



Muppets Cooperative Preschool

RED BOOK

Policies and Procedures

Parent and Families Handbook

Updated: September 2026

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Welcome to Muppets! This handbook has been created to provide families information regarding school procedure and policies. It also informs families the important role each one plays in a co-operative environment. Our hope is that this guide helps you and your family choose the right preschool experience for your child.

1.1 Muppets History

- Muppets celebrated its 50th year in 2025.
- Muppets was originally called Happy Tots and was started by a group of parents who wanted their children to go to a Co-operative Preschool.
- Happy Tots was started in 1975 and was operated out of the basement of a Presbyterian Church on New Street. The name was changed to Muppets in 1977.
- Muppets then moved to Ascension Catholic School in 1980, where it remained until September of 1985 when it moved into Frontenac Public School.
- The final move was made to Appleby United Church in 1988.

1.2 What Is a Co-operative Preschool?

The Co-op School is a parent-aided non-profit organization where “cooperative” means just that: student’s families are responsible for the development, fundraising and maintenance of the school. The Board of Directors is composed of elected parents, and all parents share the responsibility of upholding the school’s guiding principles and our ultimate goal of blending community with education. Duty people participate in the classroom as a part of the ratio supporting the teachers in running the program. The co-operative preschool is a family project with everyone involved working towards the same goal. It can also be a valuable community project with each family making its own contribution for the good of all.

A Co-operative Preschool program is unique in that staff, parents and children work, learn and grow together.

The more parents put into it, the more parents will get out of the experience.

Muppets was set up not only to provide preschool educational and social experience for the children, but also to provide opportunities for parents.

Parents must be willing to give of their time:

- To assist in the daily operation of the school through committee work.
- For consultations with the teachers.
- To discuss procedures.
- To attend all general meetings.

1.3 School Terms

Muppets adheres to the Ministry of Education guidelines set out in the Child Care Early Years Act (CCEYA). Muppets employs two Registered Early Childhood Educators (teachers), one Assistant Teacher, and one Program Support Staff.

The school year begins in September; usually one week after public school begins. The children are introduced on a staggered basis during the first week and continue their education until the 3rd week of June.

- All statutory and Halton District School Board (HDSB) holidays are observed. Muppets may close on HDSB P.D. Days (depending on staffing), and could close for Preschool Professional Development Days offered by THRC. Notice of scheduled school closures are provided at the beginning of September in the “Important Dates” document sent to all registered families with the Welcome Package. (Appendix 2)
- In the event of inclement weather, Muppets follows the policy of HDSB. If Halton Board closes the schools, Muppets will close. If buses are canceled, however, schools are open, the President of Muppets will decide whether to close the school for the safety of the teachers and families. A phone tree will be activated to notify parents of school closures as well as an email. If HDSB moves to extended online/remote learning, Muppets will close until schools reopen for in person learning.
- Please refer to our website www.muppetspreschool.ca for current fees. Please note, there is a non-refundable registration fee.

1.4 Mornings Only Programs

Muppets Co-operative Preschool offers two programs:

Toddler - is a three-morning program (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursdays) that provides care from 9:20 am - 12:15 pm for children aged 18 months to 2.5 years old. Circle time is at 12:00 pm with parents and caregivers invited to join. The teacher to child ratio is 1:5. There is one RECE teacher in the program, and volunteers are welcome.

Our focus of the toddler program is to be a positive, supportive, nurturing environment. We help children with their first experience away from their parents assisting with separation anxiety in a caring way.

Preschool - is a three-morning program (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursdays) that provides care from 9:15 am - 12:30 pm for children aged 2.5 to 5 years old. Teacher to child ratio is 2:16. There is one RECE teacher in the program. The second teacher can be made up of duty people or an assistant teacher. Two duty people make up the role of one teacher.

Our focus of the preschool program is to foster social skills and help prepare children for the expectations of Full Day Kindergarten (FDK). We set children up for success by empowering them with self-regulation and self-help skills. Most of all, Muppets is a fun ‘first school’ experience.

Friday Program - is implemented based on the requests of the participating families. The Friday preschool class is typically a smaller class size with a maximum of 8 preschool children, 1 RECE and 1 program support staff. The preschool program preference goes to students enrolled in the 3 morning program. If space is available, at the discretion of the supervisor, students can be enrolled in only the Friday program. The Friday toddler class is made up of children enrolled in the 3 morning program with one staff member. As the school is approved to

have mixed ratios, the Friday program may combine the toddler and preschool classes adhering to proper ratios set out by the Ministry of Education.

1.5 Participation Requirements

As an active member of the co-op, you have commitments to:

- 1) Abide by the by-laws of the school.
- 2) Attend all General Meetings. These meetings will be posted and are held at the school. If for some reason you are unable to attend a meeting, you must notify a Board representative or Supervisor in advance. It is your responsibility to obtain all information. ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY. ABSENTEEISM WILL BE SUBJECT TO A \$25.00 FINE FOR EACH MISSED MEETING.
- 3) Duty people are required to attend duty meetings 4 times per year. These meetings are scheduled for the hour prior to general meetings. If you are unable to attend the meeting, the duty person must meet with the supervisor prior to their next duty day to receive all information discussed. ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY. ABSENTEEISM WILL BE SUBJECT TO A \$25.00 FINE FOR EACH MISSED MEETING.
- 4) Fill an executive board or committees as set out by the executive board. Failure to fulfill your committee duties will result in a \$75.00 fine. If you have more than one child enrolled you will be expected to fulfill all committees for each child.
- 5) Fundraising ideas will be decided by the Board prior to the start of the school year. No idea is final, and the Board is always looking for new and profitable fundraising ideas. The fundraising goal is ideally \$150 per student enrolled at capacity.
- 6) A non-refundable payment for registration and to cover snack costs that are incurred throughout the year.
- 7) Families enrolled in the preschool program are required to participate in one duty day per month. Please see duty people requirements (see section 9, page 25). If the family is unable to be involved in the classroom, there is an opt-out fee of \$35 per month.
- 8) Families enrolled in the toddler program are required to participate in one volunteer day per month. Please see volunteer requirements (see section 9, page 22). If the family is unable to be involved in the classroom, there is an opt-out fee of \$35 per month.

1.6 Families with Multiple Children Enrolled in the School

If a family has multiple children enrolled in the preschool classroom, the family must either do duty days or opt-out for all children enrolled as this impacts ratio.

If a family has a child enrolled in the preschool room and the toddler room, the family may waive their toddler volunteer day with no opt-out fee necessary.

If a family has multiple children enrolled in the toddler room, the family must do one volunteer day or opt-out for one child only (waive the other volunteer day or opt-out fee).

Only one volunteer cheque for the amount of \$100 is required.

If the family chooses to sit on the Executive Board, that is the only committee which needs to be fulfilled. Otherwise, the family needs to complete two committee tasks.

1.7 Families Enrolled in Friday Program Only

If a family has enrolled in the Friday Program without enrolling in the 3 morning program, as per the Muppets by-laws, the family will be an active member in the school. At the discretion of the Executive board, the family will receive compassion in missed meetings as it is recognized that the participation of the once a week family is lower than the families enrolled in the 3 morning program. The registration fee needs to be paid, along with the difference in snack fee from the 3 morning program to the 4 morning program. Please see the registration page on the website for current fees. The volunteer fee is not required.

2 Membership Requirements

Membership:

- 1) **Toddler Program:** Children must be 18 months old to be eligible for enrollment.

Muppets can make an exception for one child under the age of 18 months at the discretion of the Supervisor.

Preschool Program: Children must be 2.5 years of age to be eligible for enrollment.

Muppets can make an exception for two children between 2 and 2.5 years of age at the discretion of the Supervisor.

Toilet training is not a requirement of Muppets.

- 2) The maximum number of children attending school each day will be 16 preschoolers and 5 toddlers.
- 3) Applications are accepted according to the date the child's name was registered with the Registrar. All spots are first come, first served. A waitlist will be implemented once the school reaches maximum capacity.

To secure a spot the following requirements must be met:

- Completed registration package in FULL along with the registration fee e-transfer is required;
- Online submit to Halton Region Immunization records for each child (or Halton Region exemption form);
- A current 4x6 or 5x7 candid headshot of child.

2.1 Parents Role and Executive Board of Directors

The parents have a very important role in a co-op preschool. They are responsible for everything from setting the policy of the school, financial details overseeing and ensuring the continuity of the program.

The appointed parents make up a Board of Directors that are accountable to:

- Administration responsibility of the school.
- Meet and maintain the requirements of the Child Care Early Years Act.
- Arrange scheduling of volunteers and duty people.
- Maintain enrollment, waiting lists and admission policies.
- Be responsible for employing staff and deciding on policies affecting staff; i.e. contracts, salary, sick leave, establish fees (in accordance with CWELCC).
- Maintaining school property and equipment, cleaning, making and repairing furnishings.
- Arrange and conduct parent business meetings.
- Keep records, which are passed on to the new executive members to help in the continuity of the school.

It is essential to understand that in becoming a member of a Co-operative Preschool, you are not merely sending your child to an affordable preschool. You are making a commitment to take an active role in sharing your child's preschool experience, to share your time and talents with other committed parents to ensure that the goals of the school are being achieved.

2.2 Fees

All fees are found on the Muppets website registration page: [Registration - Burlington](#)

- 1) The tuition fees have been calculated in accordance with the CWELCC.
- 2) Registration and snack fees are non-refundable.
- 3) Fees must be paid by e-transfer to muppetstreasurer@gmail.com with the first month and registration fee submitted with the registration package. (The first e-transfer payment must be sent by August 15th for September, then September 15th for October, October 15th for November and so on until May 15th for June.)
- 4) The \$100 volunteer e-transfer will be refunded at the end of the school year (with any deductions for incurred fines in failing to attend general meetings or fulfill committee duties, or if the fundraising goal is not met). An additional e-transfer may be required if total fines exceed \$100.
- 5) Please contact the Treasurer via email muppetstreasurer@gmail.com for other payment accommodations (i.e.: payment via cheque).

2.3 Canada-Wide Early Learning Child Care (CWELCC) System

Muppets has opted-in to the program and been accepted into the program. Our fees have been reduced in accordance with Halton Region and Ontario's action plan.

2.4 Base and Non Base Fees

Base	Tuition (\$144 per month) Friday program tuition (\$12.50 per Friday) <i>*if attending*</i> Registration (\$40) Snack (\$40) *Participants of the Friday program are required to pay (\$50) Volunteer (\$100) (Fines for missed meetings or failure to complete committee tasks /duty days will be taken from the amount if applicable.)
Non Base	Field Trip / Social Outings / In school sports (agreed upon by membership during general meeting) Fundraising goals Duty person / volunteer opt-out fee (\$35 per month if choosing not to participate in the classroom)

2.5 Refunds

- 1) Refunds will not be made when the school is closed due to emergency conditions.
- 2) Refunds will not be made for the absence of a child due to illness or vacation.
- 3) If a member does not wish a child to go on a particular social outing / field trip, it is the member's responsibility to notify the School. No refund will be given and no regular classes will be held.

2.6 Withdrawal from Program

- 1) No refund will be given for withdrawal after May 1st.
- 2) A member may be asked to withdraw their child due to the child's failure to adjust to school routine or the member's failure to participate. A rebate shall be made from the child's last day of school.
- 3) If a parent decides to terminate enrollment with the preschool he/she should fill out the termination form and return it to the Registrar. One month's notice is required see (Appendix 1).

2.7 Financial Subsidy

Financial subsidy may be applied for through the Region of Halton:

Call 311 or 905-825-6000 or Email accesshalton@halton.ca.

<https://www.halton.ca/For-Residents/Children-and-Parenting/Need-Help-with-the-Cost-of-Child-Care>

2.8 Waitlist Policy

If Muppets is at student capacity, there will be a waitlist organized by the current Registrar. If an opening becomes available, the first person on the waitlist will be contacted via email or phone. If there is no response within 48 hours, the registrar will contact the next person on the list. Only children eligible for immediate admission will be contacted (if the next student on the list is under 2 ½ years old and the space can only be taken by a child 2 ½ or older, that student will maintain their spot on the waitlist for the next possible opening). There is no fee to have your name added to the waitlist. Only children who are eligible to enter the current school year shall be placed on the waitlist. All others will be placed in our “future families” contact list. The waitlist resets every school year. To inquire about your wait number please contact the Registrar by email: muppetsregistrar@gmail.com.

2.9 Low Staffing Procedures

Muppets will attempt to cover all staffing absences to the best of the school’s ability, however, in the event of a staff absence that cannot be covered by supply staff or duty people, the toddler room will close for the day to keep the preschool room open. The toddler families will be notified via the phone tree. This would be considered an emergency measure, and a refund would not be provided for the day of the toddler room closure.

3 The Muppets Program Philosophy and Mission Statement

“The mission of Muppets Co-operative Preschool is to provide young children with a positive first school experience by creating a loving, safe environment for the whole family.”

Based on the structure of a Co-operative school model, the Muppets families, teachers and the Executive Board of Directors are brought together by a longing for our children to receive quality education at an accessible price, and willingness to pitch in and participate in this journey. Participation of each family is critical for the effective operation of the school. The co-operative model also provides great benefit for the members through the unique sense of belonging it builds.

The program is structured for your child in such a way to ensure:

- The curriculum aligns with Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years incorporating ‘How Does Learning Happen?’ into the classroom by respecting the four foundations (belonging, well-being, engagement, and expression). The children are viewed each as competent, capable, curious, and rich in potential. Children learn best when they are invested in finding out the answers to their questions through play. This makes learning fun and engaging. It is important for us to educate the entire child on all levels: emotional, social, physical and intellectual.
- The majority of the day consists of intentionally planned and engaging play based activities to promote inquisitive thinking through (but not limited to) play, crafts, baking activities, dance and physical activity.
- The fostering of self-expression and creativity are significant to learning and in the

classroom, each child can experience counting, painting, drawing, making projects and collages, play acting, constructing, physical play, using blocks and thinking creatively in a way they are comfortable doing so.

- Students work as a group and think as individuals, expressing feelings working towards contributing ideas peacefully and respectfully.
- The program is also supplemented with social outings throughout the year to further develop learning experiences that both engage and interest your child.

All children will be supported in a caring, supportive, proactive learning environment:

Support and influencers are delivered as follows:

For the children:

- Awareness of your child's reactions to certain situations and promote the use of self-regulation;
- Verbally recognize and acknowledge your child's interactions with each other and with teachers;
- Predicting your child's behaviours and adapt accordingly;
- Role modeling for your child;
- Assist in labeling your child's feelings and emotions;
- Reading your child's body language;
- Set up of the classroom in a deliberate manner to support your child's learning through engagement;
- Encouraging children to learn from each other.

For parents:

- Role model for duty people and volunteers;
- General quarterly meeting information, supported by literature on key topics;
- Written communication via newsletters, calendars, daily logs and email;
- Verbal communication to all parents/caregivers via announcements at pick-up or drop off time;
- Verbal feedback either face to face or via telephone;
- Plan and deliver on social events for parents to socialize and build supportive bonds that result in engaging relationships.

By teachers, external evaluators and other support staff:

- Teachers maintain registered status by completing the terms and conditions set out by the College of Early Childhood Educators;
- Attend learning workshops to idea generate and learn through informal networks;
- Learning from each other through coaching, feedback and idea generation;
- On-going and regular discussions with church support staff to promote partnership and feedback in facility management;
- Reach out to other preschool teachers to benchmark and best practices;
- Conduct focus groups made up of past, present and future parents to brainstorm ideas about the program;
- Strong leadership demonstrated by Preschool Supervisor in idea generating, problem solving and overall strategy of the program;

- Quality components set out by the consultants.

Muppets Co-op teachers and support staff want to ensure that your child interacts and communicates in a positive manner while at the same time supporting his/her efforts to develop increased levels of self-regulation as a life skill differentiator.

There are two main approaches to providing support:

- Provide materials for calming (i.e. a book) provide a quiet area in the classroom or encourage the use of specific fidget toys;
- Primary focus is on each individual child's needs and customize based on your child.

The management of this philosophy is:

"Your child does not always get what they want, however we strive daily to give each child what they need."

Muppets is committed to your child's sense of exploration, deeper levels of inquiry for development, and the endless desire to learn using numerous resources as follow:

- The teachers are always listening to children's conversation to gather feedback for building better capability through bettering the material available to them in order to support their play.
- Feedback is also gathered informally through day-to-day contact with duty people and the formal feedback gathered at year-end from parents via an anonymous detailed survey. It is also paramount to ensure that the program is relevant to the children's lives outside of school as school regulations and policy requirements change over time.
- Leveraging active listening, idea generation, flexibility and observing the tone of the classroom, Muppets is proactive in that your child is provided with a variety of multi-functional and multi-use materials that engage thinking, learning and interaction.
- The school has an on-going philosophy whereby the program is evaluated through the eyes of the children, using key learning philosophies and ongoing reviews of child non-verbal cues.
- A healthy balance of active, rest and quiet time is built into the program agenda to ensure your child's needs are met while learning. For example:
Dedicated gross motor space.
Quiet activity centres designed for one or two children.
Bringing the "outdoors in" and the "indoors out" is also anchored by outings, guest speakers and social outings.

Our continued dedication:

Measurement of the level of success against goals set of the Muppets school year along with areas of improvement as it relates to both the strategy, capabilities of ECEs/duty people and the program scope are key to launching the program for the following school year. As such, a multifaceted view to measurement would be key.

The levers that can be measured are as follow:

- Teacher and program evaluations completed yearly by Muppets families;

- Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) used as a benchmark for quality programming;
- Survey duty staff as requested;
- Reflections: Child, Parent, Teachers, Duty People;
- Testimonials;
- Survey parents of graduation class for JK readiness one year after graduation.

3.1 Expectations of Program Statement Implementation

All teachers, other staff, duty staff, volunteers and placement students are expected to implement Muppets Program Statement in the following ways:

- Yearly review of the Program Statement, along with reviewing the statement whenever updated throughout the school year.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the Muppets Program Statement while interacting with children through play.
- Participate and review teacher and program evaluations completed by Muppets families and staff members.

All teachers, other staff, duty staff, volunteers and placement students are expected to follow the Ministry of Education Regulations regarding child safety and “prohibited practices”.

No licensee shall permit, with respect to a child receiving child care at a child care centre it operates or at a premises where it oversees the provision of child care:

- Corporal punishment of the child.
- Deliberate use of harsh or degrading measures on the child that would humiliate the child or undermine his or her self-respect.
- Depriving the child of basic needs including food, shelter, clothing or bedding.
- Locking the exits of the child care centre or home child care premises for the purpose of confining the child.
- Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.
- Using a locked or lockable room or structure to confine the child if he or she has been separated from other children.
- Sexual abuse, sexual misconduct or a prescribed sexual act in respect of the child, as those terms are defined under the Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007.

Any infraction of these items listed above will result in immediate termination of your responsibility as staff, duty person or volunteer.

3.2 Inclusion Policy

At Muppets we believe that all children have the basic right to be valued, accepted, and included. Although our physical location may have structural limitations beyond our current control, we strongly believe that all children are entitled to full participation in our program and support individual needs. We will do our very best to make accommodations to ensure all family

members are able to actively participate in all aspects of our program including meetings that pertain to the developmental needs of their child(ren).

3.3 Support with Halton Inclusion Services

Muppets Cooperative Preschool is supported by Halton Inclusion Services. Halton Inclusion Services is delivered by Halton Region, Community Living Burlington, Community Living North Halton and ErinoakKids. Together, we help all children feel included and supported in our program. You may see Resource Consultants, Occupational Therapists, and Speech and Language Pathologists (SLPs) visiting our centre. They watch how things are going in the classroom and work with educators to share ideas, training, and helpful tools. Often this support is for the whole classroom and may not be focused on any one child. Resource Consultants help our educators by checking in on children's development, making plans that focus on children's strengths and needs, supporting children who are getting ready for school and delivering workshops, sharing information and providing useful materials. If more help is needed, the Resource Consultant may bring in a Speech and Language Pathologist or an Occupational Therapist. Speech and Language Pathologists and Occupational Therapists are regulated health professionals who support children's learning and development. In our centre, the Speech and Language Pathologist offers helpful suggestions to support children in joining classroom activities and play that encourage different ways for children to communicate—through pictures, gestures, sounds, or words. The Occupational Therapist looks at how the classroom and materials are set up to help children take part in play, feeding and daily routines. Sometimes, after observing the program, the team may notice that a child could use extra help to be successful. If your child could use extra support, our educators will reach out to you. If you have any questions, please speak to the Supervisor.

3.4 Quality Engagement Cycle

Muppets Cooperative Preschool participates in Halton Region's Quality Engagement Cycle. This cycle is a requirement for all operators and demonstrates a commitment to the Quality System Framework. Participation includes, but is not limited to, on-site visits and meetings with Regional staff, completion and submission of required data and documentation, collaborative goal setting, and the development and implementation of action plans.

4 Program Outline

Toddler

The Muppets Toddler Program provides care for 2.75 hours.

Arrival: Drop off in the gym between 9:20 - 9:30 am (if the Church is using the space, arrival will be in the classroom). Please keep the gym door closed as the teachers will open the door when they are ready to start the program.

Dismissal: Parents are encouraged to join in the daily circle time at 12:00pm. Dismissal will be at the end of circle time (approx 12:15 pm).; please be on time. It is difficult for the children to wait at this time. Failure to pick up your child(ren) on time may result in a

\$10.00 fine (for each late pick-up). In the event you are delayed, please call the school to notify the teachers. If you have the need to pick your child up during program time, please notify the teachers at drop-off time.

- Parents must pick up children at the door during going home times. No child is allowed through the door without an adult and there is to be no running or shouting in the halls.
- Once you have picked up your child, the child becomes your responsibility.

Our Daily Schedule includes:

- at least 1 hour of uninterrupted free-play time;
- at least 30 minutes of gross motor play in the gym;
- a scheduled sit down snack time including good hygiene hand washing skills;
- a large group circle time with songs and stories;
- small group invitations (facilitated or set-out by teachers) to introduce process art, math, language, science, sensory activities;
- washroom routine, if needed, on a personalized schedule.

Preschool

The Muppets Preschool Program provides care for 3.25 hours.

Arrival: Drop off with hand washing routine in the toddler room between 9:15 - 9:30am. (If the Church is using the gym space, drop off will be in the preschool room, please wash hands in the bathroom prior to entry). Children are encouraged to use the bathroom before coming into school. Please keep the door closed as the teachers will open the door when they are ready to start the program.

Dismissal: Pick-up is between 12:15 - 12:30pm in the gym; please be on time. It is difficult for the children to wait at this time. Failure to pick up your child(ren) on time may result in a \$10.00 fine (for each late pick-up). In the event you are delayed, please call the school to notify the teachers. If you have the need to pick your child up during program time, please notify the teachers at drop-off time.

- Parents must pick up children at the door during going home times. No child is allowed through the door without an adult and there is to be no running or shouting in the halls.
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- a scheduled sit down snack time including good hygiene hand washing skills;
- a large group circle time with songs and stories;
- small group invitations (facilitated or set-out by teachers) to introduce process art, math, language, science, sensory activities;
- washroom routine, if needed, on a personalized schedule.

4.1 Absence of a Child

Please notify the school if your child is going to be absent from school for any reason whether it be illness or otherwise.

Call 905-333-5272 or email muppetspreschool@gmail.com.

In case of absence due to vacation or prolonged illness, the child's place will be held in the school as long as regular fees are paid.

4.2 Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy and Procedures

This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15. Muppets Cooperative Preschool will ensure any child receiving child care at the child care centre is only released to the child's parent/guardian or any individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization in which the centre may release the child. The centre will not release any children from care without supervision.

Where a child does not arrive in care as expected or is not picked up as expected, staff must follow the safe arrival and dismissal procedures set out below:

Accepting a child into care

1. When accepting a child into care at the time of drop-off, program staff in the room must:
 - o greet the parent/guardian and child.
 - o ask the parent/guardian how the child's evening/morning has been and if there are any changes to the child's pick-up procedure (i.e., someone other than the parent/guardian picking up). Where the parent/guardian has indicated that someone other than the child's parent/guardians will be picking up, the staff must confirm that the person is listed on the child's registration form authorized pick-up list or where the individual is not listed, ask the parent/guardian to provide authorization for pick-up in writing (e.g., note or email).
 - o document the change in pick-up procedure in the daily written record.
 - o sign the child in on the classroom attendance record.

Where a child has not arrived in care as expected:

1. Where a child does not arrive at the child care centre and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off (e.g., left a voice message, email or advised the staff at pick-up), the staff in the classroom must:
 - o inform the supervisor and they must commence contacting the child's parent/guardian no later than 10:30am. Staff shall call parents/guardians and leave a voicemail if there is no contact.
 - o if the parents/guardians do not respond to the phone call, the supervisor will email the parents at the end of the day for follow-up.
2. Once the child's absence has been confirmed, program staff shall document the child's absence on the attendance record and any additional information about the child's absence in the daily written record.

Releasing a child from care:

1. The staff who is supervising the child at the time of pick-up shall only release the child to the child's parent/guardian or individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization that the child care may release the child to. Where the staff does not know the individual picking up the child (i.e., parent/guardian or authorized individual),

- o confirm with another staff member that the individual picking up is the child's parent/guardian/authorized individual.
- o where the above is not possible, ask the parent/guardian/authorized individual for photo identification and confirm the individual's information against the parent/guardian/authorized individual's name on the child's file or written authorization.

Where a child has not been picked up as expected:

Toddler Class

If a parent/guardian does not show up for circle time at 12:00pm, the circle time will proceed as usual. If the parent/guardian is not at the school at 12:15pm for the end of the program, the classroom teacher will call the parents/guardian. If the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian, staff must wait 5 minutes, then call again and leave a voicemail informing the parent/guardian that the staff member will proceed to call the child's emergency pick-up people. Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized individual listed on the child's file (e.g., the emergency contacts) by 1:30pm, the staff shall proceed with contacting the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) Halton: 1-905-333-4441 Staff shall follow the CAS's direction with respect to next steps. The staff member will ensure the child is not left alone during this time and is either with the classroom teacher or supervisor.

Preschool Class

If the parent/guardian is not at the school at 12:30pm for the end of the program, the classroom teacher will bring the child upstairs to the classroom and call the parents/guardian. If the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian, staff must wait 5 minutes, then call again and leave a voicemail informing the parent/guardian that the staff member will proceed to call the child's emergency pick-up people. Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized individual listed on the child's file (e.g., the emergency contacts) by 1:30pm, the staff shall proceed with contacting the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) Halton: 1-905-333-4441 Staff shall follow the CAS's direction with respect to next steps. The staff member will ensure the child is not left alone during this time and is either with the classroom teacher or supervisor.

4.3 Health and Medical Supervision of Children

A new medical background form shall be required from each child before admission. All immunizations of children need to be reported to Halton Region with a copy provided to the school. All staff including duty people are recommended to provide documentation of a negative tuberculin skin test upon employment/uninterrupted enrollment. They should also provide evidence of an original series of vaccinations against Polio, Measles, Mumps and Rubella or evidence of having contracted the disease itself. Booster shots for Diphtheria and Tetanus must have occurred within the last ten years and should be documented as well.

Communicable diseases or prolonged illness of children shall be reported at once to the Supervisor.

No child should attend school if:

- (S)he has had a fever within the last 24 hours;
- (S)he has begun taking a prescribed antibiotic within the last 24 hours;
- (S)he has a continuous dry hacking cough;

- (S)he had diarrhea that is not of obvious dietary, drug, or medical cause;
- (S)he or an immediate family has come in contact with, or is under quarantine for, a serious respiratory illness;
- (S)he has a constant running nose that is NOT clear in colour;
- (S)he is overtired;
- (S)he has contracted head lice:
 - o He/she will have to be checked by a health professional and been deemed to be clear of all live lice and eggs.
 - o A note from a health professional shall be submitted to the supervisor at the time the child re-enters the school. Any parent of a child deemed to have head lice is asked to inform the school so that parents of other children in the class may check their child for head lice.

Daily Health Check:

- Staff member conducts an informal visual health check and if required, reports back to parent either at pick-up or as a follow-up conversation later in the day.
- In the event that there is an occurrence during classroom time whereby an interaction took place that the parent needs to be aware of, the parent is informed of the situation and details that would include any first aid given to your child or how the teacher/duty person remedied the situation.
- An accident report is filed for any incident that needs medical attention. The parent receives a copy of the report and a signed copy is required to be kept on file at the school.
- Any child who shows signs of illness may be sent home at the discretion of the Supervisor.

Communication with Families:

- In the event there is an incident affecting the health, safety or well-being of the children attending Muppets (i.e.: a child or staff member has been identified with a communicable illness), all families will be notified via email of the situation.
- To maintain confidentiality, the name of the person(s) with the illness will not be disclosed to families of the child care centre.

4.4 Your Child's Clothes

Dress your child in clothing that they will feel free to participate fully in all activities (some of which may be quite messy!). Label all boots, coats and shoes. Remember that easy clothing means independence (i.e., use of the toilet). Shoes with rubber soles should be worn to ensure safety during school activities. Please keep extra set of clothing for your child at school. If your child is toilet training it is recommended to keep multiple sets of clothes your child can be changed as necessary for their comfort level. If your child is not toilet trained, please keep extra diapers/pull-ups at the school. The teachers will inform families when to replace clothes and diapers as needed.

4.5 Social Outings and Neighbourhood Trips

Social outings are an important part of the school experience and a fun way to interact with the children and their families in the community. The families enrolled in the school, along with the teachers decide each year on how many trips to take throughout the year. Typical outings include going to various farms and gymnastics. All families are encouraged to participate and siblings are welcome to attend. The teachers attend social outings, but parents / guardians are responsible for their child(ren).

Muppets recognizes that community is an important part of growth. Outdoor experiences contribute to the Muppets program. Outdoor activities include (but not limited to):

- Outdoor gym in parking lot;
- Walks in neighbourhood including the “Secret Forest”;
- Gross motor activities at the park.

The teachers do our best to give as much notice as possible. Weather will be a factor as to how much notice we give, sometimes we may decide that morning that an outdoor activity is appropriate. Please note teachers do not apply sunscreen at school, it is recommended to apply at home.

4.6 Snack Routine

Muppets Snack Policy complies with the mandates of the Ministry of Education. Muppets provides a nutritious snack daily for each child within the program. Filtered water is provided at snack time and throughout the morning. Muppets is a nut-free school and follows the guidelines of Canada’s Food Guide. Please speak with the Supervisor regarding specific food allergies and/or dietary needs. Muppets does not permit outside food into the school. Substitutions when necessary will be provided by the school.

4.7 Washroom Routine

Parents are asked to have their children visit the washroom before school. A regular washroom routine is part of the daily schedule. Staff are to close the washroom door, and remind the children not to lock the stall doors for safety reasons. Children are assisted with washing their hands after using the washroom facilities. Please inform the teachers if your child is toilet training, we will support and assist as required.

4.8 Child Safety “Prohibited Practices”

Ministry of Education Regulations:

No licensee shall permit, with respect to a child receiving child care at a child care centre it operates or at a premises where it oversees the provision of child care:

- Corporal punishment of the child.
- Deliberate use of harsh or degrading measures on the child that would humiliate the child or undermine his or her self-respect.
- Depriving the child of basic needs including food, shelter, clothing or bedding.
- Locking the exits of the child care centre or home child care premises for the purpose of confining the child.

- Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.
- Using a locked or lockable room or structure to confine the child if he or she has been separated from other children.
- Sexual abuse, sexual misconduct or a prescribed sexual act in respect of the child, as those terms are defined under the Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007.

Any infraction of these items listed above will result in immediate termination of your responsibility as staff, duty person or volunteer.

“Sexual abuse”, “sexual misconduct” and “prescribed sexual acts” have the meanings given to them under the Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007. This prohibited practice was added to Ontario Regulation 137/15 effective July 1, 2026 and applies to all staff, duty people, volunteers and placement students at Muppets.

4.9 Sanitary Practices

Please refer to the supporting document: “Muppets Cooperative Preschool Health and Cleaning Policies and Procedures Parent and Families Handbook” for the current sanitary practices. This handbook is updated as necessary and can be found on the Muppets website:

www.muppetspreschool.ca

4.10 No Smoking Policy

Coinciding with Smoke-Free Ontario, Muppets has a no smoking policy. Please refrain from smoking or vaping on the Church’s property during program time.

5 Drug and Medication Administration Policy and Procedures

The staff of Muppets Cooperative Preschool will administer drugs or medications to children as an absolute necessity when prescribed by a doctor or pharmacist that cannot be given outside of program time.

- Parent / guardian will provide written authorization that includes a schedule that includes a schedule that sets out the times the drug or medication is to be given and amounts to be administered. Parents need to provide information on how to administer “as needed” medications that are consistent with the prescribing doctor or pharmacist guidelines.
- The drugs or medication must be in the original container with proper usage guidelines. All drugs and medications must be stored according to the written instructions on the package. All drugs or medications are kept in a locked container, with the exception of emergency allergy and asthma medication, medication for epilepsy or diabetes, and any other medication that the prescribing health professional has determined must be readily available to prevent a significant risk to the child’s health.
- All medications are stored inaccessible to children.
- The medications listed above may be carried by a staff member or by the child so

that they can be accessed quickly in an emergency, rather than being kept in the locked container.

- Where a medication is carried in this way, it must remain on the person carrying it or otherwise be secured so that other children cannot access it.
- If you would like your child to carry their own medication, please speak with the Supervisor. Written authorization from the parent/guardian is required, together with the prescribing health professional's direction that the medication must be readily available.
- Muppets staff will not accept into the school or administer expired or unnecessary Medications.

Please see Staff / Duty / Volunteer handbook, section 4 for fully detailed policy and procedure including:

- Anaphylaxis Policy
- Record-Keeping of Administered Drugs and Medications
- Individualized Plans and Emergency Procedures for Children with Life-Threatening/Anaphylactic Allergies
- Risk Reduction Strategy
- Communication Plan between Parents / Staff for Life-Threatening Allergies
- Staff Procedures for Life-Threatening Allergies

6 Parent Issues and Concerns Policy and Procedure

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.

6.1 Policy Outline:

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our child care centre 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, child care 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 the Staff and Board of Muppets Cooperative Preschool 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 two school 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.

6.2 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 Children's Aid Society).

6.3 Conduct

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

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

6.4 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

<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaid/reportingabuse/index.aspx>

6.5 Who to Contact – Issues / Concerns Procedure

Types of Issues or Concerns and How to Report Them:

Program Room-Related Issues (e.g., schedule, toilet training, indoor/outdoor activities, feeding arrangements)

- **Parent/Guardian Steps:** Raise the issue directly with classroom staff or the supervisor. If necessary, schedule a meeting within 8 school days to discuss the concern.
- **Staff/Licensee Steps:**
Document the issue in detail, including:
 - Date and time the issue was raised
 - Name of the person receiving the concern
 - Name of the person reporting the concern
 - Description of the concern
 - Steps taken to address or resolve the concern, and any next steps provided to the parent/guardian

- If the person you initially contact can't address the issue, provide the contact details of someone who can.
- Begin investigating the issue as soon as possible and document any delays.
- Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent/guardian who raised the concern.

General Centre- or Operations-Related Issues (e.g., childcare fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus)

- Parent/Guardian Steps: Raise the concern with the supervisor or the president/executive board.
- Staff/Licensee Steps: Follow up with the appropriate person to resolve the concern.

Staff, Duty Parent, Supervisor, and/or Licensee-Related Issues

- Parent/Guardian Steps: Raise the concern directly with the individual involved, or with the supervisor or licensee.
- Staff/Licensee Steps:
 - If the issue concerns the conduct of staff, duty parents, etc., and is a risk to a child's health, safety, or well-being, it should be reported to the supervisor immediately.
 - Document and follow up on actions taken to address the concern.

Student or Volunteer-Related Issues

- Parent/Guardian Steps: Raise the issue with the staff member responsible for supervising the student or volunteer, or with the supervisor or licensee.
- Staff/Licensee Steps:
 - If the issue concerns the conduct of a student or volunteer that risks a child's health, safety, or well-being, report it to the supervisor as soon as possible.
 - Take necessary steps to investigate and address the issue

6.6 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 the President of the Board at: muppetspresident@gmail.com

Issues/concerns related to compliance with requirements set out in the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 and Ontario Regulation 137/15 should 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 etc.) where appropriate.

Contacts:

Halton Public Health: Call 311

College of Early Childhood Educators: General complaints and discipline inquiries
discipline@college-ece.ca or Practice inquiries practice@college-ece.ca

Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care Help Desk: 1-877-510-5333 or
childcare_ontario@ontario.ca

7 Insurance and Liability

- All consent forms must be signed by parents or legal guardians on application.
- With notification of each trip, a consent and waiver of liability form will be sent to be signed by parents or legal guardians.
- Transportation for official trips will be parent drop-off and pick-up with the necessary adult supervision.
- The school shall have an insurance policy to indemnify the members against any injury to a child due to an accident during School attendance.
- The school shall have Directors and Officers Liability Coverage to safeguard the Board of Directors.
- The school shall name the Regional Municipality of Halton and The City of Burlington as additional insured parties.

8 Right to Privacy

Notice with Respect to the Collection of Personal Information (Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act):

Each staff member, student and volunteer in a licensed child care centre or person employed by / associated with a licensed home child care agency must complete this form. In administering and enforcing the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA), Ministry of Education inspectors, program advisors and the director under the CCEYA may collect and review personal information about staff employed by a licensed child care centre or employed by or associated with a licensed home child care agency under the authority of s. 30, 31, 67(1) and 69(1) of the CCEYA and s. 53, 54, 55, 56 and 57 of O. Reg. 137/15 under the CCEYA to ensure that the licensed child care centre or home child care agency is complying with the CCEYA and O. Reg. 137/15. This form is required to be kept for the ministry's review at the child care centre where you are employed or the head office of the home child care agency. Your personal

information may be provided by your employer in connection with an application for approval of a Supervisor, a person to take the place of a Registered Early Childhood Educator or approval of a Home Child Care Visitor, if applicable. Information collected in the licensing process about Registered Early Childhood Educators may be shared with the College of Early Childhood Educators if necessary for the enforcement of the Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007.

Questions concerning the direct or indirect collection of personal information may be addressed to:

Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch
Early Learning Division Ministry of Education
900 Bay Street, 24th floor
Mowat Block, Toronto, ON
M7A 1L2
416-314-8373

Each family is required to read and sign the Photo Release before the commencement of school. It is important to remember that although we live in a social media driven society, not all families choose to be a part of online postings. You may NOT post photos of other children on social media websites, even if they are just in the background, without the permission of their parent or guardian. Please be aware and respectful of this during your time with Muppets.

All Board Members sign a Code of Conduct which includes keeping confidential information private.

All adults participating in the program are asked to not discuss classroom issues outside of the classroom. The Supervisor will handle any issues that arise. This may include the involvement of teachers, duty staff, and the Executive Board of Directors.

9 Duty Staff, Volunteer and Placement Student Requirements

9.1 Confidentiality Agreement

Information regarding children, parents, teaching staff, duty people or volunteers shall be respected and handled confidentially. All information concerning children, parents, teaching staff, duty people or volunteers shall be confidential and shall not be disclosed to or discussed with anyone other than those authorized to receive such information, unless disclosure is authorized by law.

It is agreed that all information about the centre, staff, children and families will not be discussed with any other person outside the preschool. It is agreed that if an incident **needs to be discussed* outside the centre, this will be done in a professional way keeping details of unrelated children / families / staff / incidents out of the discussion and no personal value judgments will be made during the discussion.

**needs to be discussed* covers such things as:

- Seeking information or opinions on a particular child's needs from other professionals i.e.: speech therapist, occupational therapist, child psychologist, etc.
- Seeking information from peers (other childcare workers) in order to form policies, procedures, or programs.
- Being compelled to report to the Children Aid Society, or police report.

If a situation arises in the classroom between two children where the parents need to be informed i.e.: one child hurts another child, do not disclose the name of the other child who was involved.

If there are any questions regarding the confidentiality agreement, please contact the supervisor for guidance or clarification.

Failure to abide by this agreement could result in disciplinary action or termination of your position at the school.

9.2 Duty Staff

Duty persons in a cooperative child care program who are taking the place of an employee are counted in ratio. Two duty people take the place of one staff member. Duty people are responsible for the care and supervision of all children in the group and must meet all requirements applicable to employees of a child care centre. For each child enrolled, the preschool program requires each family to participate in one duty day per month. If the family is unable to complete the duty portion of the preschool classroom requirement an opt-out fee of \$35 per month is required.

9.3 Participation and Schedule

The duty person is the enrolled child's parent, legal guardian, or any consistent caregiver. Every participating member must fill out the Participating Families package prior to starting in the classroom. The Board Scheduler will do their best to accommodate all duty day requests as put forth in the registration package.

- It is imperative that duty people arrive 5 MINUTES prior to school starting in order to touch base with the teachers and make sure everything is ready for the morning. The program will not start until all duty people and teachers are ready.
- A schedule will be emailed on a monthly basis. Please inform the scheduler if you would like to be provided with a hard copy.
- Please inform the scheduler if you plan to take vacation or be absent from the program more than four weeks in advance so that adjustments can be made to the future schedule.
- If you are unable to work on your duty day, make arrangements with another duty person to take or to swap days. Adjust the schedule that is posted in the classroom, and notify the supervisor of the change via email or phone message. The scheduler is not responsible for making changes to posted schedules.
- An emergency duty list is provided to all duty people. It is highly recommended to call individual people rather than sending a mass email. **Failure to cover your duty day**

may result in a \$100.00 fine and the closure of the program for the day if a replacement is not found.

- Siblings cannot be brought to school on your duty day.
- Duty people are required to attend duty meetings 3-4 times per year. These meetings are scheduled for the hour prior to general meetings. If you are unable to attend the meeting, the duty person must meet with the supervisor prior to their next duty day to receive all information discussed.

9.4 Volunteers

Volunteers can be (but not limited to) special guests, college students, resource staff and non-duty staff participating in the classroom, in contact with the children. Volunteers are not permitted to be alone or unsupervised with a child and cannot be counted in staff-child ratios. The supervision of volunteers and student policy must be reviewed with staff, volunteers and students, implemented and monitored for compliance and contraventions in accordance with the Ministry of Education.

9.5 Placement Students

Currently Muppets does not have the facilities to host placement students. Muppets will continue to work with colleges in the area to be able to welcome placement students into our program in the future.

9.6 Tips for Duty Staff, Volunteers and Placement Students

- Wear clothing that you are willing to expose to paint, paste, sand, etc.
- Be accepting of the fact that your child may find it difficult to share you with others. Your child has a special need for you - don't push him or her away.
- Realize that your child may act differently when you are not in school. In all dealings, seek to be:
 - Fair
 - Reasonable
 - Consistent
- Beyond the call of scheduled duty - this calls for good judgment, alert watching and initiative.
- Roll up sleeves of a child who is about to play in water, use finger-paints, etc.
- Supply or direct a child to a tissue when he needs it. There should be a box at each end of the playroom at the child's level. Have them wash hands after they are finished with the tissue.
- Straighten the equipment and keep it orderly, without restricting the children's play while doing so.
- Follow through having a child put away toys when finished. Provide guidance by bringing the child back to the area to put the item away.
- Encourage children to see that scraps are put in the wastebasket after cutting activity.
- Never put away puzzles with a piece missing - if you cannot find the piece, inform one of the teachers.

- Report equipment that is broken or in need of repair.
- Straighten up a messy table so there is more room to work.

9.7 Language and Modeling for Duty Staff, Volunteers and Placement Students

The following suggestions, although far from complete, may help you in your participation in the classroom:

Manner

- Seek to have a manner that is gentle, quiet, relaxed, friendly, calm, controlled and understanding.
- Remember - children are imitators.
- Let your presence be felt in a quiet way, and above all, use good judgment, alert watching and your own common sense.

Talking

- Too much talk invariably leads to over-direction and confusion.
- Let the child take the initiative in conversation. Say, "tell me about it".
- Having a quiet conversation with a child can show friendliness.
- Teach them to have "indoor voices" indoors.

Helping

- Let the child be as independent to the best of his/her ability.
- Help the children to help themselves, realize and respect each child's level of independence.
- Please refrain from doing artwork for your child, as it conveys the message that his/her work is not good enough.

Sitting

- Sit down whenever possible, when participating or watching.
- When we are down at a child's level, we are less noticeable.
- We appear more stable and settled when we sit. Children, through imitation, will also play in a more settled way.
- The presence of an adult sitting near an activity usually steadies the situation and often prevents destructive play from starting in the first place.

Choices

- Encourage the child to make a choice from a variety of desirable activities.
- If the child needs to focus, have the child choose from two different activities (i.e.: water table or easel).

Listening

- An important art to develop.
- Give the child time to express themselves. Sometimes it can clear up a distressing matter if an upset child can talk about what is bothersome to a sympathetic listener.
- The quality of your facial expression shows the child you are interested.
- Develop the "tell me about it" attitude when approached by a child for comment on their creative work.
- Reflect or label feelings and accept what the child is saying. For example:

- o "I can tell that you are angry, but hitting hurts."
- o "Ask for a turn."
- Substitute more mature ways to handle conflicts.

Danger Awareness and Limitations

- Always watch out for potential situations and, if anticipated, stand nearby, caution, or remove hazard.
- Children walk inside the classroom – running is for the gym.
- Use scissors, paint brushes, etc. with care - never walk around with these.
- Sand, blocks and hard objects are not for throwing. Sand stays in the tub.
- If nails need hammering or screws need tightening, ask the teacher for proper tools and perhaps one of the children would like to fix it - with supervision.
- Inform the Supervisor immediately if a child hurts themselves or others.

10 Criminal Reference Check Policy and Procedure

All staff, duty people, volunteers, placement students and other persons who provide child care and other services to children need a vulnerable sector check before interacting with children. The purpose of this policy and the procedures outlined is to provide clear and transparent rules and processes for regularly collecting and using information in police record checks, offence declarations and attestations for staff, duty people, placement students and volunteers and other persons who provide child care and other services to children.

This policy is intended to help protect the health, safety and well-being of children, families and those involved with the child care centre by setting out measures to verify that individuals involved in providing child care in positions of trust are not prohibited doing so under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA) and do not have a criminal history that may put children in care at risk.

This policy sets out additional measures to protect children while a vulnerable sector check is being obtained, which helps to reduce risk where there is a gap between the time an individual starts interacting with children and the time they provide their vulnerable sector check (VSC). This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for staff screening and police record checks for a child care centre.

Effective July 1, 2026, additional offences under the Criminal Code (Canada) are prescribed in regulation for the purposes of section 9 of the CCEYA. These prescribed offences are:

- Section 152 – invitation to sexual touching
- Section 153 – sexual exploitation
- Section 153.1 – sexual exploitation of a person with a disability
- Section 160(1)(2)(3) – bestiality
- Section 162 – voyeurism
- Section 162.1 – publication of an intimate image without consent
- Section 170 – parent or guardian procuring sexual activity
- Section 171.1 – making sexually explicit materials available to a child
- Section 172.1 – luring a child

- Section 172.2 – agreement or arrangement for a sexual offence against a child
- Section 271 – sexual assault
- Section 272 – sexual assault with a weapon, threats to a third party or bodily harm
- Section 273 – aggravated sexual assault
- Section 281 – abduction of a person under 14
- Section 286.1(1) – obtaining sexual services for consideration
- Section 286.1(2) – obtaining sexual services for consideration from an individual under the age of 18

Anyone working in or providing child care at Muppets – including staff, duty people, volunteers and placement students – who has been convicted of any of the offences listed above must notify the Supervisor and the Licensee (the Board of Directors) immediately, and cannot continue to work in or provide child care.

This requirement applies in addition to the vulnerable sector check and offence declaration requirements already set out in this policy.

For fully detailed policy and procedure please see Staff / Duty / Volunteer handbook, section 8.

11 Serious Occurrence (SO)

Ontario Regulation 137/15 – Definitions of “Serious occurrence” means:

- (a) the death of a child who received child care at a home child care premises or child care centre, whether it occurs on or off the premises,
- (b) abuse, neglect or an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child while receiving child care at a home child care premises or child care centre,
- (c) a life-threatening injury to or a life-threatening illness of a child who receives child care at a home child care premises or child care centre,
- (d) an incident where a child who is receiving child care at a home child care premises or child care centre goes missing or is temporarily unsupervised,
- (e) an unplanned disruption of the normal operations of a home child care premises or child care centre that poses a risk to the health, safety or well-being of children receiving child care at the home child care premises or child care centre

Every licensee shall ensure that:

- (a) there are written policies and procedures with respect to serious occurrences in each child care centre operated by the licensee and each premises where it oversees the provision of home child care, that address at a minimum, how to identify, respond to and report a serious occurrence;
- (b) a report is provided to a program adviser of any serious occurrence in any child care centre operated by the licensee or any premises where it oversees the provision of home child care within 24 hours of the licensee or supervisor becoming aware of the occurrence;

- (c) a summary of the report provided under clause (b) and of any action taken as a result is posted for at least 10 business days in a conspicuous place at the child care centre or home child care premises; and
- (d) the report and the summary of the report are each kept in accordance with section 82. Every licensee of a child care centre or home child care agency shall:
 - (a) conduct an annual analysis of all serious occurrences that occurred in the previous year at each child care centre operated by the licensee and at each premises where the licensee oversees the provision of home child care; and
 - (b) keep records of the actions taken in response to the analysis. O. Reg. 126/16, s. 25 (3).

For fully detailed policy and procedure please see Staff / Duty / Volunteer handbook, section 7.

12 Emergency Preparedness and Procedures

In the event of an emergency, staff will maintain supervision of the children until a parent or guardian arrives. Children with individualized plans will have their plans followed during emergency situations. Parents and staff will be notified promptly via email after an emergency situation occurs as to how Muppets Co-operative Preschool will resume normal operations. The email will debrief parents (children) and staff of the occurrence and what (if any) preventative measures can be taken in the future to prevent an emergency of the same nature. Muppets will work to support staff, parents, and children who may have experienced distress during the emergency by offering support of necessary local agencies (doctor, therapist, etc.)

12.1 Water Supply

In the event of the disruption in water supply or a “boil water” order from the local Medical Officer of Health, the following procedures shall be implemented immediately:

- 1) Ensure all drinking water is from the “Emergency” supply of bottled water. The bottled water is clearly marked “Emergency”.
- 2) All water used for washing dishes, hands, toys, floors, water table, water colours, etc. has been boiled for 5 minutes and allowed to cool before using.
- 3) Regular use of tap water can only be maintained when the Medical Officer of Health lifts the disruption in water supply or the “boil water” order.
- 4) A serious occurrence report will be submitted to the Ministry of Education as per defined practices.

12.2 Fire, Flood, Leaks and Power Outages

- 1) Keep calm.
- 2) Notify staff and sound the alarm.
- 3) Move children in your room towards the fire exit. Remind children to use walking feet. Do not gather coats. Go directly outside with the children.
- 4) With staff, exit out fire exit doors, down the stairs and congregate at East end of parking lot on the grass.
- 5) The Supervisor (or designate) comes outside as leader and immediately does a head

count. The Supervisor (or designate) checks all rooms for children, shuts doors, turns off lights, brings attendance & emergency book outside. Supervisor does roll call for each child to ensure all children are outside and accounted for.

- 6) As soon as the Supervisor (or designate) can do so safely, (s)he will call the local emergency response agency (i.e. 911 for fire department)
- 7) Winter weather – duty people will quickly gather coats and bring outside. (Only if safe to do so)
- 8) If the children cannot be returned safely to the school within a reasonable length of time, the staff will supervise the transfer of the children to the Evacuation Center listed below, whereupon their parents or guardians will be contacted via phone of their whereabouts to facilitate prompt pick-up.

Fire drills are practiced monthly. Procedures for staff are located on the back of duty cards and posted near all exits.

12.3 Evacuation Center:

Pineland Public School

5121 Meadowhill Road, Burlington (905) 634-2311

13 Duties and Responsibilities of Board of Directors

First and foremost are the ethical responsibilities of the Board to the members, the teachers and the community. It is the Board's duty to uphold high standards while maintaining confidentiality, tact, and diplomacy in sensitive matters. All Board members are expected to attend all executive and general meetings. The Board typically changes over before the new school year begins. At that time, the Board reviews policies, procedures and individualized plans and will record as necessary in the Board minutes. The Supervisor in conjunction with the Board monitors all school procedures (including policies, procedures, and individualized plans). If a contravention to any outlined policy takes place, the Supervisor and Board will discuss, work for a resolution and record in the monthly board meetings minutes.

13.1 President

- Prepare an agenda, organize and preside at all meetings.
- In case of a tie vote, shall break the tie.
- Be a signing officer.
- Be ex-officio on all committees.
- Complete Form 1 online.
- Notify members of any missed responsibilities and resulting fines if the Treasurer has not done so.
- Act as Personnel Consultant to deal with any personnel problems with the assistance from the executive members.
- Review and renew teacher contracts.
- Coordinate the hiring of new staff and along with at least one other Board member,

- conduct interviews for new staff members and make a recommendation to the Board.
- Be responsible for advertising for the position of staff members.
- Be responsible for finding suitable facilities for the operation of the school.

13.2 Vice-President

- Perform the duties of President in their absence/resignation.
- Be a voting member.
- Be a signing officer.
- Perform other duties as the President and other Executive Board may designate.
- Assist President in preparing teacher contracts for the upcoming year.
- Assist any committee that is formed for the purpose of fundraising or marketing (ie: Appleby Street Fair Committee).
- Organize and lead fundraising initiatives.
- Assist the teachers with low-budget marketing strategies.
- Assist the teachers with social media.

13.3 Treasurer

- Maintain contact with the Bookkeeper and report to the Board/membership on updates as they arise.
- Be a voting member.
- Be a signing officer.
- Receive and deposit all monies of the school in a designated bank or trust account on behalf of the school.
- Disperse all monies of the school.
- Be responsible for returning cheques or e transfer monies to withdrawing members.
- Collect from members with any delinquent fees, committee fines and fundraising amounts.
- Maintain listing of fees received for each member.
- Assist President in preparing teachers contracts for the upcoming year.
- Respond to any financial inquiries from Halton Region and the Ministry of Education.
- Write and distribute tax receipts.
- Maintain and present up to date fundraising financial records to membership.

13.4 Bookkeeper / Treasurer

If financially viable, a bookkeeper will be retained and assume the following responsibilities:

- Calculate teachers' biweekly payroll and write teachers' pay cheques.
- Prepare a monthly or bi-monthly (as deemed necessary) financial report for the Executive.
- Prepare an annual financial statement (with comparison to budget).
- Record all receipts and disbursements of the school on a monthly basis and prepare monthly bank reconciliation.
- Prepare T4 forms, T4 summaries and annual tax return.

- Prepare a budget for the upcoming year which is to be approved by the incoming board.
- Complete and submit CWELLC reconciliations on behalf of the school.

Note: If there is no bookkeeper, these responsibilities will be assumed by the treasurer.

13.5 Registrar

- Handle all registrations and applications.
- Be a voting member.
- Keep a master file of all members of the school.
- Comply with the Halton Regional Health Department child immunization policies regarding submissions.
- Notify the Supervisor and Executive Board in the event of the withdrawal of a child, or the addition of a new member.
- Plan one Open House in conjunction with the Supervisor.
- Maintain a list of all persons who have paid the registration fee.
- Maintain a list in the order in which applications are received.
- Maintain the waitlist when the school is at capacity.
- Assist the Supervisor in updating the student files.
- Assist the Supervisor and Scheduler in collecting participating member information.
- Check messages on the school's answering machine during summer months/school closures for holidays.
- Change outgoing message on the school's answering machine when necessary.

13.6 Secretary

- Record and file minutes of all meetings.
- Be a voting member.
- Deliver, collect and summarize school evaluation (feedback forms).
- Be responsible for all General Meeting sign-in sheet.

13.7 Scheduler

- Make up a duty and volunteer schedule, giving at least one week's notice for each month, and provide copies to each participating member and supervisor.
- Be a voting member.
- Set up various operating and special events committees and schedule each member on each (excluding Executive) and provide the Supervisor and the members with updated committee lists as needed.
- Assist the Supervisor and Registrar in collecting participating member information.

Note: When necessary, the Secretary and Scheduler role will be combined.

14 Staff Training and Development Policy

All new staff who join Muppets Co-operative Preschool must have a valid Criminal Reference Check in place with Vulnerable Sector Screening, as well as required immunizations as per

Ministry of Health. A staff / duty / volunteer handbook is located in the office to assist in the transition into the classroom for following policies and procedures.

All staff need to abide by the confidentiality agreement as set out in the Staff / Duty / Volunteer handbook (see section 9.1 in the Red book as it also applies to duty and volunteers).

The following is a list of required training to be completed when a new staff member is hired:

- Review, understand and sign-off on “Child Care and Early Years Act and Ontario’s pedagogy How Does Learning Happen?”
- Review, understand and sign-off of the Red Book which includes policies and procedures.
- Intermediate (formerly Standard) First Aid and CPR-C Training.
- Worker Health and Safety Awareness training (online).
- Food Safety Certification from the Halton Region (one staff member must have this certification at all times while in program).
- Quality Training to be coordinated with both the employee and the supervisor and maintained throughout employment.

14.1 Ongoing Training and Professional Development

Current staff members must keep all certifications valid during employment. At Muppets, we strive to encourage and support every staff member with pursuing on-going professional development to help each team member to acquire new knowledge, improve existing skills and facilitate personal growth. As per our staff employment contracts, training time and necessary budget is allocated to each employee to participate in professional development.

Muppets will reimburse employees (including Supply Staff and Enhanced Support Staff) of the total cost of their:

- VSC (Vulnerable Sector Check) upon completing 5 shifts of work
- Intermediate (formerly Standard) First Aid/CPR C certification upon completing 10 shifts of work

The above reimbursements only apply to costs undertaken to be able to work at Muppets and at the discretion of the School Supervisor.

Appendix 1

TERMINATION FORM

I, (full name) _____ would like to terminate my child's attendance at Muppets Co-operative Preschool Inc.

Name of Child(ren):

Effective Date (DD/MM/YYYY):

I understand that four weeks' notice is required for withdrawal, and I agree to assume any financial obligation that may be necessary.

My reason for withdrawing my child is:

I feel changes could be made in the area of:

- ☐ Staff ☐ Facilities ☐ Orientation
☐ Schedule ☐ Meetings ☐ Executive
☐ School Routines ☐ Other (please specify):

Please rate your experience at Muppets:

- ☐ Very Satisfied ☐ Somewhat Satisfied ☐ No Opinion
☐ Somewhat Dissatisfied ☐ Very Dissatisfied ☐ Unsure

My suggestions for areas of improvement:

I would (☐) / I would not (☐) recommend Muppets Preschool to another parent of a preschooler.

The Red Bag needs to be hand washed and returned to the school as soon as possible. The Registrar will return the remainder of post-dated cheques, if applicable. Please drop in or call the school to set a time to pick up all remaining artwork and other belongings.

(☐) I have a child eligible for preschool next fall, and would like information regarding registration when available.

(☐) Please notify me regarding the Open House.

Parent Signature:

Date:

Appendix 2

IMPORTANT DATES 2026-2027

<u>Event</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>
Duty Person Meeting Annual General Meeting	Classroom	Thursday September 10 th	7:00pm 8:00 pm
First Day of School (staggered start and shortened morning)	Classroom	Tuesday September 15 th Wednesday September 16 th Toddler visits Tuesday September 15 th	9:30am – 12:00pm
Appleby Street Fest	Appleby Line	Sunday September 20 th	1-5 pm
PD Day (HDSB)	School Closure	Friday October 9 th	Morning
PD DAY (Preschool)	School Closure	Friday November 6 th TBC	Morning
Duty Person Meeting General Meeting	Classroom	Thursday November 12 th	7:00pm 8:00 pm
PD Day (HDSB)	School Closure	Friday November 27 th	Morning
Holiday Party	Gym	Thursday December 17 th	Morning
Winter Holidays	School Closure	December 18 th – January 3 rd	Inclusive
First Day of School in the New Year!	Classroom	Tuesday January 5 th	Morning
Picture Day	Classroom	Thursday February 4 th	Morning
General Meeting	Virtual (Zoom)	Thursday February 4 th	8:00 pm
PD Day (HDSB)	School Closure	Friday February 5 th	Morning
March Break	School Closure	March 15 th – March 19 th	Inclusive

Registration open for returning families	Submit to Registrar	Tuesday March 23 rd	9:00 pm
Good Friday	School Closure	Friday March 26 th	Morning
Open House	Classroom	Monday April 5 th	9:30 - 11:30 am
Registration open for all	Submit to Registrar	Tuesday April 6 th	9:00 pm
VIP Tea	Gym	Thursday May 6 th	Morning
General Meeting	Classroom	Thursday May 20th	8:00 pm
PD Day (HDSB)	School Closure	Friday June 4 th	Morning
Graduation/ Party	Gym / Nautical Park	Thursday June 17 th	Morning
End of Year Picnic	Henderson Park	Friday June 18 th	5:00 pm

School closures align with the Halton District School Board.

Attendance at General Meetings is mandatory.

Field trip and social gathering dates will be included in the monthly newsletter / calendar.

Planned Closure Days:

- There are 19 planned closure days for the 2026-27 school year.
- Winter Break and March Break are PAID closure days and part of the regular monthly tuition.
- Friday P.D. days, Preschool P.D. day and Good Friday (Stat Holiday) have no tuition cost associated with the closure which is reflected in the monthly calculation of Fridays for participating families.