount the day's events intellectually. If you ask at pick-up, "What did you do today in school?" The response is typically a dreamy gaze and/or the statement, "Nothing." Most likely, you'll learn about your child's day by overhearing a fragment of a song or a line of verse, or the name of a new friend. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's experiences, or are simply curious, please do not hesitate to ask a



teacher. Teachers will share photos and information about your child's activities through the Seesaw Journal so that you have a little window into their school days.

How We Work with Separation Anxiety:

Children are naturally attached to their parents and families. Experiencing a new environment with new people caring for them, children will experience separation anxiety, tears or even have tantrums. At this time, our patience and loving care will help to ease the transition.

During drop-off, this anxiety can be heightened. One of the most important aspects that will support your child through this transition is your confidence in the teacher, the environment, and the school. It is important for your child that you can pass the child to the teacher in trust, and with the knowledge that **you will be contacted if the child is not coping well**. The tears will eventually subside over a period and the child will realign themselves with their new surroundings. As teachers, we practice gentleness using songs and surround them with loving warmth to reassure them until the unrest passes.

For parents, separation anxiety looks and feels traumatic. We assure you when you are confident, your child will be confident and that this time of transition will ease gradually as your child builds resilience and adaptability. The care we provide to the children is grounded in love and respect for what your child is experiencing.

Daily Schedule:

8:00 - 9:00 AM	Before School Care (additional fees apply)
9:00 AM	Drop-off in Preschool classroom
10:30 AM	Morning Snack
12:00 PM	Lunch
2:00 PM	Afternoon Snack
3:00 PM	Pick-up in outdoor Preschool hub
3:00 - 4:30 PM	After School Care (additional fees apply)

Before / After Care:

If you require before and/or after care this school year, please contact our Administration and Finance Co-ordinator, Elaine Kempt, at info@rowantreeschool.ca to register. Families can sign-up on a month by month basis. Invoices are sent mid-month.



Before School Care (8-9 am)	After School Care (3:00-4:30 pm)	Before AND After School Care
Monday to Friday - \$10 / day	Monday to Friday - \$10 / day	Monday to Friday - \$15 / day

Food

All food: snacks and lunches are provided by the school each day. Healthy snacks are prepared and served in the morning and afternoon. Children are provided with a wholesome lunch each day. These lunches include well-balanced, nutritional, homemade, and local foods. We take pride in maintaining and being a waste conscience and environmentally friendly school.

In addition, goals at Rowan Tree Children’s School are to:

- introduce new and fun foods to your child’s repertoire
- promote healthy nutrition habits and change the way children eat and understand food
- reduce the stress of preparing lunch each day
- save on washing lunch containers
- support Ontario growers, farmers, merchants, and businesses

No food from home is required. We ask that generally no food be brought into Rowan Tree, unless special arrangements have been made with staff. Special treats (cookies, cupcakes, etc. are fine for birthdays and special occasions (list of ingredients must be included).

Please pack a water bottle (with name label) for your child.

Guidelines for Gear, Clothing and Dress:

It is crucial that the children are dressed for any weather. We will be outside everyday and only extreme weather stops us, such as high winds, extreme cold and thunderstorms. The children need to have waterproof jackets and pants, rubber boots, closed shoes, long pants and long sleeves (in warmer weather this provides protection from mosquitoes). **Hats must be worn outdoors.**

When colder weather comes, the children need snowsuits and mittens. Wool hats, mittens and socks are the best for warmth and allow for moisture transference in a way that synthetics do not. Undershirts and wool sweaters or vests can be layered and removed if necessary – dressing in layers helps accommodate for fluctuating temperatures. **We**



highly recommend at least 3 layers on the top and two layers on the bottom once the temperatures begin to drop in the fall and until the warmth has penetrated the ground in the spring (young children spend a great deal of time on the ground). We have extra clothes at school if the weather changes dramatically throughout the day.

Dressing your child in clothing without cartoons, slogans or writing during school time, frees them of the influences of external media during their day. This allows your child, as well as other children, the opportunity to develop their own imagination using creative ideas and thoughts as the source of inspiration for their play. Thank you for your support.

What to Bring:

All clothing needs to be suitable for free movement during play and circle games.

- **Hat every day**, suitable to the season. We ask that your child always has a hat on outside. We usually have extra hats; however, most children prefer their own.
- **Extra clothing** is kept in a spare bag in the classroom – include two pairs of socks, one pair of underwear, one pair of pants, one long sleeve shirt, one sweater.
- **Fair weather splash pants** – we ask that the children always wear splash pants to protect their clothing and the carpets inside. We try to keep the dew, mud, and sand in the yard! Please be sure to have a very thin pair of splash pants for fair, warm weather. In very warm weather we make exceptions.
- **Rain suit** – a one-piece rain suit is the best, but raincoats and pants are great too – see clothing resources below.
- **Indoor shoes** – the children will need clean shoes or slippers that fit securely with good support. We request that shoes have no lights or noises, which cause distraction.
- **Boots** – rubber boots unlined in the warm weather and lined for when the weather turns colder, and it is still wet.
- **Winter Boots** – check to see that the boot is rated for -30 or -40 C. Be sure there is a removable liner and check them regularly to see that they are dry – boots that do not have a removable liner are impossible to dry before it's time to go outside again!
- **Snow suit** – one-piece snow suits or two-piece with overall style pants to ensure that no snow goes in between
- **Mittens** – rather than gloves in cold weather. Fingers stay warmer when together. Always send an extra pair of mittens.
- **Long underwear** – wool is the very best. For the sensitive child, silk wool blend is ideal. The children spend a lot of time on the ground and on the floor at school. Keeping them warm and comfortable is important.
- **Scarves** – in colder weather, a scarf, neck warmer or balaclava is necessary for everyone
- **Sun protection** – the number one protection from the sun is clothing (hats and long sleeves). Sunblock is our second choice. Please apply sunblock before school if you feel it is needed in the morning.



Please label all personal items. It will help us make sure your child's clothing makes it home again. Some families have used Lovable Labels: www.lovablelabels.ca

The following are companies that carry good quality, long lasting outdoor clothing, outerwear and boots for children:

- Mountain Equipment Co-op for seasonal outdoor gear
- Sail – for seasonal outdoor gear
- Warmth and Weather – for organic woollens and wool/silk as well as ethical rainwear (also sold through school fundraisers)
- Puddlegear for rain wear

What Not to Bring

We request your help in choosing clothing for school that does not display media characters and slogans. Commercial nature of mass media characters can inhibit the development of a healthy imagination and play. We strive to create an environment where the child can express and play out of his or her own experience.

- **Children's toys and personal items** should be kept at home. Items from home are very distracting and create challenges with sharing. We have plenty of materials in the classrooms. If they do make it to school, the teacher will store the items until going home time.
- We further request that children do not wear **nail polish, hair dyes or 'tattoos'**. These are a form of adornment suited to an older stage of life and distract the child and their friends from finding their own imaginative and creative play. It becomes the focus of their time together.

Health, Safety and Development:

Fostering your child's health and well-being is important to us. Rowan Tree School's Illness and Attendance Guidelines (below) outline expectations around illness. Please keep in mind that the lively Preschool classroom is not a soothing environment for a child who is not well. Please keep your child home when they are exhibiting common cold symptoms, even if they appear full of energy, to prevent illness from spreading through the class (more details below).

Dietary restrictions should be communicated to us so that necessary adjustments can be made.

Please notify the school and your teacher of **ALL ALLERGIES**.

All classroom volunteers (including parents) must have a current Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) criminal record check (including a vulnerable sector check) and provide a copy to keep on file in the school office.



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Illness and Attendance Guidelines:

*** Please phone / text your child's Lead Teacher if your child will be late or absent. ***

Early Childhood Lead Teacher:

Jessica Lindeman

(705) 930-0809

jessicalindeman@rowantreeschool.ca

Medicine prescribed by a physician in the original container may be administered if accompanied by completed Medication Information and Parent Consent forms, which are available by contacting the Administration and Finance Co-ordinator at info@rowantreeschool.ca.

Rowan Tree Children's School strives to provide a healthy environment for children, staff and parents. To avoid many common illnesses, teach children HOW and WHEN to wash their hands properly: Wash regularly before eating and after using the toilet.

When a child becomes ill during the day, parents will be contacted to make arrangements for the child to be taken home if the symptoms:

- prevent the child from participating comfortably in program activities
- result in greater needs for care than the staff can provide without compromising the care of other children
- may be contagious

Keep your child home if any of the following are present to avoid spreading illness to other children or staff:

- Unusual behaviour: including extreme lethargy or irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, or other signs of possible illness. Your child should be kept home until a healthcare professional indicates that the child can attend the program.
- Diarrhea: An episode of diarrhea within the past 24 hours. Children should stay home until the child is symptom-free for 48 hours.
- Vomiting: An episode of vomiting during the previous 24 hours. Children should stay home until the child is symptom-free for 48 hours.
- Fever: Oral/tympanic temperature equal to or greater than 38C (100.4F). Auxiliary temperature equal to or greater than 38C (100.4F). Temperature above 102F is likely a sign of influenza or infection. Children should stay home until the child is fever-free without medication for 24 hours.
- Rash: A rash appearing with fever or behaviour change. Exclusion from school should continue until the child is evaluated by a healthcare professional. (See Impetigo)
- Colds and Coughs: We request that a child be kept home for the first 24 to 48 hours of a cold if it is accompanied by a fever, extreme lethargy or irritability or a runny nose that is persistent and/or of a clear colour. This kind of discharge makes the child more contagious. (A persistent runny nose with a green/yellow colour may



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indicate an infection.) In the case of a severe or 'chesty' sounding cough exclusion could be required until a healthcare professional has been consulted. A healthcare professional's note may be required to return to the program. Teachers should be informed when cold or cough-like symptoms are due to allergies, asthma or other non contagious conditions.

- Sore Throat: May be accompanied by head cold, runny nose or ear infection. Majority are due to minor viral illnesses. One third of cases are diagnosed as 'strep' which is highly contagious and requires seeing a physician ASAP.
- Impetigo: Rough, cracked reddened area, commonly on face or legs. Itching lesions (pinhead to bean sized); fluid filled blisters form and change to honey coloured crusts; fluid from blisters spreads a highly contagious infection.
- Pinworms: Itchy and irritated anal area. Persistent scratching; difficulty sleeping. Wash hands often and see a physician. Notify school if there is any possibility of pinworms as it is highly contagious. Children must be treated before returning to school to avoid an outbreak.
- Lice: Child complains of itchy head; persistent scratching. Check for adult lice or nits (eggs). Notify school if there is any suspicion of head lice as it is highly contagious. Children should be treated before returning to school to avoid an outbreak.
- Pink Eye: Itchy, red, weepy or watery eye(s) with or without mucous. Highly contagious. Children must be treated before returning to school to avoid an outbreak.

COVID-19 Policies:

You can find the comprehensive version of Rowan Tree Children's School's COVID-19 policy on our website on the [Parent Portal](#) page. For the most recent updates to Public Health Policies and Procedures please refer to the [Peterborough Public Health Guidelines](#).

Masks:

Masks are no longer required by the current Public Health regulations, please let your Lead Teacher know if you wish your child to be masked. We will support each person's individual preference.

A Special Note about Media:

Many families at Rowan Tree Children's School have made a commitment to reducing or eliminating screens in their homes and there is much evidence to support this action, especially for young children. The strong influence of television and other electronic devices in a child's life is often observed in the classroom. A child may speak in the tone of a certain character or machine, where speech can be reduced to the sound of robots or mechanical noises and movements. A child may seem "stuck" in their play, unable to play anything but a superhero, transformer, or other character. Other children seem to lose their ability to engage in imaginative play. There may be an expectation on the child's part to be entertained rather than to co-participate in learning. Subtle changes may be noted in a



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child who cannot sit still during a story, making it a distressing time instead of a time of wonderment and delight.

We recommend that students are not exposed to any electronic media or computers during the school week or any day preceding school. In *Simplicity Parenting*, Kim John Payne states that, "although 'media saturation' characterizes our era, it need not flood our children's childhood." He also offers three compelling reasons to eliminate media exposure in children under 7 years: A) Negative long-lasting effects strongly outweigh any benefits to young children ; B) Its absence greatly supports the goals of simplification; C) Based on experience, dispensing with television is not as hard as most families fear. Our experience is that whatever one child is exposed to, affects the rest of the class. We make this recommendation out of respect for all families at Rowan Tree Children's School and for the protection of the children.

For additional information about screens and young children, please follow this link from the Canadian Paediatric Society:

<https://www.cps.ca/en/documents/position/screen-time-and-young-children>

News broadcasts heard from either the radio or television go deep within the child and can affect them on an emotional and psychological level. Please help us protect our youngest children from the stress associated with upsetting world and local events.

Rowan Tree Children's School Communication Guidelines:

Rowan Tree Children's School has created many ways to learn about the school community. Here are some of the ways we will communicate and stay connected during the school year:

Seesaw

- Class teachers will post photos of student work and updates on class activities to the class Seesaw Journal on a regular basis. The frequency of posts will be determined by the class teacher. Posts may also include pedagogical information about students' classroom experiences (i.e. "why we are doing what we are doing").
- Class teachers may also message parents using the Seesaw messaging feature. Seesaw automatically sends email notifications to parents when new items are added.

Email

- Information regarding class activities and events may be sent by email as well as through the Seesaw messaging feature (i.e. you may receive the same information twice!).
- If you have a question or concern pertaining to your child, please email the class teacher to set up a mutually convenient time to meet in person or



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connect by phone. Indicate the issue to be discussed as some lead time provides an opportunity for the teacher to give prior thought to the matter. This meeting can include the Head of School at the request of the teacher or the parent.

- For enrolment and questions regarding fees please contact the Administration and Finance Co-ordinator at info@rowantreeschool.ca

Phone

- Class teachers provide their personal phone numbers so that they can be reached during the school day in case of an emergency or if information needs to be relayed regarding a change in the student's routine.
- During school hours, if you are unable to reach the class Lead Teacher by phone, please call: **Sabrina Hale (705) 768-9967**
- When a supply teacher is present, the Lead Teacher will let parents know the contact number for the day.

Parent - Teacher Conferences

- Formal parent-teacher conferences are conducted twice per year (early November and mid-February) to exchange information about the progress (social, academic, learning skills) of each student and to set mutually agreed upon goals.

School Newsletters

- Information and news pertaining to the whole school community will be included in the School Newsletter. Newsletters will be sent at least once per season.
- Newsletters will be delivered to your inbox

Rowan Tree Children's School's Website and Social Media

- www.rowantreeschool.ca
- See also the Facebook, and Instagram pages for updated school events.

The Rowan Tree Children's School Faculty, Staff and Board of Directors are committed to ongoing improvements in the area of communication as our school continues to grow. We are committed to working in partnership with parents in order to build bridges between home and school. All pedagogical, administrative and financial questions are treated with respect and confidentiality.

Parent-Teacher Communication in Preschool:

At the beginning of the school year your child's teacher will inform you of when and where they can be reached. In addition to the class meetings held throughout the year, teachers provide written communications via e-mail and Seesaw to inform parents of what is happening in the classroom.

Any concerns that require longer conversations should be addressed in pre-arranged meetings. Long conversations are not possible when the teachers are with children.



Communication Guidelines:

Healthy communication between parents, teachers and community members is important to all of us and vital to our school's success. We have created these guidelines in the interest of fostering healthy relationships among all members of our school community.

- Honest, respectful, and timely communication is the key to our success. We will contact you immediately if there are any concerns about the safety, development, or well being of your child. In turn, we encourage you to speak to us about your concerns or questions. If you have concerns that involve another child or family please speak first to your child's Lead Teacher. Please inform us as soon as possible of any significant changes in home life or routine so that we can be sensitive to your child's needs. *Note: At pick-up and drop-off times, teachers are supervising children and are unavailable at that time for in-depth discussions. You may use email or a written note to schedule a time to speak with your child's teacher by phone or in person.*
- If it is necessary to leave a message for a teacher or arrange changes regarding your child's routine (e.g., going home with someone else) please write it down and give the note to a teacher in the morning. Although we try to remember everything, it is always best to have it in writing. If your child is going to be late or absent, please contact the Lead Teacher as early as possible.
- Please read class letters that are sent by email.
- Parent Evenings provide a valuable opportunity for teachers and parents to learn about Waldorf Early Childhood Education and child development, and to share our experiences, strengthening the loving circle of parents and teachers around each child. Thus, there is both a social and a pedagogical aspect to our parent evenings.
- Teachers will respond to emails within 24 – 48 hours. When emails are sent after 6 p.m. or on weekends, teachers will respond within 24 hours – 48 hours of the next working day.

Parent Questions and Concerns:

We value healthy communication in all aspects of the school's life that model a civil society and learning community for our students. It is natural for concerns to arise within any school system, and we ask that such concerns be communicated directly in a productive and constructive manner.

Pedagogical Questions

Please speak to your child's teacher directly on matters concerning the curriculum, discipline, and social relationships.

For further advice, please contact the Head of School (Sabrina Hale), who will pursue concerns in collaboration with the parent and teacher. If an additional step is desired, the Administrative Committee (Head of School--Sabrina Hale;



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Administration and Finance Co-ordinator--Elaine Kempt; Board Chair--Mike Hendren) will strive for a satisfactory resolution.

Administrative Questions

If you have questions concerning school policies and/or procedures, please contact the Administration and Finance Co-ordinator. Parents seeking further resolution with any concern may submit a letter to the Administrative Committee.

Parent Meetings:

Parent meetings are held a couple of times per year. These meetings take place in person, and your teacher will advise you with details via email communication. They are for adults only. Nursing infants are welcome. It is important that at least one parent per family is represented at these meetings so that you are fully informed about class activities and developments. Parent meetings will include opportunities for you to learn together about your children, a chance to participate in activities that will deepen your understanding of the young child's development and an opportunity to build your class community, strengthen relationships with each other and the teacher. Please speak with your child's teacher if you have any topics that you would like us to explore at parent meetings. We strive together with you to make these meetings meaningful.

Building a Relationship between Home and School:

We aim to create a safe and healthy environment for your child to develop and grow. We have planned a healthy rhythm for the young child, and through years of experience, we know how important your support at home is for your child to be successful at school. Parents can support their child's Preschool experience in the following ways:

- Spending more time in nature as much as possible and reducing exposure to TV, video viewing and computer activities. The best way to see how technology affects your child is to observe them: when they have been exposed to it and when they are not exposed to it. How does it change the way they engage with the world around them?
- A well-rested child will be content in the rhythm of the day. You will find that your well-rested child wakes up on their own in the morning, ready and willing to meet the day.
- Encouraging the family to sit together at mealtimes can support your child to sit with their friends at school and share a meal together.
- Involve your children in simple daily household chores.
- It is beneficial to consider the rhythm between activity and rest during the day and be sure to include both aspects in your child's day. Bring rhythm into the home life - active time, quiet or focused time, active time, quiet or focused time and so on throughout the day. You will find the day goes much smoother for you as well.
- Being on time for drop-off and pick-up
 - **Drop-off:** Children often arrive and enter play together very early on in the morning; it can be difficult for a child who comes late to enter the play once it



has started. Arriving on time allows your child to engage and to experience the healthy benefits of the rhythm and activities in the Preschool.

- **Pick-up:** Some children may have difficulties with leaving at the end of a wonderful day at school. Remind them they will be back soon and now it is time to go. Remember it is a wonderful sign that they love to be at school.
- Please feel free to contact your child's teacher as soon as a concern or question arises. Each teacher will provide a time when they are usually available.
- It is beneficial to attend all parent meetings – this is one way to strengthen your partnership with your child's teacher and your community.
- Familiarize yourself with Waldorf education through reading, participating in learning opportunities at the school and beyond. Keep an eye on the newsletter to learn about upcoming learning opportunities and see the recommended reading section and links in the handbook.
 - [WECAN | Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America](#)

Inclement Weather Days / School Closures

Rowan Tree Children's School will be closed only when travelling conditions are extremely hazardous or in the event of unsafe conditions at the school. The decision to close the school could be made on short notice in the event of a sudden change in the weather or in the case of an unpredicted extreme situation that impacts the health and safety of students, faculty and staff. For example: loss of heat during the winter months, power outages, water stoppages or extreme weather. If the school is required to close, each family will receive an email.

Typically, Rowan Tree Children's School will remain open on inclement weather days, but an Inclement Weather Day will be declared when driving conditions prevent some students and teachers from safely coming to school. A communication will be sent early that morning. We urge parents to exercise caution when making the decision about whether to walk or drive to school. Please be advised that some staff members will not be able to travel and we will switch to alternative programming. Classes may be combined to ensure adequate supervision with appropriate health and safety precautions. If weather conditions become worse during the course of the day, parents will be called to pick up their child(ren) early. The safety of families and staff is our primary concern.

Tuition Payments:

Our Administration and Finance Co-ordinator Office, Elaine Kempt, will send you an invoice at the beginning of each month. Tuition fee payments are equalized over the 10 months of the school year.



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Tuition payments are due on the **first day of every month** and are payable by e-transfer to info@rowantreeschool.ca

If you are paying by e-transfer, please send a separate e-transfer for each child you have registered in Rowan Tree Children's School programs or identify in the message section the amount you are paying for each child, for example:

John Smith - Nature Kindergarten, October \$876.69
Sarah Smith -Grade 1, October \$876.69

Any questions regarding invoicing and fee payments can be addressed to Elaine Kempt at info@rowantreeschool.ca

Attendance Policy:

Fees are payable for every day your child is registered at Rowan Tree Children's School. If absent due to illness, fees will still be charged.

Should a child need to be withdrawn from the program mid-school year due to unforeseen circumstances, Rowan Tree Children's School requires at least one month's notice.

We do not issue refunds in the case of a participant's dismissal from the program.

***Please note: in the case of a school lockdown due to COVID-19, families will be charged 50% of regular tuition fees and online learning options will be offered by the class teachers. We are not able to offer tuition refunds.

Additional Documents:

Please complete and return Form: Alternate Pick-up Authorization and provide a copy of your child's immunization record. These documents can be emailed to info@rowantreeschool.ca (subject line: child's first and last name, program name) or submitted in person on your child's first day of Preschool.

How to join our parent communication forum (Seesaw):

This year we are using Seesaw to share and communicate with families! We will post to Seesaw to share your child's learning and experiences in Preschool. We'll also use Seesaw to send you messages and reminders.

Seesaw is private; you'll only see posts we've created about your child. Content can only be accessed on the password protected site and cannot be downloaded for further



distribution. If there is content you would love a copy of, that only involves your child, don't hesitate to contact us so that we can share it with you!

Please Sign Up Now

1. Click on this link: <https://app.seesaw.me/s/494-567-780>
2. Choose your child from the list
3. Create your account
4. Once approved you can then see content from your child

After you sign up, download the free Seesaw Family app and sign in. You can also access Seesaw from a computer at <https://app.seesaw.me>.

Thank you for supporting your child's learning journey!
Jessica, Dera and Elise

P.S. If you used Seesaw last year or have more than one child using Seesaw, follow the link above, then click the 'Sign in' tab at the top of the screen. You do not need to create a new account.

SECTION 2: WHAT MAKES OUR PROGRAM "WALDORF"?

Essential aspects of Waldorf early childhood in our Preschool:

Love and Warmth:

"Children who live in an atmosphere of love and warmth, and who have around them truly good examples to imitate, are living in their proper element."

~ Rudolf Steiner, The Education of the Child

Our teachers strive to provide an environment of love and emotional warmth, which in turn creates the basis for the child's healthy development. We also feel that the children are served if this love and warmth exist in the relationships between the teachers and the parents, between the early childhood teachers and the rest of the school, and in the surrounding community.

The Classroom Environment and Nourishing the Senses:

The Waldorf classroom environment is a warm and supportive place where the child feels secure in the feeling that they are loved. Physically it is simple, beautiful, and harmonious to



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the eye so as not to over stimulate the child and to encourage their creativity and imagination. Learning in the early years is profoundly connected to the child's physical and sensory experience, therefore the physical surroundings of our classrooms, indoors and out, have been intentionally created to provide a nourishing environment in which to play and learn.

Creative and Artistic Experiences and Rhythm:

The teacher orchestrates and choreographs the rhythms of each day, each week, and each season in such a way that the children can breathe freely in a living structure. Young children respond strongly to rhythm and are tremendously supported when they have rhythm every day. Therefore, the daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly rhythms are so strong in Waldorf early childhood classrooms.

In addition, the teacher offers the children opportunities for artistic experiences in singing and music, in movement and gesture through rhythmic games, and in creative speech and language through verses, poetry, and stories. The children may model with beeswax, draw, and do watercolour painting. Puppet shows put on by the teacher are an important element in the life of the Preschool.

Imitation and the Young Child:

The teacher is aware that imitation is one of the child's main learning tools at this age and the teacher takes care to be worthy of imitation. Each action, if done with quiet and loving reverence, will be imitated by the child so that the qualities of wonder and reverence will grow within them, feeding those qualities that are so important – reverence towards all living things, respect, consideration, and tolerance towards our fellow human beings.

Free Imaginative Play, Inside and Out:

Little children learn through play. The Preschool teachers create an environment that supports the possibility of healthy play. This environment includes the physical surroundings, furnishings, and play materials; and the social environment of activities and social interactions.

Daily outdoor play, in all sorts of weather, allows the children to develop their senses of balance, movement, touch and well being. It gives them the opportunity to come into relationship with themselves, their peers, and the world around them. Our time outside is as good for the body as it is for the soul.

Protection of the Forces of Childhood:

The lively, awake yet dreamy way of the little child's consciousness is encouraged to thrive in the early childhood classrooms. This means that the teacher works to avoid a lot of verbal instruction. Instead, their gestures and actions provide a model for the child to imitate. Each day is filled with familiar daily rhythms and activities which provide a context where the need for verbal instruction is greatly reduced and simple, imagery in stories, songs, and games provides experiences that the children can internalize but that do not require intellectual or critical reflection or explanation.



Gratitude Reverence and Wonder:

Throughout each day, in our classrooms, a sense of gratitude, reverence and wonder is fostered with the children, and this is the basis for what will become a capacity for deep love and commitment in later life, for dedication and loyalty, for true admiration of others, and for placing oneself wholeheartedly in the service of the world.

SECTION 3: PRESCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Program Statement:

This Program Statement is provided to current and prospective parents of children in the Rowan Tree Children's School Preschool Class. It describes the goals and approaches used in our Childcare program.

Rowan Tree Preschool program aims to promote the health, safety, nutrition, and well-being of children. We value children in this age group as being competent, capable, curious, and rich in potential. The following program statement is consistent with the Ministry of Education's policy statement on programming and pedagogy issued under subsection 55 (3) of the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014. Child Care Early Years Act. It is based upon the document: How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's pedagogy for the Early Years which is to be used to guide licensed early years programs: *How Does Learning Happen?* <https://files.ontario.ca/edu-how-does-learning-happen-en-2021-03-23.pdf>

It is Rowan Tree Children's School's policy to review the program statement at least annually.

To promote the health, safety, nutrition, and well-being of the children.

- Food is thoughtfully planned and prepared daily on sight by designated staff.
- Our menus consider information from the Peterborough Public Health Unit and Ministry Education nutritional guidelines.
- We strive to use whole foods that are locally purchased and organic when possible.
- We offer a vegetarian menu avoiding excess sugars, artificial flavours, colours, and additives.
- Every effort is made to provide wholesome foods, prepared with attention to safe food handling and storage.
- Care is taken to serve food in an aesthetically pleasing manner in a home-like setting which fosters a sense of community.
- Foods from various cultures are enjoyed.



- We ensure that all our staff have up-to-date First Aid training and Food Safe certification from Peterborough Public Health Unit.
- We have policies and procedures related to health and safety. We perform monthly fire drills and conduct daily, seasonal, and annual yard safety checks. We document all these checks.

To support positive and responsive interactions between parents and teachers.

- Ongoing open communication with parents is essential for us to work as a team in the best interests of their children.
- Teachers strive to communicate verbally daily with parents and keep records of daily observations and provide monthly newsletters to parents.
- Two formal Parent-Teacher conferences are offered throughout the year: one in the fall and one in February. Parents are encouraged to speak directly to teachers with any questions, concerns and/or suggestions.

To support positive and open communications among staff members.

- An open, respectful, and honest relationship between Morning Garden teachers is fostered. Teachers speak daily about children and programming.
- A trusting relationship between staff and administration is fostered. We are proactive rather than reactive and this opportunity for frank and open discussion enables us to support children and families.
- Weekly pedagogical and business meetings provide opportunities to discuss issues related to the children and topics related to the principles of “How Does Learning Happen?” as well as the Waldorf philosophy.

To support the personal and professional development of the teachers.

- Teachers complete an annual assessment of their personal and professional development needs for the Human Resources Committee.
- Teachers in their first and second year of teaching undergo a comprehensive evaluation process, which includes a written self-evaluation, peer review, parent feedback, and in-class observation. All this information is documented by the Human Resources Committee and shared with the individual teacher.
- The school strives to support each staff member’s personal and professional development within its budget.

To protect the imaginative state of childhood and to foster the children’s exploration, play, and inquiry.

- Free and child initiated creative play with plenty of time during the program for outdoor and indoor creative play.
- Teachers’ observations of children’s play help to inform and develop the emerging curriculum.
- Learning through imitation, exploration, discovery, and observation.



- Transitions through songs and rhymes to facilitate smooth movement from one activity to another.
- The oral tradition of storytelling, reciting verses, and rhymes, and singing songs is integral to Waldorf early childhood programs. Through the oral telling of a story, the children are free to create inner pictures of the contents of the story. Creating mental pictures is a precursor to, not only reading, but also to abstract and symbolic thinking. Oral stories help to develop speech and vocabulary in children as they are introduced to words and phrases that they may not hear in everyday language. Story and circle times assist in developing memories and imagination and in lengthening children's attention span.
- Science and mathematics are rooted in a phenomenological approach. Children's learning is experiential; we recognize that the young child learns best by being a participatory observer. Outdoor time in nature helps children to develop capacities for observation and understanding processes as well as helping them to see the interconnectedness of life. By encouraging children to explore and to develop their senses a heightened experience of the world occurs. Our approach to teaching also cultivates an attitude of awe and reverence.

To enhance the cognitive and physical development of each child.

- We plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported and are inclusive of children with individualized plans.
- Free, unstructured movement and gross motor play, daily outdoor and indoor time: Every purposeful creative movement aid in wiring a child's nervous system. Movement helps to strengthen the proprioceptive and vestibular systems. The proprioceptive system helps with posture, motor control, sense of personal boundaries, sense of self, as well as literacy development. The vestibular system helps with muscle tone, balance, coordination, gross motor skills, auditory processing, and visual/spatial perception. The Preschool program provides many opportunities for movement in both fine and gross motor activities.
- Gestures with songs and rhymes
- Free, child-initiated creative play
- Useful work/tasks to imitate and help with learning
- A rich oral language environment full of stories, rhymes, fingerplays, and songs
- Focused fine motor activities: seasonal crafts, painting, drawing, baking, cooking, beeswax modelling, play dough. The fine motor activities help to develop children's hand/eye coordination, concentration skills, and dexterity.
- Sensory experiences indoors and outdoors
- Children of this age group are showing interest in self-care and independence. We encourage this interest by allowing them to undress/dress on their own (we help with buttons and zippers as needed) and to develop independence in the bathroom.
- The children take great pride in doing things for themselves and in helping with daily and weekly tasks in our classroom and yard. With repetition, practice, and encouragement, children will develop the capacities to care for themselves and



their environment. The daily task and rhythm are important parts of the children's day; their responsibilities grow as they do, moving from guided activities towards mastering these skills independently.

To hone and develop the emerging social skills of each child.

- Communicating clearly and politely with others.
- Using kind and inclusive language.
- Experiencing and accepting boundaries.
- Taking turns, delayed gratification, and patience.
- Developing and expressing awareness and concern for others.
- Feeling a part of the group and experiencing belonging to a community.
- Teachers help to support self-regulation as well as each of the above social skills.
- Teachers model appropriate behaviour with each other and the children.

To provide a beautiful, calming environment for the young child.

- Daily routine and predictable rhythm with outdoor and indoor play time, active play, times for quiet and rest.
- Gentle and calm approach with the children.
- Simple, open-ended toys of natural materials.
- Minimal amount of clutter and "stuff" in the room.
- Frequent use of songs and music; human voice, lap harp, glockenspiel, bells, and other instruments.
- Children absorbed in active, productive play
- Breathing in and out of their day: time for active play and time for rest and quiet.

To foster the development of the child's will.

- Child-initiated play.
- Encouraging self-motivation (avoiding praise and criticism).
- Acceptance and recognition of each child.
- Taking joy in work and play.
- Predictable routine.
- Repetition of songs, rhymes, and stories.

To involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families, and staff.

- We are an integral part of our community and we are committed to collaborating with community agencies, other schools, and professionals to support the children, their families, and staff.
- Some of these agencies include City of Peterborough, Peterborough Public Health, Fleming College, Trent University, and Home and Community Care Support Services.
- We submit enrolment information to Peterborough Public Health on an annual basis. Health Inspectors perform annual inspections of our kitchens and cleaning



procedures. We follow Public Health guidelines to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of children, their families, and staff.

- We offer placements for Fleming College ECE students.
- Some of our students receive support from the Home and Community Care Support Services (Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy Consultation).

Prohibitive Practices:

Our program is licensed under the Child Care and Early Years Act and complies with regulations outlining Prohibitive Practices as follows.

Ontario Regulation 137/15:

With respect to a child receiving child care in our program, we **do not** permit the following:

- (a) corporal punishment of the child;
- (b) physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
- (c) locking the exits of the child care centre or home child care premises for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures;
- (d) 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;
- (e) depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
- (f) inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

Intent:

This provision forbids physical punishment and other harmful disciplinary practices to protect the emotional and physical well-being of children. It sets out clear direction regarding prohibitive practices to support the overall well-being of children. These practices are never permitted in a child care centre.

Young children benefit from an affirming approach that encourages positive interactions with other children and with adults, rather than from a negative or punitive approach to managing unwanted behaviour.

Compliance Indicators:



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1. None of the following practices are observed in the program:

- a. corporal punishment (which may include but is not limited to, hitting, spanking, slapping, pinching);
- b. physical restraint of children, including but not limited to confining to high chair, car seat etc. for discipline or in lieu of supervision unless for the purposes described in the regulation (to prevent self-harm, harm to others and only until risk of harm/injury is no longer imminent);
- c. locking the exits of the child care centre for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency;
- d. use of harsh, degrading, measures or threats or derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine their self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
- e. depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
- f. inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

Teachers verbally confirm that these practices are not allowed and do not occur in the program.



Program Policies and Procedures:

Admissions:

Admission Process:

1. Request an application
 - Email info@rowantreeschool.ca to request a copy of the *All School Handbook* and schedule a school tour.
2. School Tour
 - The Administration and Finance Co-ordinator will set-up a school tour with the Supervisor of the Preschool program.
3. Submit the registration form and fees
 - Upon acceptance by the Faculty, the Administration and Finance Co-ordinator will provide you with a registration form.
 - Payment of Administrative Fee (Returning students: \$50, New Students \$100) and tuition deposit (\$300 - will be applied to September tuition).

Discharge Policy:

It is the policy of the Rowan Tree Children's School to make every effort to serve all the children and their families. We work collaboratively with parents, staff and various community support systems to meet the individual needs of each child.

It is our policy to assist children and parents to make any behaviour changes that are felt by staff, administration and/or outside agencies to be necessary for the health, needs and safety of the child and the other children in the school.

Continual attempts will be made to find appropriate solutions to resolve the problems. Support and guidance through this process will be provided by the Head of School, Supervisor of the Preschool program, and EC faculty. Parents are actively involved throughout the process of making decisions.

If a child is experiencing problems that may pose a direct threat to the safety of the other children or staff, the parent/guardian may be required to withdraw the child from the program and make other childcare arrangements.

The following procedure will be followed when a child's behaviour is an issue:

1. The initial interview will be an informal meeting between the parent(s) and teacher. At this meeting, the parent(s) will be informed of the child's social behaviour(s).
2. Support of a medical practitioner or the Therapeutic Support may be requested by the Teacher (Parental consent required).

In most cases, the above steps will be sufficient. If not, the following course of action will be followed:



1. Written notice for a conference to take place with members of the Early Childhood Faculty, Supervisor and/or Teacher. An action plan will be developed so that all parties are consistent with the strategies that need to be put in place. The type of supports needed will be determined at this time.
2. The parent may be asked to provide 'on call' support or removal of the child from the classroom when safety is questioned. An action plan will be developed to plan for the child to return to the program.
3. Should the child's needs be deemed by the EC faculty or the parent to be beyond the expertise of the staff, recommendation will be made in writing for the parent(s) to withdraw their child and to enroll the child in an alternate facility where his/her needs may be addressed.
4. Whenever possible, the parent/guardian will be given sufficient notice to make alternate arrangements. However, if a child's individual needs or behaviour pose a serious threat to the safety of other children and staff, the parent may be required to immediately withdraw the child from the school at the school's request.

Wait List Policy:

Rowan Tree Children's School has a cap of 12 children per day, Monday through Friday. These twelve spots per day are filled on a first come first served basis. Once the children's registration form and copy of the immunization form are received (plus administration fee) by the Administration & Finance Co-ordinator then the child is officially enrolled, and the space is filled.

Because space is limited, we have implemented this wait list policy to ensure that fair and equitable enrolment can occur at Rowan Tree Children's School. The policy states that once all our spots have been filled, a wait list will be implemented, and families will be placed on this list on a first come first served basis. The last name of each family, child's name and DOB, contact phone number, date of request to be put on the wait list will all be documented on Rowan Tree's wait list. When a spot opens, the first family on the list will be notified and offered the available spot. The wait list information will be kept confidential. Families listed can call at any time and ask to be taken off the list.

The wait list remains open until Feb. of each school year. Then we notify the families that have not been able to register in the program for the current year, to proceed to register for the upcoming fall when most of the spaces become available again.

A new wait list is implemented each year (starting in Sept.) once the program has become full.

The wait list can be made available in a manner that maintains the privacy and confidentiality of the children listed on it, but that allows the position of a child on the list to be ascertained by the affected families who make the request. Only the following columns



of information will be visible: the dates of request for enrollment, the dates enrolled, and the children's given names.

Enrolment Fees for Preschool (age 2.5 – 4):

\$48 / day

Holidays Observed & School Closures:

We offer a 39-week schedule. Dates can be seen on the Rowan Tree Children's school calendars at this link:

<https://calendar.google.com/calendar/u/1?cid=Y19qcGV2b2ZxNzBuam5lZ25vMWtxZjkzcFzc0Bncm9lcC5jYWxlbmRhci5nb29nbGUuY29t>

- Our program does not operate on the following days: Labour Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas/Winter Break (2 weeks), Family Day, March Break (1 week), Good Friday, Easter Monday, and Victoria Day.

Administration of Medication:

Rowan Tree Children's School administers prescription and non-prescription drugs, in the original container to children when requested by the parent in writing. Prescribed medications will be received and administered to children always ensuring that the medication is in the original container, clearly labelled with the child's name, name of drug, instructions for storage and administration of the drug. Supervisor will dispense medications and will complete and sign the Medication Administration Log noting any observations each time the medication is administered.

Volunteer and Student Supervision Policy:

Every child who is in attendance in the Rowan Tree Preschool Program is supervised by a teacher always, and

- No child will be supervised by a person under eighteen years of age.
- Direct unsupervised access (i.e. when an adult is alone with a child) is not permitted for people who are not employees of the centre.
- Placement students are not counted in the staffing ratios of the centre.
- Volunteers are not counted in staffing ratios of the centre. Volunteers and students will meet the following Child Care and Early Years Act requirements;
- Behaviour management policies and procedures will be reviewed with and signed off by volunteers and students who will be providing care or guidance at the centre before they begin and at least annually afterwards;
- The individual plan(s) for a child with anaphylaxis and the emergency procedures will be reviewed with and signed off by volunteers and students who will be



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providing care or guidance at the centre before they begin and at least annually afterwards;

- The supervision policy for volunteers and students will be reviewed with volunteers and students who will be providing care or guidance at the centre before they begin and at least annually afterwards;
- Criminal reference checks are required for all volunteers having direct contact with children in the centre.
- An Offense Declaration form will be filled out annually, a year after the date on the vulnerable sector check. A new vulnerable sector check is submitted every five years.
- Twice a year a staff monitoring template sheet will be filled out, ensuring that all staff behaviour is appropriate and in compliance with the Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA)

The operator will be responsible for the implementation, annual review, and evaluation of this supervision policy.

Supervisor Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations:

Supervisor or designated staff:

1. Provides consistent supervision, orientation and mentorship to students or volunteers throughout the placement.
2. Ensures the following will be discussed/reviewed and implemented with students/volunteers:
 - An orientation.
 - Review of all the policies and procedures in the preschool binder.
 - Student/volunteer will review the policy and attachments and sign off on the forms annually.
 - Review individual plans for children with anaphylaxis and the emergency procedures before commencement of placement.
 - Criminal reference checks are required and collected for all volunteers having direct contact with children. This criminal reference check policy does not apply to students placed in childcare programs by an educational institution. Note: Criminal reference checks are required and collected by community colleges and universities prior to students beginning a placement in childcare.
 - Discusses roles and responsibilities of the childcare and obtain program expectations from volunteers and students.
 - Ensures that the policy (Child Care Supervision for Volunteers and Students) is reviewed annually with new employees before they begin their employment and annually afterwards.

Playground and Outdoor Policy:

Staff will ensure the safety of the children always by following strict adherence to supervision for the duration of outdoor play.



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During outdoor play staff will be sure to have:

1. First Aid Kit
2. Children's Files
3. Playground Checklist
4. Cell phone
5. EpiPen (if applicable)

Children will be required to wear sun hats on sunny days and appropriate winter layers will be strictly adhered to during the winter months, including snow pants, coat, hat, mittens and winter boots with a sturdy rubber tread to prevent slipping and falling.

Minor Injuries:

Bumps, grazes, and bruises will be handled by staff and reported to the parents when they pick up their child. Accidents or illnesses that require medical attention will be reported to the parents immediately with a phone call.

Anaphylaxis Policy:

Rowan Tree has a policy in place to address concerns around severe allergies. This policy can be found in our [All School Parent Handbook](#), which is available in the classroom.

When parents share information regarding confirmed or potential allergies, the supervisor will follow up on all the components of this policy which includes data, postings, and Epi-pen staff training. Any potential harmful food items will be eliminated from the menu plan and classroom and strict adherence to policy will be followed.

Fire Drill:

We implement a fire drill once a month, to ensure the safety of the children. Children are guided through the procedure to be taken in case of a fire. Once the whistle is blown, all children line up immediately at the designated door. A teacher leads the way, and the children evacuate the building in single file with a second teacher at the back of line with an attendance log. Staff lead the children outside and to the west parking lot, just beyond the west door. If needed children are taken to our evacuation shelter next store at St. Joseph's on the Mount (only for real fire emergency).

Emergency Management Policy:

Staff will follow the emergency response procedures by following these three phases:

1. Immediate Emergency Response
2. Next Steps during an Emergency
3. Recovery



Staff will ensure that children are kept safe, are accounted for and are supervised always during an emergency.

For situations that require evacuation of the classroom, the meeting place to gather immediately will be: The parking lot behind our building, immediately west of our back door at 1545 Monaghan Rd.

If it is deemed 'unsafe to return' to the classroom, the evacuation site to proceed to is located at: Mount St. Joseph's -1565 Monaghan Rd. which is just north of our classroom.

****Note:** all directions given by emergency services personnel will be followed under all circumstances, including directions to evacuate to locations different than those listed above.

For any emergency situations involving a child with an individualized plan in place, the procedures in the child's individualized plan will be followed.

If any emergency situations happen that are not described in our policy binder, the supervisor will provide direction to staff for the immediate response and next steps. Staff will follow the direction given.

If any emergency situations result in a serious occurrence, the serious occurrence policy and procedures (in RED BINDER) will also be followed and a report will be submitted to the program advisor within 24 hours.

All emergency situations will be documented in detail by staff in the daily written record.

Parent Issues and Concerns Policy and Procedures:

The purpose of this policy is to provide a transparent process for parents/guardians, the child care licensee and staff to use when parents/guardians bring forward issues/concerns.

Definitions

Licensee: The individual or agency licensed by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of each child care centre it operates.

Staff: Individual employed by the licensee (Supervisor, Early Childhood Lead Teacher, Registered Early Childhood Educators, Lead Teachers, Assistant Teachers, Subject Teachers, and Administration).

Policy:

General



Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our program and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing with our program. As supported by our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, childcare providers, and staff, and foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children. Our staff are available to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction.

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by all staff members and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties and as quickly as possible.

Issues/concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally, or in writing upon request. The level of detail provided to the parent/guardian will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved. An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within three (3) business days. The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

Investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial, and respectful to parties involved.

Confidentiality

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially, and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff, students, and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g., to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society).

Conduct

Our agency maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication, and role-modelling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated from any party.

If at any point a parent/guardian, and/or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused, or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the supervisor and/or licensee.

Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a child

Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, is required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.



If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact the [local Children’s Aid Society \(CAS\)](#) directly.

Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to CAS as per the “Duty to Report” requirement under the *Child and Family Services Act*.

For more information, visit <https://www.ontario.ca/page/childrens-aid-societies#section-2>

Procedures

Nature of Issue or Concern:	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Provider, Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
<p>Program-Related</p> <p>E.g., schedule, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, menus.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One of the teachers directly or - The Supervisor, Early Childhood Lead Teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised; or - Arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within two business days. <p>Document the issues/concerns in detail. Documentation should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the date and time the issue/concern was received; - the name of the person who received the issue/concern; - the name of the person reporting the issue/concern; - the details of the issue/concern; and - any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.
<p>General, Agency- or Operations-Related</p> <p>E.g., fees, placement.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administration & Finance Co-ordinator 	<p>Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.</p>
<p>General, Agency- or Operations-Related</p> <p>E.g., fees, placement.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administration & Finance Co-ordinator 	<p>Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within three business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing.</p>



Nature of Issue or Concern:	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Provider, Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
Staff-, Supervisor- and/or Licensee-Related E.g., conduct of provider, agency head office staff.	Raise the issue or concern to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the individual directly or - The Supervisor, Early Childhood Lead Teacher, Administration & Finance Co-ordinator or Head of School.. All issues or concerns about the conduct of the provider or staff that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.	Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.

Escalation of Issues or Concerns:

Where parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may escalate the issue or concern verbally or in writing to Sabrina Hale, Head of School.

Issues/concerns related to compliance with requirements set out in the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* and Ontario Regulation 137/15 must be reported to the Ministry of Education's Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch.

Issues/concerns may also be reported to other relevant regulatory bodies (e.g., local public health department, police department, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Labour, fire department, College of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario College of Teachers, College of Social Workers) where appropriate.

Contacts:

Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care Help Desk: 1-877-510-5333 or <https://www.ontario.ca/page/find-and-pay-child-care>



This program statement will be read by all staff, volunteers, and placement students prior to interacting with the children and at any time when the program statement is modified. The program statement will also be read during the annual policy and procedures manual review. We see this as a living document which will change over time. Staff meetings will be a time for teachers to reflect on the program to further their understanding of the organization's philosophy and practices and to find opportunities for improvement. This will be a time for us to reflect on the program statement to ascertain whether we are achieving our goals or if new goals are necessary. These findings will be brought forward to the Board Chair.

Thank you for taking the time to read this document. Keep it handy throughout the year as a helpful resource.

Please refer to the [All School Parent Handbook](#) for additional policies and procedures.

