

## Program Statement

***"Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble."*** (1 Peter 3:8)

We commit to and believe "that every child is competent, capable of complex thinking, curious, and rich in potential. We believe that they grow up in families with diverse social, cultural, and linguistic perspectives. We believe that every child should feel that he or she belongs, is a valuable contributor to their surroundings, and deserves the opportunity to succeed. We believe that learning and development happens within the context of relationships among children, families, educators, and their environments. We believe that when we recognize children as capable and curious, we are more likely to deliver programs and services that value and build on their strengths and abilities." (as stated in the How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years, 2014 document).

Harmony Preschool is a faith based emergent enriched curriculum that is child-led and teacher-guided with Christ as our foundation. We believe in allowing all children to explore~discover~learn through the relationships that we build with the children, their families, and through our internal and external communities.

We support and implement the core values of Halton Hills Christian School (HHCS)

- To serve and honour God in all things
- To demonstrate honesty and integrity in all that we say and do
- To demonstrate that each student matters
- To deliver a Christ centered education
- To deliver quality programs for both inside and outside the classroom
- To build and offer community for students and their families

We support and implement the core values of HHCS through our awareness, acknowledgement and implementation of the four pillars of learning ~ belonging, well-being, engagement and expression ~ as stated in the How Does Learning Happen? Ontario Pedagogy for the Early Years, 2014 (HDLH) document. We believe the implementation of these four pillars are critical to all children, family members, staff members and our extended community to feel a part of our program. As we create a feeling of ~ belonging, well-being, engagement and expression ~ and become co-learners together then we are ultimately able to support the child's learning and growth.

***Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." (Matthew 19:14)***

We promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of each child through a variety of ways. Addressing the needs of the whole child is what allows the child to fully grow, develop and learn according to God's plan.

- Staff monitor the health of each child as they enter the classroom and connect with the parents during drop off and pick up time to discuss and talk about the child's day.
- Staff perform a daily inspection of the classroom and playground to ensure a safe learning environment for the child. This includes following a regular sanitization schedule.
- We have chosen to invest in the well-being of each child through our nutrition program.

- We offer a high rotation menu with a variety of food options including multi cultural food items to promote healthy food awareness.
- We build strong relationships with each family by respecting and therefore supporting any special dietary, cultural and religious requirements as needed.
- We provide a family friendly style for snack and meal time inviting the children to help set the table, serve themselves when possible while supporting the building of relationships.

***“Do to others as you would have them do to you” (Luke 6:31)***

We are called to support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, child care providers, and staff by how we build relationship with one another.

- We treat each other with respect by how we listen and speak to each other.
- We model how to have positive relationships with each other.
- We are aware and intentional of our body language and voice during interactions with the child, parents/guardians, community agencies, and co-workers.

***“Encourage one another and build each other up.” (1 Thessalonians 5:11a).***

We support and encourage each child to interact and communicate in a positive way and support his/her ability to self-regulate by incorporating and modeling the *7 Habits of Happy Kids* (as supported by Halton Hills Christian School) through our daily interactions with the children.

- Habit 1: Be Proactive: You're in Charge
- Habit 2: Begin with the End in Mind: Have a Plan
- Habit 3: Put First Things First: Work First, Then Play
- Habit 4: Think Win-Win: Everyone Can Win
- Habit 5: Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood: Listen Before You Talk
- Habit 6: Synergize: Together is Better
- Habit 7: Sharpen the Saw: Balance Feels Best

***“I the LORD search the heart and examine the mind.” (Jeremiah 17:10a)***

We know that as we provide materials and equipment to support the opportunity to explore~discover~learn we are fostering the child's exploration, play and inquiry.

- We strive to engage the heart and mind of each child through the questions that we ask.
  - We call these **essential questions**. These questions are open-ended and we learn more about the child as we hear their answers. (Example: I wonder ....?)
- Through the responses and our observations of the child we are able to extend and further develop his/her learning through the use of the “*Early Learning for Every Child Today*” (ELECT) document.
- We provide an extensive variety of hands on learning opportunities that support the interests of the child.
- We enhance, rotate and/or renew the materials and equipment the children are using to further expand their interest(s) and inquiries.

***“Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.” (Philippians 4:8)***

In order for us to provide child-initiated and adult-support experiences we are intentional about providing an environment that is child-led and teacher-guided.

- Curriculum planning is based on the interests of the children (child led - teacher guided).

- Scaffold the child's learning through "essential questions" (I wonder ...).
- Provide small group learning opportunities that are child led and teacher guided.
- Our enriched curriculum is enhanced by other supportive programs such as: Jolly Phonics, Handwriting Without Tears, Risk Watch and our Bible Stories Curriculum.

***"Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it." (Proverbs 22:6)***

We believe in creating a positive learning environment and promoting experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported.

- We are intentional about the materials that are available for the children to ensure that they are open ended to enhance their creativity and imagination.
- We provide a nature based outdoor education area that allows the child to explore the world around him/her in a creative open environment.
- We observe each individual child to see where s/he is developmentally in all areas: social, emotional, language, cognitive and physical so that we intentionally plan activities and provide materials to help support the individual child's growth.
- As educators we work with each child to become co-learners - to explore~discover~learn together to scaffold the child's learning.
- We see parents as an important part of their child's learning. We want to involve the parents in the learning. As we connect home and school, the learning is more meaningful to the child.

***"Give careful thought to the paths for your feet and be steadfast in all your ways." (Proverbs 4:26)***

We strive to provide a variety of learning opportunities that incorporates indoor and outdoor play that promotes active play, rest and quiet time within the day and give consideration to the individual needs of the child receiving care.

- Educators are aware of the individual needs of each child and provide opportunities that support the needs to ensure a sense of belonging, well being, engagement and expression within every aspect of the daily schedule.
- We set up the classroom in such a way that provides both busy and quiet areas; this way we support each child's ability to self-regulate as needed throughout the day.
- Daily communication with the parents/guardians allow us to get to know each child and discover what his/her individual needs are.

***"These are the things you are to do: Speak the truth to each other, and render true and sound judgment in your courts;" (Zechariah 8:16)***

We understand and believe in the value of fostering the engagement of and ongoing communication with the parents about the program and their child.

- We coach and encourage staff to share "learning stories" with the parents regarding their child.
- We encourage parents to be intentional about reading the documentation posted within the classroom and through the HHCS News Nuggets.
- We support parent's request for a Parent/Teacher meeting.
- We exhibit and provide ongoing documentation throughout the classroom that is reflective of the current learning that is happening.
- We provide open-house opportunities for parents to experience and learn more about our program through drop in activities during the day and evening information sessions.

***“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—”***

***(Hebrews 10:24-25)***

We understand the value of working alongside and involving our local community partners to help provide support to the children, their families and the staff.

- Through our emergent enriched curriculum, we bring in local “experts” to help further enhance the children’s learning.
- Through local/regional/provincial grants being offered we connect with local experts and parents within the community to help support the goals within the grant.
- We invite local community partners to come into our program to provide professional learning opportunities for staff and/or parents within our program.
- We encourage and present Service Projects (Example: Operation Christmas Child) to support either our local or broader community.

***“Rise up; this matter is in your hands. We will support you, so take courage and do it.” (Ezra 10:4)***

To provide the quality program that we believe each child and family deserves we strive to support the staff and all other parties involved who interact with the children in our program by providing a continuous professional learning environment.

- Provide In-house Professional Development (PD) 2 x’s/year
  - Staff input required in regards to what PD topic(s) should be
  - Either an “expert” will be brought in or the PD will be led by staff themselves
- Staff encouraged to participate in Continuous Professional Learning opportunities through various support organizations (i.e., Quality First, THRC, Sheridan College, etc.) to be reflective of their professional goals.
- Annual Performance Review
  - Professional Goals based on survey results
    - Resources
      - Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice (CECE)
      - Occupational Standards for Early Childhood Educators
      - How Does Learning Happen?
      - Quality First Resources/Tools
      - Program Statement
- Encourage and facilitate communities of practice among staff and through networking resources within the Region of Halton.

***“I applied my heart to what I observed and learned a lesson from what I saw:” (Proverbs 24:32)***

Annually we document and review the impact of the above strategies to further understand how to best support the children and families in our community to ensure that they all have a sense of belonging, well being, engagement and expression.

- Annual Parent Survey
  - Survey is to be sent out the end of May allowing 2 weeks for parents to respond
  - Results are to be tabulated and graphed - categorized through the 4 pillars of HDLH
  - Results of survey to be discussed at the annual June Year End Staff Meeting
    - Action Plans to be created based on survey results and staff discussions
- During the August Staff Meeting
  - Action Plans will be discussed and assigned to staff as to implementation for the upcoming school year