



Preschool Operating Criteria Embracing Quality in Child Care and Early Learning

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1. Daily and Visual/Auditory Schedules

Intent: A Daily Schedule is posted that reflects the current outline of the day. Families, visitors, students, educators, and children should always be aware of, and have access to, how the day is scheduled. Being aware of how the day is planned allows for consistency, self-regulation and promotes positive behaviours. The Visual/Auditory and Daily Schedules should be a reflection of the day and allow for flexibility, promoting a sense of belonging. Regular use of the Visual/Auditory Schedule with the children promotes independence and positive transitions.

Inspiring Pedagogy: "A safe environment that offers consistency and continuity as well as graduated support for children's growing independence and capacity for self-care enables children to tackle challenges, learn to persevere, and explore ways to cope with manageable levels of positive stress." (How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years (HDLH), page 30).

Reflective Questions: What considerations have been made to ensure the Visual/Auditory Schedule is developmentally-appropriate and easy for the children to understand? How flexible is the Daily Schedule? How does the Daily Schedule aim to meet the needs of the children and support their well-being and engagement? How does the Visual/Auditory Schedule encourage the child to reflect on what is happening next? How is the Visual/Auditory Schedule being used to support children through transitions?

Daily Schedule: A written schedule that lists when activities and events will occur during the day and is posted in a place accessible to families and educators.

Visual/Auditory Schedule: Real photos showing when activities and events will occur during the day. **Real photos depicting children using the toilet/potty or being diapered are not considered appropriate.** The Visual/Auditory Schedule is accessible to the children. It is acceptable to have a Visual/Auditory Schedule that is not posted (for example, in a photo album or on a ring holder) as long as it is kept in an area that is accessible to the children at all times. If there are children in the program with a wide range of abilities and disabilities, modifications should be used to support their needs. For example, creating a schedule using braille or an auditory schedule.

Does Not Meet Expectations

Daily Schedule is not posted

There is no Daily Schedule posted within the program space accessible to the families and educators.

Visual/Auditory Schedule is not accessible to the children

Time is not planned for different learning experiences/learning periods

For example, no time is planned for outdoor play, indoor play or child and educator-initiated activities and learning experiences.

Meets Expectations

A Daily Schedule is posted that indicates time is planned for:

The Daily Schedule covers the full hours of operation of the program and indicates that time is planned for ALL of the following activities:

Outdoor play

(Sub-item potentially not applicable)

Indoor play

Child and educator-initiated learning experiences

Time to meet children's physical needs

Visual/Auditory Schedule is accessible to the children

The Visual/Auditory Schedule is accessible to the children and reflects the main routines and transitions for the complete day using real photos or auditory practices.

Exceeds Expectations

Alternate arrangements are indicated on the Daily Schedule

Should the children be unable to go outside due to inclement weather, the alternate gross motor location is identified on the Daily Schedule. For example, the gym, hallway, or program space is used as an alternate space.

Daily Schedule is seasonally adjusted

Evidence the Daily Schedule is changed to reflect the seasons. For example, the posted Daily Schedule is labelled with the current season.

Visual/Auditory Schedule is seasonally adjusted

The Visual/Auditory Schedule is updated to reflect the current season through real photos.

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Does Not Meet Expectations

Meets Expectations

Exceeds Expectations

Daily Schedule has balance between structure and flexibility

The Daily Schedule is flexible and can be adjusted to meet the circumstances of the day and to meet the individual needs of the children. For example, time planned for outdoor play is adjusted because the children want to stay outside longer, or washroom routines are completed as required to meet the needs of the children.

Photographs in Visual/Auditory Schedule include children in the program

Two or more children currently enrolled in the program are included in two or more photos of the Visual/Auditory Schedule.

Daily Visual/Auditory Schedule is referred to

The Visual/Auditory Schedule is referred to with individual and/or groups of children. Educators and/or children refer to a Visual/Auditory Schedule and it is used as a teaching tool for children who are learning the daily routines. For example, using the Daily Visual/Auditory Schedule to support transitions, or using a pictorial schedule to support learning of toileting routine.

2. Program Plan

Intent: The Program Plan is an information tool used to ensure families, educators, students, and visitors are aware of the learning experiences in which the children will be engaged in throughout the day. The Program Plan is developed by educators to promote the on-going learning opportunities and developmental growth for all children. Scheduled time away from the children for programming allows educators to incorporate documented observations, cues, interests, and developmental goals into the Program Plan.

Inspiring Pedagogy: "As defined in ELECT, early years curriculum is the sum total of experiences, activities, and events that occur within an inclusive environment designed to foster children's well-being, learning, and development and ensure meaningful participation for every child. It begins with an informed understanding of what children are capable of learning and how they learn effectively; it sets out goals for children's learning and development, health, and well-being; and it provides direction for educators." (HDLH, page 15).

Reflective Questions: How are recommendations from external agencies or professionals taken into consideration when programming? How are the children's individual goals incorporated into the learning experiences? How do educators collaborate with families and local communities to ensure the program is reflective of their beliefs, practices, and expectations as well as sociocultural identities? How is the Program Plan inclusive and responsive to meet the needs of all the children in the program?

Program Plan: Describes the specific learning experiences planned for children or documented by the end of the day in each curriculum area. It is different from a schedule in that it includes details of each learning experience. The Program Plan is unique to each individual centre/agency or program and reflects their curriculum model and philosophy. The program space has a Program Plan for both indoor and outdoor experiences that is reflective of the children enrolled in each particular program.

Posted: The Program Plan is posted in a place that is accessible to families and educators in the program space or at the entrance to the program space.

Learning areas are planned: Refers to pre-planned learning experiences based on current observations of the children.

Learning areas are documented: Refers to emergent programming. For centres that use an emergent curriculum model, learning experiences must be documented by the end of each day; however, learning experiences should be planned for the first day of each week. The previous week's programming will be reviewed to ensure experiences are documented for all learning areas.

Does Not Meet Expectations

A current Program Plan is not posted

There is no current Program Plan posted in a place accessible to families and educators.

Program Plan does not cover the entire time children are in attendance

The Program Plan does not provide for learning experiences throughout the day.

Each room does not have its own Program Plan

For example, there are two preschool rooms, and they share one Program Plan.

Meets Expectations

The following learning areas are planned and/or documented:

One sensory daily

One art daily

One cognitive daily

One language and literacy daily

Two science and nature weekly

One block and construction weekly

One music and movement weekly

One pretend play weekly

Exceeds Expectations

Evidence of formal programming time given to educators

Meetings are held away from the supervision of children that includes the whole room team for a minimum of 30 minutes per month. For example, evidence can be seen in meeting minutes, or posting of scheduled room meetings. Formal planning meetings occur at least once a month throughout the year.

Does Not Meet Expectations

Meets Expectations

Exceeds Expectations

Current Program Plan includes descriptions of the learning opportunities

A description of the learning opportunities for each learning area being planned and/or documented needs to be reflected on the Program Plan. At least one learning experience needs to relate to the learning opportunity. This can be accomplished in the following ways:

- list materials with a direct reference to the number and competency within the Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT) Continuum of Development which describes the learning opportunities, for example: Cardboard boxes, paint, glue - 4.3 Representation.
Note: if only referencing the number, the Continuum of Development must be posted beside the Program Plan for reference.
- describe the learning experience and include the competency children will potentially learn by participating in the learning experience, for example: Sink and Float – Problem Solving.
- curriculum learning outcomes. For example, Key Developmental Indicators from High Scope, Play to Learn, Montessori.

Evidence that individual goals of children are incorporated into the Program Plan

This can be accomplished in any of the following ways:

- through observation notes
- Individual Program Plans
- meeting minutes, or
- directly on the Program Plan

How this is accomplished is at the discretion of each individual centre/agency/program.

Supervisor reviews Program Plans and signs them weekly

Evidence that the supervisor reviews the weekly Program Plans either prior to posting or the end of the week after learning experiences have been documented.

Note: The person responsible for reviewing and signing the Program Plan should be someone other than the person implementing it. For example, the educators designate or the assistant supervisor.

Information is accessible to families on curriculum model

This information may be found on the family board or in the family handbook.

Does Not Meet Expectations

Meets Expectations

Exceeds Expectations

External agencies/professionals attend meetings to plan appropriately for children with individual support needs

External professionals and/or specialists provide support and share suggestions on how educators can support the needs of individual children and/or programs.

Children who do not nap or who wake early are provided with play materials which are documented

Play materials are documented on the Program Plan or through a separate posting next to the Program Plan.

Note: Not applicable for nursery school programs.
(Sub-item potentially not applicable)

3. Learning Experiences

Intent: Educators plan learning experiences and transitions that are developmentally-appropriate throughout the day, based on individual observations, their knowledge of child development and the cues of the children. The continuous learning opportunities are adaptable, promote choice and reflect the interests of the children. Educators collaborate with families and encourage them to be active participants in their child's learning environment. Photo documentation, whether posted or found in individual portfolios, highlight the children's interests, skills, and accomplishments. Educators incorporate specialized opportunities that introduce children to diverse learning topics.

Inspiring Pedagogy: "Educators are reflective practitioners who learn about children using various strategies. They listen, observe, document, and discuss with others, families in particular, to understand children as unique individuals. They observe and listen to learn how children make meaning through their experiences in the world around them. Educators consider their own practices and approaches and the impacts they have on children, families, and others. Educators use this knowledge, gained through observing and discussing with others, and their professional judgement to create contexts to support children's learning, development, health, and well-being." (HDLH, page 19).

Reflective Questions: How does the program encourage all the children to be engaged? How is the program space set up to encourage children to follow their own interests and skills? How are the observations of the children being used to offer experiences that extend learning? How do educators ensure all the learning experiences are inclusive and reflective of diverse communities and cultures, varying abilities, and family structures as well as sociocultural identities? How do the educators ensure the learning experiences are gender inclusive and support diverse gender expressions?

This indicator reflects the implementation of learning experiences from the Program Plan.

Sociocultural Identities: Experiences that represent Indigenous peoples and cultures, different ethnicities, races, languages, sexual orientations, and diverse gender identities.

Gender Identity: Gender identity is each person's internal and individual experience of gender. It is a person's sense of being a woman, a man, both, neither, or anywhere along the gender spectrum. (Ontario Human Rights Commission)

Does Not Meet Expectations

Learning experiences offered do not reflect the current Program Plan

For sites practicing emergent curriculum, learning experiences are not documented by the end of each day.

Learning experiences offered are not developmentally-appropriate

Learning experiences offered are either too advanced or do not present enough challenge for the children enrolled.

Meets Expectations

There is current documentation which demonstrates that observations of children are used in the development of learning experiences

Educators keep a record of observations, photo documentation or learning stories. At least one observation per child per week is documented. Note: For children who attend nursery school programs less than five days per week, at least two observations per month are documented. For children who attend nursery school programs daily, at least one observation is documented per week.

Exceeds Expectations

Photo documentation of learning experiences available

Educators use photographs of children participating in activities and learning experiences to share what the child is learning during the day. Written descriptions of the learning opportunity must accompany the photograph. Photographs can be used for recall opportunities with the children. Photo documentation can be available in the program space or in the child care centre.

Activity resources are accessible to families

Educators provide activity resources to families which extend the current learning opportunities. For example, printed copies of the recipe for the weekly cooking activity are made accessible to families. The resources can be offered as hardcopies, via online apps, web links or emailed at least every four months.

Does Not Meet Expectations

Learning experiences do not promote choice for children

Children do not have a choice of what learning experience they want to do. For example, children are only able to access books early in the morning, only one learning experience is offered at a time or children are not provided with a choice.

Meets Expectations

Learning experiences are adapted to meet any child's individual needs

Educators modify activities, learning experiences and routines to allow all children to participate. For example, a child is provided a larger paint brush to paint, or a child is shown the steps for dressing.

Learning experiences are based on children's interests

Children are engaged in activities and experiences. This may also include adaptations made to the Program Plan based on children's interests.

Exceeds Expectations

Portfolios regarding each child's development are accessible to families

Educators compile portfolios that document the child's developmental progress. Portfolios include two or more types of the following items: developmental reviews, artwork, photographs, observations, pedagogical documentation. Each portfolio must contain two of each type. For example, two pieces of pedagogical documentation, two photographs. Portfolios are accessible to families for them to look through at their leisure.

Enrichment program, in addition to regular program, is included monthly

Evidence is shown that the program incorporates enrichment programming which goes above and beyond the regular program. An educator or family member within the centre can offer the enrichment program, which is also extended to other programs. For example, monthly music teacher, yoga instruction, creative movement instruction, a children's workshop.

Note: Not applicable for half-day nursery school programs.

4. Indoor Physical Environment

Intent: All play equipment, furnishings, and learning environments are developmentally-appropriate and safe. The program space is organized and inviting. Materials reflecting people with a wide range of abilities, disabilities and sociocultural identities are placed in an inclusive manner throughout the program space. Educators adapt the program space to meet the needs and interests of the children. Educators are given paid time away from supervision duties to prepare the materials needed for the planned learning experiences and program space set-up.

Inspiring Pedagogy: "Children thrive in indoor and outdoor spaces that invite them to investigate, imagine, think, create, solve problems, and make meaning from their experiences – especially when the spaces contain interesting and complex open-ended materials that children can use in many ways." (HDLH, page 20).

Reflective Questions: How is the program space arranged in a manner that is inviting and encourages children to explore? How do educators regularly assess if there are any barriers to the children that would prevent them from playing freely? What strategies are used to ensure there are no barriers to supervision? How are the toys and play materials open-ended to support the children's natural curiosity and discovery during play? How do educators organize the layout of the program space to promote opportunities for children to master self-regulation within their play? Are the play materials reflective and relevant to the children, families and community that are in care which provide a sense of belonging? How are educators being intentional with the use of the play materials to inspire and promote the ability to self-regulate, promote well-being and positive self-identity? How do educators ensure that learning experiences are gender inclusive?

Physical environment: The program space where children spend their time.

Sociocultural Identities: Experiences that represent Indigenous peoples and cultures, different ethnicities, races, languages, sexual orientations, and diverse gender identities.

Learning area: An area in the program space that is intentionally set-up with similar play materials to support the focus. For example, the creative art learning area includes all the required accessible materials.

Does Not Meet Expectations

Play equipment, toys and materials are disorganized

Similar equipment, toys and materials are not grouped together and/or toys and materials are carelessly piled on shelves.

Toys are not accessible on open shelves to children

Children cannot take the toys and materials they want to play with off a shelf by themselves or shelves are closed off from the children.

Furnishings are in poor condition

For example, shelving units have chipped paint, carpeting is frayed, furniture is unstable, or seating is torn.

Meets Expectations

The play environment is arranged into learning areas that are open and accessible throughout the day

All learning areas are open during free play and planned program time. Learning areas provide space for:

- Sensory/Art
- Language/Listening
- Pretend Play
- Construction/Block
- Science
- Cognitive/Manipulative, and
- Quiet space

Exceeds Expectations

Organized storage space available

There is space for educators to be able to store rotational toys and other play materials. The space is organized and/or labelled allowing educators to easily access equipment.

Time is scheduled daily for educators to prepare materials in advance of learning experiences

Educators have time scheduled daily to prepare materials in advance and/or to set up the program space in advance so that children are not kept waiting. For example, a daily set-up time or material prep time is provided for educators to prepare materials for up-coming learning experiences. Educators are on paid time and are not counted in ratios.

Does Not Meet Expectations

Room set-up does not allow for supervision of children

The program space set-up interferes with safe supervision of all children.

Meets Expectations

The play environment is designed to promote participation and peer interactions

There are small areas for children to play in and large areas where three or more children can play together. There are sufficient tables and chairs. For example, a cozy corner where two children can read a book and seven chairs at a table for children interested in a group cooking experience.

The play environment is designed to promote independent use by children

The program space is set up in a way that encourages children to access materials independently.

Floor space with suitable floor coverings is available

There is at least one area of the floor with a soft covering. For example, mats or carpets for children to sit comfortably on the floor to play.

Safe storage space available for equipment/toys and materials

There is space for educators to be able to store rotational toys and other play materials. The space does not pose a safety issue. For example, boxes are not stacked on top of each other and if it is open storage, it is organized and is not creating visual clutter.

Safe mirror at child's eye level in the playroom

There is a shatter-proof mirror accessible within the program space at the children's eye level.

Two or more educational play materials reflecting people with a wide range of abilities and disabilities are accessible in two areas

Educational play materials may include toy wheelchairs, guide dogs, dolls with leg braces, puzzles, blocks and/or books that depict people with varying abilities or using adaptive equipment. These materials need to be integrated into two learning areas. For example, two puzzles in the cognitive area and two books in the book area.

Exceeds Expectations

Environment adjusted to meet the needs of children

When needed, educators rearrange the program environment to meet the needs of the children. For example, educators expand the pretend play space to include children with an assistive device if necessary, or educators utilize light covers to decrease the impact of overhead lights.

Child height windows in doors/walls to see out

Within the program space, windows and/or doors are at child's height to allow for children to see out.

Two or more educational play materials reflecting people with a wide range of abilities and disabilities are accessible in at least three areas

These materials need to be integrated in three learning areas. For example, two puzzles in the cognitive area, two toy wheelchairs in the pretend play area and two books in the book area.

Two or more educational play materials reflecting sociocultural identities are accessible in at least three areas

Educational play materials may include dolls with different skin tones, non-binary dolls, anatomically correct dolls, foods, books, puzzles that reflect Indigenous peoples and cultures, dishes, clothes, and wooden dolls reflecting sociocultural identities. These materials need to be integrated into three learning areas. For example, two foods in the pretend play area, two puzzles reflecting Indigenous culture in the cognitive area and two wooden dolls representing sociocultural identities in the block area.

Does Not Meet Expectations

Meets Expectations

Exceeds Expectations

Two or more educational play materials reflecting sociocultural identities are accessible in two areas

Educational play materials may include dolls with different skin tones, non-binary dolls, anatomically correct dolls, foods, books, puzzles that reflect Indigenous peoples and cultures, dishes, clothes, and wooden dolls reflecting sociocultural identities. These materials need to be integrated into two learning areas. For example, two food items in the pretend play area and two wooden dolls representing sociocultural identities in the block area.

5. Displays

Intent: Displays should be meaningful to the children in the program and intentionally placed throughout the environment in a thoughtful manner. They are inclusive and are changed regularly to reflect the recent interests and artwork created by the children. Displays, including photographs of the children engaged in learning experiences, are at the children's eye level which promotes spontaneous interactions, logical thinking, and memory recall. Displays include family engagement in the program and encourage community involvement. Displays of people with a wide range of abilities and disabilities, diverse sociocultural identities, and family structures should be staged in an inclusive manner throughout the program space and used as tools for reflective practice and learning.

Inspiring Pedagogy: "Enabling children to develop a sense of belonging as part of a group is also a key contributor to their lifelong well-being. A sense of belonging is supported when each child's unique spirit, individuality, and presence are valued." (HDLH, page 24).

Reflective Questions: How do the displays strengthen and give meaning to the program? How are the displays arranged to support all children and their families to feel a sense of belonging, taking into consideration each family's lived experiences? How do displays in the program reflect families engaged in everyday life and/or in the local community? How do educators ensure all the displays are inclusive and reflective of diverse communities and cultures, a wide range of abilities and disabilities, and family structures? How do the displays embrace different family structures, social cultural identities, and traditional celebrations in an authentic and meaningful manner? How are educators using families as a resource to ensure displays reflect the local community and are meaningful? How are educators creating a sense of well-being, supporting an inclusive environment through displays that reflect diverse gender identities?

Display: Anything posted on the walls, furniture, photo frames or in digital photo frames:

- commercial displays: store-bought artwork, paintings
- adult-made displays: family tree with pictures of the children in the room and their families
- child-made displays: children's art

Family structures: Two-parent families, single-parent families, 2SLGBTQIA+ families, blended families, couples, multi-generational families, grandparent-led families, alternative family forms living in one household.

Process Art: Open ended process where children can freely engage with art materials and express themselves individually and creatively.

Product Art: Specific materials are presented to the children and there is a finished end product in mind by the educator.

Sociocultural Identities: Displays that represent Indigenous peoples and cultures, different ethnicities, races, languages, sexual orientations, and diverse gender identities.

Gender Identity: Gender identity is each person's internal and individual experience of gender. It is a person's sense of being a woman, a man, both, neither, or anywhere along the gender spectrum. (Ontario Human Rights Commission).

Note: Displays should reflect different languages of the families, educators, and local community, and should be checked for accuracy before posting.

Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<p>No displays posted There are no displays posted in the program space.</p> <p>More than half of the children's artwork is product-oriented, not process-oriented More than half of the children's artwork on display in the program space is product-oriented and focused on creating a standard product or achieving a specified outcome.</p>	<p>At least three displays include children's own artwork as well as adult-made and/or commercial materials The program space has at least three types of displays that include children's artwork displayed along with adult-made and/or commercial materials.</p>	<p>Additional displays are placed throughout the environment Displays extend throughout the centre. For example, the cloakroom, hallways, entrance. These displays are free of bias and are displayed in an inclusive manner.</p>

Does Not Meet Expectations

Displays are arranged in a segregated manner

Displays are not placed in an inclusive manner, nor displayed throughout the environment. For example, all displays reflecting people with a wide range of abilities and disabilities are grouped together.

Meets Expectations

Displays are:

Reflective of children's recent activities

Three or more displays include children's recent activities. For example, artwork from the past two months.

Developmentally-appropriate

Displays include pictures that are developmentally-appropriate for young children.

Socioculturally appropriate and free of bias

Displays are socioculturally appropriate, presented in a way that does not reinforce stereotypes, tokenism nor dehumanize communities and/or individuals. Photographs and displays are intentional and provide opportunities for learning, reflective practice and understanding.

Two or more displays include people with a wide range of abilities and disabilities

Displays include images of people with a wide range of abilities and disabilities participating in everyday activities or using different types of adaptive equipment.

Two or more displays include sociocultural identities

Displays reflect Indigenous peoples and cultures, different ethnicities, races, languages, or diverse gender identities that are meaningful to children and families in the program and community.

Two or more displays include family structures

Displays include images of two or more different types of family structures. For example, Two-parent families, single-parent families, 2SLGBTQIA+ families, blended families, couples, multi-generational families, grandparent-led families, alternative family forms living in one household.

Exceeds Expectations

Displays include family involvement in activities and/or events

Two or more photos in the program space include two or more current families engaged in centre activities. For example, family breakfast, summer BBQ, field trips.

Displays promote inclusion in daily living

Two or more photos in the program space include images of diverse sociocultural identities and people with varying abilities and disabilities participating in everyday activities.

Displays include children in the room participating in activities and experiences

Two or more photos in the program space include photographs of current children participating in planned and/or documented experiences. These photos do not include the photos of the children in the Visual/Auditory Schedule, or the family tree displays.

Two or more displays are in more than one language

Displays in the program space include different languages. For example, sign language, braille, Indigenous languages, and languages spoken by the children and families in the program.

Children's three-dimensional creations are on display

Three-dimensional items created by children may be on display anywhere in the program space.

Does Not Meet Expectations

Meets Expectations

Exceeds Expectations

As much as possible, displays are at child's eye level

For example, on furniture, in the program space, picture frames or on the wall.

Photographs of current children and/or families are displayed

Two or more photos of children currently enrolled in the program are displayed within the program space. Pictures of some children, but not necessarily all children in the program at the time of the assessment, are seen in displays.

6. Sensory, Science and Nature

Intent: Materials reflecting sensory, science and nature encourage children to explore through cause-and-effect experimentation and observation. Continual exposure to these materials and experiences allow children to learn more about their environments.

Inspiring Pedagogy: "Optimal conditions for learning occur when we are fully engaged. For children, this happens in play that evolves from the child's natural curiosity – active play that allows children to explore with their bodies, minds, and senses, stimulating them to ask questions, test theories, solve problems, engage in creative thinking, and make meaning of the world around them. These investigations through play fuse intellect and feeling to help children make connections and develop the capacity for higher-order thinking." (HDLH, page 35).

Reflective Questions: How are the play materials developmentally-appropriate for the children? Which play materials promote critical thinking? How do the play materials enhance the natural curiosity and inquiry of the children? How are STEAM concepts embedded into planned and/or documented learning experiences?

Sensory learning experiences: Planned and/or documented learning experiences referring to one or more of the five senses - taste, sight, touch, smell, and hearing.

Science and nature equipment and materials: For example, bottles filled with natural items, magnifying glasses, plants, coloured lenses, volcanoes, tornado bottles.

STEAM concepts: STEAM refers to Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics.

Does Not Meet Expectations

No materials for science and nature learning experiences

There are no materials available in the program space for science and nature learning experiences.

No materials for sensory learning experiences

There are no materials available in the program space for sensory learning experiences.

No equipment for sensory learning experiences

There is no equipment available in the program space for sensory learning experiences. For example, no sensory bin and/or table.

Meets Expectations

Three or more developmentally-appropriate science and nature equipment and/or materials are accessible

For example, magnifying glasses, pine cones, and a weight scale.

Three or more developmentally-appropriate sensory equipment and/or materials are accessible

For example, sensory bottles, tactile bags, and sand.

Sensory opportunities accessible throughout the day

During free play and planned programming times, sensory materials and learning experiences are accessible to the children. It is acceptable for sensory equipment to be closed at lunch and sleep time.

Exceeds Expectations

Three or more science and/or nature learning experiences planned and/or documented weekly

Note: Not applicable for half-day nursery school programs.

(Sub-item potentially not applicable)

One science and/or nature learning experience planned and/or documented daily

Note: Not applicable for half-day nursery school programs.

(Sub-item potentially not applicable)

Opportunities to experience natural objects and/or events

Educators offer opportunities that incorporate natural objects in the program space or through learning experiences. For example, snow, plants, honeycombs, nests, shells, gourds.

Two or more planned and/or documented sensory learning experiences daily

Note: Not applicable for half-day nursery school programs.

(Sub-item potentially not applicable)

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Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
		<p>Permanent sensory equipment accessible to children in the play environment Sensory equipment is always accessible. For example, water/sand table, light tables. It is acceptable for sensory equipment to be closed at lunch and sleep time.</p> <p>Evidence of extended science and nature projects Science and nature learning experiences are extended over a period of time. For example, planting from seeds and observing the seedling growth, a height chart with measurements over time or a cause-and-effect experiment. Evidence can be seen on the Program Plan or in progress in the program space. Past experiences can be shown through photos, photo documentation, homemade books, or charts.</p>

7. Art

Intent: Creative art promotes self-expression and individuality while providing experiences collaboratively and independently through different mediums for children. Regular expectations within the Daily Schedule and children's interests allow for time to complete/extend the creative process. Safe art materials and equipment are always accessible to the children and are developmentally-appropriate. Art materials reflect sociocultural identities, include a range of skin tones, and are placed in an inclusive manner. Depending on the type of extended art project, the final piece of art created by the children can be incorporated into their program space as a prop or play material.

Inspiring Pedagogy: "Encouraging the creative expression of ideas, feelings, and interpretations using a variety of materials also helps solidify children's learning, enhances their creative problem-solving and critical thinking skills, and strengthens their memory and sense of identity." (HDLH, page 42).

Reflective Questions: Are the materials being routinely restocked to allow the children to engage in self-directed art? How are the art materials accessible in a responsive and inclusive manner? Do the children have the ability to manipulate the materials as they see fit? How do the materials inspire the children to be engaged? How are educators incorporating sociocultural identities that include skin tone materials into the program?

Note: Materials should not pose choking hazards. Children's allergies should be considered when choosing materials.

Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<p>No equipment for art learning experiences There is no equipment available in the program space for art learning experiences. For example, easel, paint brushes.</p> <p>No materials for art learning experiences There are no materials available in the program space for art learning experiences. For example, drawing tools, glue or paper.</p> <p>Art equipment is in poor condition More than 25 per cent of art equipment are in poor condition. For example, easel is unstable.</p> <p>Art materials are in poor condition More than 25 per cent of art materials are in poor condition. For example, markers are dried out, crayons are too short for children to grasp, and paper is ripped.</p> <p>Children have access to toxic art materials For example, bingo dabbers, permanent markers, or any item that states "keep out of reach of children".</p>	<p>A sufficient number of the following art materials are accessible:</p> <p>Painting and drawing For example, paints, paint brushes, markers, crayons, chalk, pastels, paper.</p> <p>Modelling materials For example, playdough, modelling clay, plasticine.</p> <p>Collage materials For example, glue, glue sticks, stickers, fabric, yarn, tissue paper.</p> <p>Printmaking For example, stamps/stamp pads, stencils.</p> <p>Three-dimensional materials For example, paper towel rolls, tissue boxes, yogurt containers.</p> <p>Three or more art materials reflect sociocultural identities through a range of skin tones There are three or more art materials accessible to the children that include four or more different skin tones. For example, markers, paint, and paper.</p>	<p>Two or more art learning experiences planned and/or documented daily Note: Not applicable for half-day nursery school programs. (Sub-item potentially not applicable)</p> <p>Evidence of extended art projects Art learning experiences are extended beyond the planned time or extended art experiences take several sessions or days to finish. For example, making paper-mâché props or the planned learning experience to paint a box evolved into making an entire community with three-dimensional materials. Evidence can be seen on the Program Plan, or the final creation may be on display. Past experiences can be shown through photos, photo documentation, homemade books, or charts.</p> <p>Art projects are incorporated into other areas Props created by children are used in other areas of the program space. For example, a city created out of three-dimensional materials is used in the block area, or collages of different food groups are used as food flyers for the grocery store in the pretend play area.</p>

Guidelines|Preschool

Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
	Equipment for art learning experiences is accessible to children	Three or more art mediums are used in planned and/or documented learning experiences For example, paint and sponges, glue and collage materials, paper and crayons.

8. Books

Intent: A comfortable and inviting environment is created to encourage natural opportunities for language and literacy enjoyment. Children can retell stories and situations with the accessible props, thus providing opportunities to enhance storytelling experiences and language development. The program space includes books in a thoughtfully displayed manner in different learning areas, or within programmed experiences, providing opportunities for enriched and extended learning possibilities.

Inspiring Pedagogy: "Opportunities for children to explore language and literacy through play contribute to their development of strong language and cognitive abilities in both the short and the long term." (HDLH, page 42).

Reflective Questions: Have the books been placed in other learning areas in a meaningful way? How are educators ensuring books are rotated based on the interests of the children and families? How do educators ensure the books are reflective and responsive to the sociocultural identities of the children and families? How do educators plan when books and book accessories are required to be rotated? What practice is in place for replacing and repairing old or well-used books?

Developmentally-appropriate: The content and material of the books reflect the developmental level of the children enrolled in the program. Books represent the sociocultural identities of the children in the program.

Book accessories: For example, puppets, flannel boards and flannel pieces, finger puppets, stuffed animals, magnetic boards and pieces, play people.

Note: The total number of books accessible include the required books reflecting diverse sociocultural identities, a wide range of abilities and disabilities, different languages, and real images.

Does Not Meet Expectations

Books are in poor condition

At least 10 per cent of books are missing pages, a front or back cover. The words and pictures are not legible.

Books are not accessible for independent use

Books are kept out of reach of children or for display only.

Less than two developmentally-appropriate books for each child enrolled

Multiply the number of children enrolled in the program by two to determine the minimum number of books that are required.

Area does not include soft seating and/or cushions for sitting

The program space does not have a separate reading area, or the reading/quiet area does not include things such as a sofa, chairs, or cushions that would make the area comfortable for children to sit. Floor mats are not considered soft seating if placed directly on a bare floor.

Meets Expectations

Books reflect three or more topics

For example, favourite story characters, insects, and trucks.

Three or more books contain real images of people and/or objects

For example, a book with images of actual food items, animals, people.

Two or more books which include sociocultural identities are accessible

Two or more books that include images of people that reflect Indigenous cultures, different ethnicities, races, languages, and diverse gender identities are accessible that are meaningful to children and families in the program and community. The books are inclusive and bias-free.

Exceeds Expectations

Books for rotation are available

The rotational books can be shared within the centre.

Books are incorporated into one other learning area

Books are accessible to the children in one other area of the program space. For example, the science, art, or pretend play areas have books related to the learning area, or the focus of the area. Books can be incorporated by placing them on shelves or in the toy bins. These books are used to extend and enhance children's learning.

Books are incorporated into three or more other learning areas

Books are accessible to the children in three or more areas of the program space. For example, the science, art, and pretend play areas have books related to the learning areas or the focus of the areas. Books can be incorporated by placing them on shelves or in the toy bins. These books are used to extend and enhance children's learning.

Does Not Meet Expectations

Meets Expectations

Exceeds Expectations

Two or more books which include people with a wide range of abilities and disabilities are accessible

Two or more books that include images of people with a wide range of abilities and disabilities participating in everyday activities or using different types of adaptive equipment are accessible to the children. The books are inclusive and bias-free.

One book accessory is accessible in the book area

One book accessory is accessible in the book area for children to use in combination with books to engage in storytelling. For example, puppets or a flannel board with flannel pieces.

Two or more books relate to current Program Plan

Two or more books relate to the current Program Plan focus to support and enhance the planned and/or documented learning experience. These books are accessible to the children.

Homemade books are accessible

Books made by educators and/or children are accessible to the children and placed in the program space in a meaningful way. Homemade books are not counted as displays in the room. For example, a photo album, a collection of artworks that has been laminated and bound together, or photo documentation of an activity such as plant life-cycle.

Three or more books which include people with a wide range of abilities and disabilities are accessible

Three or more books that include images of people with a wide range of abilities and disabilities participating in everyday activities or using different types of adaptive equipment are accessible to the children. The books are inclusive and bias-free.

Three or more books which include sociocultural identities are accessible

Three or more books that include images of people that reflect Indigenous cultures, different ethnicities, races, languages, and diverse gender identities are accessible that are meaningful to children and families in the program and community. The books are inclusive and bias-free.

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Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
		<p>Two or more book accessories are accessible in the book area Two or more different types of book accessories are accessible in the book area for children to use in combination with books to extend their play and storytelling opportunities. For example, puppets, finger puppets, flannel board with flannel pieces, masks, play people, animals, magnetic board with magnet pieces.</p> <p>Two or more print materials are accessible Two different appropriate print materials are accessible to the children. For example, two different magazines, two different catalogues or one magazine and one newspaper.</p>

9. Language and Literacy

Intent: Educators promote authentic opportunities for the development of language and literacy by exposing children to various materials and accessories. Planning language and literacy experiences every day encourages the children to use and develop their vocabulary, their questioning skills, recall abilities, and gain an understanding of sociocultural identities. By exposing the children to a variety of literacy materials, languages and experiences, the educators support the children in making meaningful pre-reading connections.

Inspiring Pedagogy: "Programs can best support emerging literacy skills by providing open-ended materials that foster imagination and symbolic play, including signs, symbols, and props that support print awareness in authentic contexts; by encouraging children to engage in play with words and sounds in song and rhyme; and by offering numerous opportunities for children to share books and stories." (HDLH, page 42).

Reflective Questions: How are literacy experiences reflected and extended throughout the program space? How do the literacy experiences connect to the cues and interests of the children? How is literacy promoted and extended in the program? How are language and literacy opportunities being extended to the families to continue skill building? How are families supported to promote language and literacy learning opportunities outside of the program?

Language and literacy learning experiences: For example, labelling games, audio books, reading books, singing songs, telling stories, reading recipes, exploring menus.

Note: Any labelling in other languages or homemade books in dual languages should reflect the commonly spoken languages of the families, educators, and/or the local community and should be checked for accuracy.

Does Not Meet Expectations

Educators do not read to children daily

Educators do not read to children daily, either spontaneously or planned, during large or small group times, or to individual children.

Writing materials are not accessible

Children are not able to independently access writing materials. Writing materials are limited to drawing tools located on the creative shelf or the writing materials are incomplete.

Language and literacy toys/puzzles are not accessible

There are no language and literacy toys/puzzles accessible to the children. For example, number puzzles, word matching games, alphabet blocks.

Meets Expectations

Three or more writing materials are accessible

Three or more types of writing materials are accessible to the children to extend learning opportunities for language and literacy. For example: pencils, erasers, braille rulers, paper, word boxes, dictionary, write on/wipe off board, dry erase markers, braille keyboard, chalkboard and chalk, Etch A Sketch, magnetic boards/letters. These items are not considered part of the required creative materials.

Two or more language and literacy toys or puzzles are accessible

For example, puzzles, matching games, braille blocks, alphabet blocks, sign language cards, tracing letters, play materials with letters or numbers.

Toy bins and/or shelves are labelled with words and/or pictures

Half of the toy bins and/or shelves are labelled with words, pictures, or a combination of both.

Exceeds Expectations

Language and literacy opportunities are integrated into one other area

For example, audio books, keyboards, phones, word builders, alphabet and number blocks, braille rulers, cash registers with play money, braille slate kit, or letter and number stencils.

Toy bins and shelves are labelled with words and pictures

More than half of the toy bins and shelves are labelled with words and pictures. For example, the bins on the shelves are labelled with words and pictures and the shelf is labelled with words and pictures.

Two or more language and literacy learning experiences are planned and/or documented daily

Note: Not applicable for half-day nursery school programs

(Sub-item potentially not applicable)

Guidelines|Preschool

Does Not Meet Expectations

Meets Expectations

Exceeds Expectations

Children have exposure to different languages

Educators use different languages when communicating with children. For example, using sign language, singing songs in different languages, audio books in different languages, dual language books or play materials in different languages are accessible.

Educators use more than one form of communication

Educators use more than just verbal communication with children. For example, sign language, gestures, adding electronic communication devices or PECS are used to support children's learning.

Educators provide opportunities for families to access literacy materials

For example, families can be offered books to take home to read and share with their children, resources for local libraries, book mobiles.

Community language and literacy experiences available to the children monthly

Evidence is shown that community language and literacy experiences are incorporated into the program monthly. This may include visiting the library or the book mobile, or a family member/ community volunteer visits the child care centre for storytelling, or a designated language teacher.

10. Music and Accessories

Intent: Children learn, through repeated exposure, a positive appreciation of music and movement. Music should be played in a meaningful manner that benefits the learning opportunities and experiences during the day. By providing a music rich environment, children have continued exposure to an assortment of cultural music and musical genres, while promoting competencies such as language development, rhythm awareness, self-regulation, and self-concept.

Inspiring Pedagogy: "Creating and designing fuse together the cognitive, emotional, and physical domains – thinking, feeling, and doing. Encouraging the creative expression of ideas, feelings, and interpretations using a variety of materials also helps solidify children's learning, enhances their creative problem-solving and critical thinking skills, and strengthens their memory and sense of identity." (HDLH, page 42).

Reflective Questions: When music is played, how does it add meaning and purpose to the program taking into consideration sociocultural identities and family preferences? How are the musical instruments and accessories made accessible in a way which encourages the children to engage and explore freely? How are educators including families when selecting music to be played to the children? How are the individual needs of children being considered when playing and/or choosing music, for example, the volume of music in the space, background music, music/white noise during nap time - is it over stimulating? How do educators ensure that the music that is played and sung to children includes different sociocultural identities?

Music: Music and lyrics are age appropriate. Music can include visual music and vibration that support a wide range of abilities and disabilities.

Visual music: Imagery based on music and/or sound, it often uses colour or shapes to depict sounds. For example, music videos with sign language, using instruments that are tactile to create vibrations, or music videos with colours.

Sing: Chant, hum, rapping.

Accessories: Headphones, musical instruments, CDs/books, puppets, scarves, ribbons, shakers, microphones.

Does Not Meet Expectations

Loud background music interferes with learning experiences

Educators have to raise their voice or turn down the music so children can hear them.

Music is not appropriate for the age group

Music and/or lyrics are not appropriate for the age of the children in the program space.

Radio is played when children are present

The radio is played while children are in attendance. This is not appropriate as commentary and content cannot be controlled.

Educators do not sing to children daily

Educators do not sing with children daily, whether it is with an individual child, small group, or large group.

Meets Expectations

Three or more different types of music are available to be played to children

Three or more different types of music, including more than one artist and more than one genre are available in the program space. For example, classical, jazz, tapping, Indigenous drumming music, blues, vibration sounds, children's music, nature sounds, calypso.

Three or more different types of musical instruments are accessible to children

Three or more types of musical instruments are accessible which children can use independently during free play and planned program time. For example, tambourine, tactile instruments, piano, drums, rainsticks, and cymbals.

Exceeds Expectations

Two or more music and movement learning experiences are planned and/or documented weekly

Note: Not applicable for half-day nursery school programs

(Sub-item potentially not applicable)

Educators sing/play songs from different cultures

Educators incorporate music into the environment by either singing songs or playing music from different cultures. Evidence can be seen on the Program Plan, in the selection of music available in the program space or observed during the assessment.

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Does Not Meet Expectations

Meets Expectations

Exceeds Expectations

Musical instruments are in good condition

Musical instruments are in good condition and complete. For example, there are two cymbals for one child to use, and the electronic instruments have working batteries.

Props are used to enhance music experiences

Children use props while engaging in music play. Evidence can be seen on the Program Plan or observed during the assessment. For example, finger puppets, electronic devices to view visual music, scarves, noise-canceling headphones, musical instruments, streamers.

Audio playlists are available

Where applicable, audio playlists are made available when using other electronic devices, if requested. **(Sub-item potentially not applicable)**

11. Physical Literacy

Intent: Active physical play learning experiences promote large muscle movement, coordination skills, and support positive social interactions. Daily physical play learning experiences for children encourage health and well-being and allow children to experience their natural environment in all weather conditions. Children are given choices of physical play learning experiences both in the morning and afternoon, whether indoor or outdoor which are planned and/or documented daily. By giving the children the opportunities to lead the experiences, they can enhance their leadership qualities and turn-taking skills.

Inspiring Pedagogy: "Through active play and physical exploration, children gain increasing levels of independence, learn to persevere and practice self-control, and develop a sense of physical, emotional, and intellectual mastery and competence." (HDLH, page 29-30).

Reflective Questions: How do the learning opportunities promote muscle movement? Do educators engage in physical play experiences that are responsive to the children's interests and needs? How have the planned and/or documented physical play experiences been considered to include the wide range of abilities and disabilities of the children? How are opportunities being given for children to develop a higher sense of self-regulation?

Planned and/or documented physical play learning experiences: Learning experiences that encourage large muscle movement. For example, an obstacle course, pulling wagons, bowling, yoga, crawling through tunnels, breathing exercises, rolling balls, pushing carts.

Does Not Meet Expectations

No planned and/or documented physical play learning experiences

There is no current outdoor plan posted or there is no physical play learning experience indicated on the Program Plan daily.

Physical play learning experiences are not offered during inclement weather

Alternate physical learning experiences/opportunities are not offered when children are unable to go outside due to inclement weather.

Indoor gross motor equipment is not available

Children do not have access to indoor gross motor equipment during indoor gross motor play.

Meets Expectations

Children are given a choice of two or more planned and/or documented physical play learning experiences daily

Physical play learning experiences are planned to ensure all children are able to participate

Learning experiences are developmentally-appropriate or are adapted so that children can participate.

Educators are engaged in planned and/or documented physical play learning experiences with the children

Exceeds Expectations

Children are given the opportunity to lead outdoor learning experiences

Children initiate outdoor and/or indoor physical play learning experiences.

Designated safe space for indoor physical play learning experiences available

In the event children are unable to go outside for physical play, a designated space is available. For example, a school gym, atrium, empty room, or the program space.

Children are given a choice of two or more planned and/or documented physical play learning experiences for both the morning and afternoon

Educators plan and/or document two physical play learning experiences in the morning and two physical play learning experiences in the afternoon. The physical play learning experiences can be implemented inside and/or outside.

Note: Not applicable for half-day nursery school programs

(Sub-item potentially not applicable)

12. Blocks and Construction

Intent: Children have access to an assorted selection of block accessories and block materials that are developmentally-appropriate and reflective of the interests of the children, with which they can build, create, and explore concepts. Through weekly planned and/or documented learning experiences, educators support the development of STEAM concepts, spatial awareness, manipulation of two and three-dimensional materials and problem-solving. Block play offers opportunities to work together, use imagination, learn about cause and effect, patterning, and sequencing.

Inspiring Pedagogy: "Through play and inquiry, young children practice ways of learning and interacting with the world around them that they will apply throughout their lives. Problem solving and critical thinking, communication and collaboration, creativity and imagination, initiative and citizenship are all capacities vital for success throughout school and beyond." (HDLH, page 15).

Reflective Questions: How do the children combine materials from different learning areas to enhance their play? How does the accessibility of the play materials encourage children to be collaborative as well as independent? How do educators encourage children to collaborate in building and construction?

Block and construction materials: Different sizes of wooden blocks, Duplo, K'nex, cardboard blocks, foam blocks, squishy blocks, home-made blocks.

Block and construction accessories: Racetracks, cars, play people, farmhouses, and animals.

STEM concepts: STEAM refers to Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics

Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<p>Block and construction materials are not accessible For example, wooden blocks, Lego, foam blocks.</p> <p>Block and construction accessories are not accessible For example, cars, dinosaurs, play people.</p> <p>Block and construction materials are in poor condition More than 25 per cent of block and construction materials are in poor condition. For example, wooden blocks are splintered and chipped, cardboard blocks are damaged.</p> <p>Block and construction accessories are in poor condition More than 25 per cent of block and construction accessories are in poor condition. For example, cars are missing wheels, people missing limbs, or farmhouse has sharp edges.</p>	<p>Three or more block and construction materials are accessible For example, wooden blocks, Duplo, and cardboard blocks.</p> <p>Three or more block and construction accessories are accessible For example, cars, play people, farmhouses, and animals.</p> <p>Children are able to combine materials from other areas Children are able to bring materials from other learning areas to enhance their learning experience in the block and construction area.</p>	<p>Block and construction materials are available for rotation The rotational block and construction materials can be shared within the centre.</p> <p>Block and construction materials include three or more textures Three or more sets of blocks are accessible to the children that feel texturally different. For example, smooth blocks, dimpled blocks, and squishy blocks.</p> <p>Two or more block and construction learning experiences are planned and/or documented weekly Note: Not applicable for half-day nursery school programs. (Sub-item potentially not applicable)</p> <p>On-going project work is saved Children can save ongoing project work to complete at a later time. For example, using the top of a toy shelf, a special place in the program space, on a tray or in a bin.</p>

Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<p>Block and construction materials are incomplete</p> <p>Incomplete construction materials limit the children's play experience. For example, only a few wooden blocks are accessible and not the full set.</p> <p>Block and construction accessories are incomplete</p> <p>Incomplete construction accessories limit the children's play experience. For example, only one wooden figure and two cars are accessible and not the full set.</p>		

13. Cognitive and Manipulative

Intent: Based on the children's observed cues and interests, planned and/or documented cognitive and manipulative experiences recognize the children to be capable and competent in following their own learning paths. Children have access to an assorted selection of cognitive and manipulative materials and accessories during the operating hours of the program. Spontaneous cognitive and manipulative learning experiences occur throughout the day to support a natural play experience that enhances cognitive development including attention regulation, language learning, and memory competency.

Inspiring Pedagogy: "The focus is not on teaching a body of knowledge or a predetermined set of topics. Nor is it centered on children's achievement of a specific skill set. In the early years, programs are most effective when the content of learning is focused on supporting the development of strategies, dispositions, and skills for lifelong learning through play and inquiry." (HDLH, page 15).

Reflective Questions: How are the play materials open-ended and flexible to encourage children to adapt them to meet their individual needs? How does the accessibility of the play materials encourage children to be collaborative as well as independent? How do educators include STEAM concepts into planned and/or documented learning experiences? How are educators adapting the play materials to be developmentally-appropriate and reflective of the interests of all the children? How are educators scaffolding learning to meet children's individual needs?

Cognitive materials: Support the development of cognitive skills. For example, counting and sorting games, puzzles, braille puzzles, cause and effect toys, loose parts and interactions with the outdoor environment.

Manipulative materials: Support the development of fine motor skills. For example, lacing beads, sewing cards, shape sorters, large knobbed puzzles, real materials such as nuts and bolts, things you collect on a walk.

Does Not Meet Expectations

Cognitive and manipulative materials are not accessible

For example, puzzles, memory games, sequencing cards.

Cognitive and manipulative materials are in poor condition

More than 25% of cognitive and manipulative materials are in poor condition. For example, toys are chipped, have sharp edges.

Cognitive and manipulative materials are incomplete

Incomplete cognitive and manipulative materials limit the children's play experience. For example, a shape sorter is missing some of the shapes, puzzles are missing pieces.

Meets Expectations

Three or more different types of cognitive and manipulative materials are accessible

For example, puzzles, sequencing cards, memory game, shape sorters.

Two complete toys for each child enrolled are accessible

For each child enrolled in the program, there are two or more complete cognitive and manipulative toys accessible. For example, puzzles, pegs and peg boards, sequencing cards, magnetic letters/boards, lacing shapes, gears, bead mazes, shape sorter.

Note: If credit has been given in another section or sub-item for a specific toy, it cannot be counted twice.

Exceeds Expectations

Additional cognitive and manipulative materials are available for rotation

There are complete toy sets in storage for rotation. The additional cognitive and manipulative materials can be shared within the centre.

One planned and/or documented cognitive and manipulative learning experience offered weekly to enhance knowledge of math concepts

For example, measuring and counting, seriation, sand timers, number recognition.

One planned and/or documented cause and effect learning experience offered weekly

For example, marble works, lock boards, gears, self-help boards.

Does Not Meet Expectations

Meets Expectations

Exceeds Expectations

Cognitive and manipulative materials are developmentally-appropriate

The cognitive and manipulative materials reflect the age and developmental level of the children in the program.

14. Pretend Play

Intent: Children enhance their social interaction skills, emotional development, and language extension through pretend play. Educators promote imaginative play by providing the children an area rich in materials and accessories that are in good condition. Prop boxes are used to enhance the pretend play area with accessories and materials that support three or more role-playing possibilities reflective of the Program Plan focus. Mirrors in the pretend area allow the children to see themselves from multiple perspectives.

Inspiring Pedagogy: "As children engage in various forms of social play and are supported to recognize the varied capabilities and characteristics of other children, they learn to get along with others; to negotiate, collaborate, and communicate; and to care for others." (HDLH, page 24).

Reflective Questions: How can play materials be added meaningfully to enhance what is already there? How are the props and play materials reflective of an inclusive sense of belonging? How does pretend play support children to build relationships with others? Are the props and play materials open-ended? How can the props and play materials be adapted to the child's play? How does pretend play promote opportunities for children to master self-regulation within their play? How are educators ensuring that sociocultural identities are reflected in the pretend play focus? How are children's ideas and interests included when creating props for pretend play? How do educators equitably encourage children of all genders to interact in pretend play?

Pretend play accessories: Dress up clothes, puppets, menus, food, toy appliances and furniture such as a stove, table/chairs, doctor's kits, cash register, dishes, workbench.

Kits/prop boxes: Bins filled with materials and toys for a specific focus. For example, a "paint store" prop box may include rollers, paint brushes, cash register, money, and smocks.

Sociocultural Identities: Play materials that represents Indigenous peoples and culture, different ethnicity, races, languages, sexual orientations, and diverse gender identities.

Gender Identity: Gender identity is each person's internal and individual experience of gender. It is a person's sense of being a woman, a man, both, neither, or anywhere along the gender spectrum. (Ontario Human Rights Commission)

Note: It is not appropriate to use real medication bottles, empty cleaning products bottles, detergent bottles as pretend play props. Any container label that states "keep out of reach of children" should not be used as a prop. Children's allergies should be considered when choosing props/materials.

Does Not Meet Expectations

Insufficient accessories and equipment for the number of children enrolled

There are not enough accessories for pretend play for the number of children who want to use them.

Accessories and equipment are in poor condition

More than 25 per cent of accessories for pretend play are broken, missing pieces, or frayed.

Accessories and equipment are not developmentally-appropriate

Pretend play accessories are not developmentally-appropriate for the children enrolled in the program.

Meets Expectations

Accessories and equipment encourage three or more role-playing possibilities that reflect the Program Plan focus

A pretend play focus is identified on the Program Plan. Accessories and equipment provide for three or more role playing possibilities within the pretend play focus. For example, grocery store: cashier, customer, stock person. Roles do not need to be identified on the Program Plan but need to be reflected in the materials accessible based on the Program Plan focus.

Exceeds Expectations

Three or more pretend play prop boxes are available for rotation

Three or more pretend play prop boxes are available within the centre. For example, restaurant, workshop, fire station.

Pretend play area includes real items that are developmentally-appropriate

Three or more real items are included in the pretend play area. For example, food containers, gardening tools, woodworking tools, and clothing.

Does Not Meet Expectations

Meets Expectations

Exceeds Expectations

Accessories and equipment reflect sociocultural identities

Two or more types of pretend play accessories and/or equipment are reflective of sociocultural identities and are accessible to the children. There must be two items for each type of accessory or equipment. For example, two pieces of food and two dolls reflecting two different sociocultural identities.

Mirror is accessible in the pretend play area

A mirror at children's eye level is accessible directly in the pretend play area. Mirrors should always be free of obstruction and in good repair.

Three or more accessories reflect sociocultural identities

Three or more types of pretend play accessories and/or equipment are reflective of sociocultural identities and are accessible to the children. There must be two items for each type of accessory or equipment. For example, two pieces of food, two anatomically correct dolls reflecting different cultures and two pieces of cultural clothing.

Child's full body-length mirror is accessible in the room

A child's full body length mirror is accessible within the program space that is at the child's level. Mirrors should always be free of obstruction and in good repair and must allow the children to see their full body.

Literacy is incorporated into the pretend play area

Materials that reflect literacy and/or numeracy other than books are incorporated into the pretend area. For example, menus for a restaurant, flyers for a grocery store, pamphlets for the doctor's office, keyboards, phones.

Accessories are added and built upon daily

Pretend play accessories/props are added daily to extend and enhance play and are changed when appropriate. Evidence can be seen on the Program Plan or observed during the assessment.

Children create props and accessories for pretend play area

Children create props for pretend play. For example, they make food flyers for the grocery store focus or adaptive equipment for the hospital focus, or a washing machine for the home centre.

15. Electronic Media Usage

Intent: Guidelines are available and utilized by children and educators to encourage safe usage and age-appropriate content for all electronic media usage. Guidelines may include reference to frequency of use, duration, and a sign-up sheet. Families are made aware in advance of media being used in the program, alternative learning opportunities are always available, and resources on safe media usage are available in the centre. Educators always monitor appropriateness of games brought from home or usage of Internet within the program space.

Reflective Questions: How does the use of media/technology enhance the learning opportunities? How do educators determine if the amount of screen time available to the children is appropriate? What are the benefits for the children if using electronic media in the program? Is the movie or topic of interest age-appropriate? How is Electronic Media used to enhance and extend spontaneous learning opportunities? Are families preferences considered when offering opportunities?

Electronic media usage: Refers to any screen time for children. For example, watching TV/movies on a television, personal devices, computers, handheld devices, game systems, tablets, and laptops.

Note: Any TV/movies need to be identified at least one day prior to being shown to the children. Alternate learning experiences planned and/or documented for TV/movies are over and above what is regularly planned and/or documented daily and weekly. Educators should consider researching TV shows and movies to ensure they do not introduce or reinforce stereotypes.

Note: Electronic devices that are used to support children's individual needs are not applicable to this domain. For example, for communication, self-regulation.

Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<p>TV/Movie watching is not documented on the Program Plan TV/movie watching is not planned and/or documented on the Program Plan or on a separate posting beside the Program Plan. (Sub-item potentially not applicable)</p> <p>No planned and/or documented alternate learning experiences when TV/Movies are shown Separate learning experiences, specifically for when TV/movies are being watched are not planned and/or documented on Program Plan or on a separate posting beside the Program Plan. (Sub-item potentially not applicable)</p> <p>TV/Movie usage exceeds 45 minutes per week (Sub-item potentially not applicable)</p> <p>No guidelines in place for computer/electronic game usage The guidelines are not available in the program space. (Sub-item potentially not applicable)</p>	<p>Information, including the name and length of the TV/Movie is documented on the Program Plan The name, length, and rating of any TV/movies that will be viewed by children are indicated on the posted Program Plan or on a separate posting beside the Program Plan. (Sub-item potentially not applicable)</p> <p>Families are notified in advance of all TV/Movie watching Families are given advanced notice of which TV/movie program and when it will potentially be shown to children. This may include posting an information sheet beside the Program Plan before the day when the TV/movies will be shown or having families sign a consent form that lists the TV/movie that may be shown on a specific date or from time to time. (Sub-item potentially not applicable)</p>	<p>Alternate activities are equally interesting to children Alternative activities are in addition to regular planned and/or documented learning experiences on the Program Plan. Evidence can be seen on the Program Plan or on a separate posting beside the Program Plan. (Sub-item potentially not applicable)</p> <p>Electronic media are used by educators and children to extend topics of interest For example, children are interested in butterflies and educators use an electronic device to further their research.</p> <p>Information is accessible to families on effective use of media for learning The child care centre provides information for families regarding safe and/or effective use of media learning. This may include pamphlets, brochures, or website links. The resources can be offered as hardcopies, via online apps, web links or emailed at least every four months.</p>

Does Not Meet Expectations

Time is not limited or allocated equitably

Children spend extended periods of time using computer/electronic games. Educators do not monitor the computer/electronic game usage.

(Sub-item potentially not applicable)

No guidelines in place for Internet usage

If the children have Internet access, Internet usage guidelines are not available in the program space and/or monitored by educators.

(Sub-item potentially not applicable)

Meets Expectations

TV/Movie content is rated "PG" with family consent

Children may watch "PG" rated movies with individual written guardian consent for each movie. **(Sub-item potentially not applicable)**

Posted guidelines are followed for computer/electronic game usage

(Sub-item potentially not applicable)

Games are rated "E" for everyone

This includes games brought from home as well as Internet usage.

(Sub-item potentially not applicable)

Evidence that families are notified of Internet usage

This may include a paragraph in the family handbook, a list of websites visited, information on the Program Plan or a statement on the posted guidelines.

(Sub-item potentially not applicable)

Exceeds Expectations

Three or more educational games and computer/electronic programs are available

For example, number games, word building games, and matching games.

(Sub-item potentially not applicable)

16. Toileting and Diapering Routines

Intent: Educators are familiar with and follow the Regional Public Health procedures and practices during all toileting and diapering routines. When followed correctly, educators maintain healthy and sanitary environments. All accessories and bathroom fixtures are in good condition. The toileting and diapering routine should be viewed as a positive learning opportunity that encourages self-help and independence.

Reflective Questions: What supports are needed to ensure educators are following the diapering and toileting routine correctly? How is the area set up in a way that allows educators to follow the diapering/toileting and hand-washing/sanitizing procedures, and glove procedures correctly? How do educators engage with children to support the spontaneous learning opportunities during diapering/toileting routines? How are educators responsive to the developmental needs of the children to support individual independence? How do educators recognize and support the children's need for privacy? How are educators using proper body language to promote body literacy and self esteem, for example, using the terms penis and vulva while toileting and diapering? How are educators promoting privacy and teaching boundaries to the children while toileting and diapering? How are educators promoting a positive body image, verbally and non-verbally, while toileting and diapering?

Picture symbol schedule: Posted in the washroom and shows children what steps to follow when they are in the washroom, including how to use the toilet.

Toileting and/or Diapering Procedures: Posted in the washroom or taken by educators, for example, on a portable clipboard when they are diapering/toileting children in a shared washroom.

Toilet and diapering supplies: Hand soap, toilet paper, paper towels, diapers, pull-ups, change table. The top of the diaper change table is not used as storage when not in use.

Note: Photographs depicting children using toilet/potty or being diapered are not considered appropriate.

Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<p>Current Regional Public Health toileting routine not posted Regional Public Health toileting procedures are not posted or taken by educators into the washroom and/or diapering area.</p> <p>Current Regional Public Health diapering routine not posted Regional Public Health diapering procedures are not posted or taken by educators into the washroom and/or diapering area. (Sub-item potentially not applicable)</p> <p>Current Regional Public Health potty routine not posted Regional Public Health potty procedures are not posted or taken by educators into the washroom and/or diapering area. If potties are not used, the potty procedure does not need to be posted. (Sub-item potentially not applicable)</p>	<p>Posted procedures for toileting/potty and diapering are followed by educators</p> <p>Change table/mat in good condition There is a change table/mat in good condition that is maintained/stored in a sanitary manner. (Sub-item potentially not applicable)</p> <p>Toileting and diapering is unhurried Educators give children the time they need to complete washroom routines.</p>	<p>Child-size sink is accessible in the washroom It is acceptable to use a one-step step stool.</p> <p>Centre provides additional diapering supplies when required The centre can provide extra diapering supplies to children who require it without borrowing from others. For example, diapers and wipes. (Sub-item potentially not applicable)</p> <p>Picture symbol schedule depicting toileting routine is visually accessible at child's eye level while using the toilet A visual depiction of the toileting routine is posted in the washroom at children's eye level in a place where children can see it while using the toilet. For example, on the side wall. Real photos depicting children using the toilet/potty or being diapered are not considered appropriate.</p>

Does Not Meet Expectations

No change table/mat available
(Sub-item potentially not applicable)

Sufficient supplies are not available to ensure toileting/potty and diapering procedures are followed

There is not enough soap, toilet paper, paper towels, hand dryers or diapers for the number of children who need to use the washroom and/or toilets.

Separate covered garbage is not being used for sanitary disposal of soiled diapers

A separate covered garbage container is not being used for soiled diapers and other supplies related to the diaper change. This applies to disposable and cloth diapers.

(Sub-item potentially not applicable)

Washroom is not adapted for use by all children

Adaptations have not been made to meet the needs of individual children. For example, there is no step stool for children who cannot reach a sink or the adult-sized toilet, or the washroom is not large enough to accommodate an assistive device such as a wheelchair if required.

Meets Expectations

Toileting and diapering is viewed as an opportunity to interact with children

Educators engage in meaningful conversations with children during toileting and diapering routines, beyond providing direction to children. For example, educators verbalize the steps of the toileting or diapering process using proper words for actions and body parts, "I am going to put some diaper cream on your vulva now" or "please make sure to point your penis down when aiming in the toilet."

Toileting and diapering is viewed as an opportunity to encourage self-help skills

Educators use the time to encourage self-help skills. For example, pulling up their pants, flushing the toilet, washing their hands.

Washroom area includes a mirror at child's eye level

A mirror is accessible and at an appropriate eye level for children in the washroom area.

Exceeds Expectations

Toilets are accessible within the room

Toilets are in the program space and children are able to independently use them.

17. Meals and/or Snack Times

Intent: Meals and snack times should be viewed as positive learning experiences that promote social interactions and self-help skills. Educators encourage children to have a healthy respect for food and eating. Meals and snacks are offered at times that are developmentally-appropriate for the children and meet their individual needs. Educators extend and enhance conversations with and between the children that are authentic and meaningful and move beyond discussions about the food being offered.

Reflective Questions: How are the children supported to serve food independently, taking into consideration the children's individual needs? Are educators engaged in on-going conversations with children during meals and/or snacks? How are meals and/or snack times seen as an opportunity to instill positive attitudes towards food, nutrition, and eating? How do educators ensure they are seated in the best location at the table to support all children and minimize getting up from the table? How do educators make adaptations to ensure children with allergies and/or food restrictions are included in mealtimes in a safe manner?

Does Not Meet Expectations

Food is used as a reward or punishment

Food is used to reward, to acknowledge performance, to punish, or to control children's behaviour.

No conversations and/or interactions occur during meal and/or snack times

Less than two conversations and/or interactions occur between children and adults during meal and/or snack times, excluding when educators instruct or provide direction to children.

Individual children's needs are not met during meal and/or snack times

For example, a child who falls asleep at the table is not offered their cot and is not able to eat their meal at a later time, or a child is told they will be served last because of their behaviour.

Meets Expectations

Children are encouraged to eat food, but never forced

During meal and/or snack times, educators encourage children to eat but accept when children still refuse the food.

Meal and/or snack times are viewed as a time for socialization and conversation

During meal and/or snack times, educators engage in meaningful conversations with children. For example, teach children fine motor and self-feeding skills, or talk about the texture, temperature, and taste of different foods.

Educators sit with children while serving food at the table

Educators sit with children while they are serving all foods. Unless the educators are supporting a child through hand over hand, educators should be seated with the children and engaged in conversation. For example, preparing some food ahead of time and serving food from the table.

Children sit in small groups

During meal and/or snack times, children eat while seated in small groups. Small group ratios are 1:8 for preschool.

Exceeds Expectations

Educators use meal and/or snack times as opportunities for enhanced language learning

During meal and/or snack times, educators engage in meaningful conversations with children to extend learning. For example, educators talk with children about that morning's activities, or topics of interest.

Children self-serve all foods

Children serve themselves all foods during the first serving except for hot soups and stews. It is acceptable for the educators to assist using hand-over-hand help as needed. For example, children use serving utensils to self-serve sandwiches, fruits, and vegetables, and pour their own milk from a small jug.

Children assist with lunch/snack routines

Educators provide opportunities for children to help with setting or clearing the table for lunch/snacks. For example, children can put the napkins at each place setting or scrape their own dishes after eating.

18. Equipment Required for Eating and Seating

Intent: All equipment required for mealtimes such as seating, dishes, and utensils, are developmentally-appropriate to create a positive learning space and foster a sense of belonging.

Reflective Questions: How are the developmental feeding needs of all children being met? Does each child have enough space to sit and eat comfortably? Does each table have enough utensils and dishes for the individual needs of all children? How do educators recognize and support each child's sociocultural identities during mealtimes, for example eating foods with their hands? How are family mealtime practices incorporated into the centres routines to support a sense of belonging?

Note: Napkins/paper towels are used for dry foods only.

Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<p>Insufficient eating utensils and dishes There are not enough serving/eating utensils and dishes that are developmentally-appropriate for all children and educators in the program space to eat at the same time.</p> <p>Insufficient seating for children There is not enough seating in the program space for all educators and children to sit down at the same time for meals and snacks.</p> <p>No adult seating Seating cannot be adapted for adult use.</p>	<p>Eating utensils and dishes are developmentally-appropriate and adapted as required There are sufficient utensils and dishes that support all children and meet their individual needs. For example, weighted utensils, larger grip handles, adaptive cups.</p> <p>Food is served on dishes or napkins Food is always served on dishes or napkins/paper towels and not placed directly on a table, trolley, or shelf. Napkins/paper towels are used for dry foods only.</p> <p>Seating available to meet the developmental needs of the children enrolled Tables and seating are developmentally-appropriate. Where required to meet the needs of individual children, furniture has been adapted. For example, tables are wheelchair accessible, adaptive equipment is used where necessary.</p>	<p>Extra utensils and dishes are available for easy access The extra dishes and utensils are easily available in the program space for when utensils or dishes fall on the floor or become soiled. For example, on the table or close by on a trolley.</p> <p>All seating is washable, including cushioned seating</p> <p>Running water is located in the room Educators have access to running water directly in the program space. A five-gallon jug of water can be used as a substitution when running water is not accessible.</p>

19. Cots and Bedding

Intent: Each child has their own designated cot that is hygienically maintained. Educators provide a smooth transition from lunch to rest time. Educators show flexibility with regards to the routine of the program and follow the cues of the children. To prevent any accidents or injuries, educators demonstrate awareness of storing play materials and equipment safely on the top of shelves when placing cots at sleep time.

Reflective Questions: How do the sleep times meet the needs of the children? How is the environment set up in a manner that promotes sleeping/resting? How are the individual needs of each child being met on a regular basis? How are educators incorporating family preferences into sleep routines? When a child soothes by self-touching their genitals during nap time, how do educators respond in ways that recognize this is a common behaviour?

Cots: All children should have the opportunity to rest on a cot.

Bedding: All cots must have a sheet provided by the centre. A blanket/sheet to cover children who want to use one may be provided either by the centre or families.

Note: If mats are being used, the child care centre is to follow current Regional Public Health guidelines. Mats are also to be designated and hygienically maintained.

Does Not Meet Expectations

Cots are not designated

Cots are not assigned to a particular child and are not designated with the child's name.

Cots are used for storage

Cots are used to store toys, equipment, or personal items.

Extra bedding is not available

Sheets provided by the centre are not available for all the cots. Extra sheets are not available if they need to be changed.

Cots are in poor condition

Cots are visibly dirty, ripped or broken.

Meets Expectations

The sleeping area has a cot designated for each child

Cots are assigned to a particular child and are clearly labelled. When mats are used and stored in bags, the bags need to be clearly labelled to ensure they are used for the same child each time.

Area around cots are hazard-free

For example, toys on shelves do not pose a risk of falling on a child, curtain cords are out of reach, cots are not propped against furniture or walls.

Bedding is changed once a week or sooner if needed

For example, when a child wets the cot, or the sheet is visibly soiled.

Cots are disinfected weekly

Cot set-up does not interfere with the program

Cot set-up does not interfere with children engaging in activities or impede them from accessing materials from shelves. For example, cots are set up after the children have participated in free play or planned and/or documented learning experiences or while the children are transitioning after lunch.

Exceeds Expectations

Sleep routines meet the needs of the children

Children who need limited sleep can participate in quiet activities while the others are resting, or if a child wakes up early, they can choose an activity in the program space. For example, if a child is tired, they can go to sleep before nap time.

Resting environment includes soft music and dimmed lighting

There is soft music playing in the background during the entire rest time. For example, white noise, calming sounds, nature sounds. The lights in the program space have been turned down or dimmed and/or the curtains/blinds are closed. Educators are able to safely see what is happening in the program space.

Children are allowed to bring a soft toy and/or bedding from home

To meet individual resting needs, children are able to bring stuffed toys, pillows or blankets from home.

20. Health and Safety

Intent: All materials, play equipment, furnishings are in good working order, clean and safe for the children and educators. The fixed features in the room, such as the floors, walls, doors, and windows are also safe and in good repair. All areas of the program space including materials, play equipment, and furnishings are maintained in a hygienic condition. Educators can provide resources to families to promote safe environments and healthy lifestyles. Topics may include recall notices, information regarding car seats or choking hazards. Information is located in a central location in the centre.

Inspiring Pedagogy: "A safe environment that offers consistency and continuity as well as graduated support for children's growing independence and capacity for self-care enables children to tackle challenges, learn to persevere, and explore ways to cope with manageable levels of positive stress." (HDLH, page 30).

Reflective Questions: How are safety hazards addressed? Are there any areas of the program space that have the potential to be dangerous or unsafe? How do educators ensure all toxic materials are kept out of reach of the children and/or are securely stored? How do educators ensure the first aid kit is kept well stocked and maintained on an ongoing basis? How are the health and safety practices being followed to ensure that all children are engaged in an environment that is free of hazards? What precautions are taken into consideration to promote the well-being of each child within the program?

Hazards: Anything that is potentially dangerous to the children. For example, worn/frayed carpet, broken chairs, unstable change table, chipping paint, uncovered electric outlets, easy access to cleaning supplies, accessible sharp utensils or medications, or disorganization that affects the safety of children such as chairs stacked too high, toys piled on shelves.

Hygienic: Anything done to maintain cleanliness. For example, removing tape residue from shelves, mirrors, and windows; cleaning spills and dirt, washing/sanitizing tables before eating and following the current Regional Public Health cleaning guidelines.

Accessible resources: Resources can be a hardcopy at the centre, emailed to families, shared via online apps and/or web links.

Note: Any materials, containers or items that have the statement "Keep out of reach of children" should not be used unsupervised by the children under any circumstance. For example, hand sanitizer.

Note: First aid kits should be checked and re-stocked on a regular basis to ensure supplies are replenished and not expired.

Does Not Meet Expectations

More than one area in the room is/are not in a state of good repair

More than one area of the program space is observed in poor repair. For example, furniture, carpets, physical structure, paint chipping.

More than one area in the room is/are not hygienic

More than one area of the program space is observed as being dirty. For example, carpets, toys and shelves are visibly soiled.

Meets Expectations

First aid kit is available in the room

There is a first aid kit available within the program space for educators to access. It should be checked and re-stocked on a regular basis to ensure supplies are replenished. If small grouping occurs, a first aid kit needs to remain in the program space.

Exceeds Expectations

On-site and/or on-call maintenance employees deal with facility issues promptly

Facility issues and/or emergency repairs are responded to within 48 hours.

Safety-related resources are accessible to families

Educators provide resources to families on safety-related topics. For example, recalled toys, toys that are developmentally-appropriate. The resources can be offered as hard copies, via online apps, web links or emailed at least every four months.

Guidelines|Preschool

Does Not Meet Expectations

More than one area in the room is/are not safe

More than one area of the program space is observed as not being safe. For example, there is a tripping hazard, electric outlets are not covered, cleaning disinfectants are in reach of children or are used near the children. For example, when the children are sitting at the lunch table and educators spray the table with disinfectant.

Meets Expectations

All areas accessible to children are: Kept in a state of good repair

Safe

Maintained in a hygienic condition

Organized

Related to health and safety. For example, toys and chairs are organized in a way that they will not fall on educators or children.

Exceeds Expectations

Health-related resources are accessible to families

Educators provide resources to families on health-related topics. For example, head lice information, illness prevention. The resources can be offered as hardcopies, via online apps, web links or emailed at least every four months.

Safety and/or health resources are accessible to families in their preferred language

Educators provide safety and/or health resources to families in their preferred language. The resources can be offered as hardcopies, via online apps, web links or emailed at least every four months.

21. Toys and Play Equipment Washing

Intent: Educators follow Regional Public Health requirements for toy and equipment washing. This supports a clean and sanitary environment for the children.

Reflective Questions: What strategies are in place to ensure the current toy washing practices meet all the Regional Public Health guidelines?

Toys and equipment: All toys, play materials and equipment that are accessible to the children. For example, pretend play furniture, large blocks, indoor riding toys.

Soiled: Objects that are dirty or that children have sneezed on or mouthed.

Schedule: Toys and play equipment washing plan is available and followed as per Regional Public Health requirements. It is not acceptable to sign and date the schedule ahead of time.

Does Not Meet Expectations

No schedule for toy washing

Schedule for toy washing does not meet Regional Public Health guidelines

For example, some categories are not documented as being washed in previous weeks.

Toys and play equipment are not washed as they become soiled

Meets Expectations

Schedule for toy washing meets Regional Public Health guidelines

Educators consistently wash toys and play equipment as per Regional Public Health guidelines.

Toys and play equipment washing schedule is signed and/or initialed and dated by educators

Educators should sign and/or initial and date the schedule after the toys, materials and play equipment have been washed.

Toys and play equipment are consistently washed as they become soiled

It is acceptable to use a soiled toy bin and wash at a more appropriate time.

Exceeds Expectations

Toys and play equipment schedule identifies categories of toys and play equipment

Schedule identifies categories or areas of toys and play equipment. For example, by toy shelf, by learning areas.

Transitional toys used prior to meal and/or snack times are washed after each use

Meal and/or snack transitional toys refers to clean toys or play materials the children can use at the table once they have washed their hands prior to eating. These playing materials are then removed to be washed prior to the next meal and/or snack time.

(Sub-item potentially not applicable)

Playground and indoor gross motor toys are washed a minimum of two times a year

There is evidence playground and indoor gross motor equipment is washed a minimum of twice a year.

22. Educators and Children's Hand Hygiene

Intent: Children and educators follow and practice posted hand hygiene procedures that promote healthy living. Educators encourage children to maintain healthy hygiene habits by reinforcing hand washing. Educator's role-model proper hand-washing procedures through the use of the hand-washing Visual/Auditory Schedule. Glove usage provides barriers to potential illnesses and exposure to harmful materials. The centre supervisor monitors the educator's hand hygiene practices to support awareness and healthy habits.

Reflective Questions: How do educators' role-model and teach the correct routine each time hands are washed/sanitized? How does the program space support hygienic hand-washing/sanitizing practices? How do educators support the individual child's lifelong learning of proper hand hygiene?

Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<p>Current Regional Public Health hand washing procedures are not posted Hand-washing procedures are not posted by the sinks used by the children.</p> <p>Current Regional Public Health hand-washing procedures are not followed For example, educators and/or children miss a step in the process.</p> <p>Sufficient supplies are not accessible to ensure hand-washing is conducted in a hygienic manner There is not enough soap, paper towels, hand dryers, or hand sanitizer to ensure hand washing can be carried out.</p>	<p>Current Regional Public Health hand-sanitizing procedures are posted Sanitizing procedures are posted within the program space. (Sub-item potentially not applicable)</p> <p>Evidence supervisor reviews hand hygiene expectations with educators It is up to the individual centre/agency to determine how often the supervisor monitors hand-washing practices. There is evidence to support that it is being done. For example, educators annual sign-off and/or documentation in educators meeting minutes.</p>	<p>A sink is accessible in the room Educators and/or children have access to a sink for hand washing directly in the program space.</p> <p>Child-size sink is accessible in the room Children have access to a child-sized sink directly in the program space. It is acceptable to use a one-step step stool.</p> <p>Real photographs are used for visual/auditory hand-washing procedure All sinks used by the children include real photos outlining the proper hand-washing procedure as per Regional Public Health guidelines. The photos for the hand-washing procedure can include hands only. The procedure should be verbalized to support all children's understanding of the process.</p>

23. Transitions

Intent: Educators transition the children in small groups. Educators are aware of the individual children's cues while children further develop their self-regulation and self-help skills. Interactions during transitions reflect a positive learning environment. Props and visuals are used to help facilitate smooth transitions. Small group transitions ensure children are not waiting for extended periods. Transitions between activities and routines are planned so that children can safely change activities individually or in small groups with minimal waiting/rushing.

Reflective Questions: How have the individual child's needs and development been taken into consideration when planning the routines and transitions throughout the day? What can be improved in the routine and daily transitions to support the well-being of the children within the program? How are transitions used to facilitate learning opportunities/experiences? How much of the day is spent in transitions?

Transitions: When children move from one experience to another.

Small groups: One educator with a group of up to eight preschool children (1:8)

Does Not Meet Expectations

Extended waiting during transitions

For example, children are expected to wait beyond what is developmentally appropriate.

Children are not transitioned in small groups

Children are always being transitioned in a large group.

Educators do not prepare children prior to transitions

Educators do not prepare children ahead of time for upcoming transitions. For example, educators do not use songs, a gong, verbal cues, or Visual/Auditory Schedules to signal an upcoming transition.

Meets Expectations

Children are consistently transitioned in small groups

Small group ratios are 1:8 for preschool

Positive interactions occur between educators and children during transitions

Educators support and encourage children during transitions by using positive gestures and language.

Transitions are conducted in a smooth and seamless manner

Educators consistently support children's transitions ensuring they are carried out in a way that children are not waiting.

Exceeds Expectations

Educators facilitate transitions to meet individual children's needs

For example, transitional cards, a timer, a bell, stop and go signs or routine songs sung to indicate the next transition.

Learning experiences are planned and/or documented for transitions

Transitional learning experiences are planned and/or documented on the program plan to support children moving smoothly from one routine to another. For example, transitional songs, books to be read.

Transition play materials are available

Play materials are available for children to support the transition process. Transition play materials are specifically used for transitions. For example, a basket of toys, books, or puppets.

24. Attendance Verification

Intent: Educators are aware at all times of the number and names of children that are in their care. Documentation on the main attendance record must accurately reflect the location of all children in care throughout the day. It is the responsibility of the educators to ensure all arrival and departure times are accurately documented on the main attendance record in pen or digitally using an online application, notes app, or other electronic method. By completing written verification after all educator and child transitions, educators can communicate and self-check that the attendance is always accurate.

Reflective Questions: How can the process of documenting and maintaining accurate attendance forms be improved? What supports are in place to encourage educators to communicate with one another the number of children that are in their care? What strategies are used to ensure educators are verbally communicating with each other after transitions?

Attendance Verification: Children's attendance is recorded on the main attendance record promptly upon arrival and departure.

Main Attendance Record: A permanent method of recording and verifying children's daily arrival and departure times. The main attendance record is completed in pen or through a digital program that captures the daily arrival and departure times. The main attendance record must always accompany the whole group. It must reflect the names of children who have left the program space/group for small group learning experiences.

Portable Attendance: A record of attendance that accompanies a small group of children when they are in a different program space. For example, going to the gym.

Note: The portable attendance is not required during transitions and washroom routines.

Does Not Meet Expectations

No system of attendance verification in place

There is no procedure for recording arrival and departure times.

Attendance records do not accurately reflect the number of children present

A count of the children in the program space does not match the number of children recorded on the main attendance record.

Arrival and departure times are not completed in pen and/or digitally

Meets Expectations

Children's arrival and departure times are always recorded on the main attendance record

The main attendance record shows that all children's arrival and departure times are recorded. A review of previous attendance records shows that all children in attendance were signed in and out of care.

Small groups of children who have left the room are reflected on the main attendance record

The main attendance record reflects the names of the children who have left the program space for small group experiences. For example, names are written on a sticky note which is placed on the main attendance record, or the time the children left with the small group is recorded next to each name in pencil. When the children return, the sticky note is removed from the main attendance, or the pencil is erased.

(Sub-item potentially not applicable)

Exceeds Expectations

Educators are the recorders of the children's arrival and departure times

To ensure accuracy, educators are responsible for recording the children's arrival and departure times daily on the main attendance record.

Written verification of attendance after each educator change

After an educator change or transition, educators check the main attendance record against the number of children physically in the room for accuracy. For example, educators indicate number of children present, the time of verification and their initials when they start their shift, goes on break, or returns from lunch. This does not include random head counts unless it is identified as an educators change.

Does Not Meet Expectations

Meets Expectations

Exceeds Expectations

Portable attendance travels with each group

When educators leave the program space with a small group of children, they take a portable attendance that accurately lists the names of the children in their small group.

(Sub-item potentially not applicable)

Attendance is verbally verified after educators transitions

After educator transitions, educators communicate the correct number of children in attendance to each other. For example, after an educators break or lunch.

Attendance is verbally verified after children's transitions

After children's transitions, educators communicate the correct number of children in attendance to each other. For example, after the transition to outside or washroom routines.

Written verification of attendance after each group transition

After each group transition, educators check the main attendance record against the number of children physically in the room for accuracy. For example, educators indicate the number of children present, the time of verification and their initials when the children return from the playground or leave for a small group experience. This does not include random head counts unless it is identified as a group transition.

Visual attendance is used

The visual attendance is available in the program space and reflects the names and/or pictures of the children enrolled. The visual is used to accurately indicate the children's location at any given time. For example, indoor, outdoor, gym.

25. Positive Atmosphere

Intent: Positive interactions and relationships among educators, colleagues, children, families, and visitors create a strong sense of belonging within the community. These interactions foster respectful behaviours and interactions with others. Educators and staff consistently role-model effective social skills, recognizing and celebrating the diverse sociocultural identities of all children, families, and visitors. Through their empathetic and welcoming approach, educators create a nurturing environment that supports children in developing essential interpersonal skills and allows them to build meaningful relationships. It is vital for educators to remain positive and supportive, promoting an atmosphere of inclusion and respect throughout the day.

Inspiring Pedagogy: "When educators believe that all children have the right to participate and when they use inclusive approaches, they are more likely to find ways to reduce barriers, understand how each child learns, and create environments and experiences that are meaningful and engaging." (HDLH, page 36).

Reflective Questions: How are positive social interactions modelled for the children? How are all people who enter the program space treated with respect? How is a sense of belonging evident within the program for both children and families? How is a positive atmosphere nurtured with all children in the program space?

Note: This indicator applies to educator's interactions with children, co-workers, and visitors within the program space.

Does Not Meet Expectations

Educators use sarcasm, mocking, or harsh words

Any educators are observed using sarcastic, mocking, or harsh words that would negatively affect any individual or be considered demeaning.

Educators shout at children

Any educators are observed shouting at others or from across the room at others. For example, educators are shouting at children across the room to redirect their actions, or educators are raising their voice to get an individual's attention.

Educators are repeatedly impatient

Any educators are repeatedly observed being impatient with any individual. For example, educators are observed rushing the child to finish what they are doing, making unkind comments about their ability to complete the task in a timely manner, or interfering to complete the tasks themselves.

Meets Expectations

All educators are welcoming

All educators are observed displaying happiness when welcoming individuals into the environment. Everyone is greeted in a friendly manner.

All educators maintain a positive tone of voice

All educators are observed using a friendly tone of voice with any individual in the environment. For example, educators interact with others in an authentic and warm manner. This includes educators to educators, educators to child, and educators to family/adult communication.

All educators are patient

All educators are observed remaining even-tempered and composed during all situations.

All educators model appropriate positive social behaviour

All educators are observed interacting with others in a manner that is supportive and encouraging. Positive social skills are role-modelled with all individuals in the environment. For example, speaking in a respectful manner to others or reinforcing pro-social interactions.

Exceeds Expectations

All educators demonstrate flexibility

All educators are observed demonstrating the ability to accommodate for unexpected changes that may occur throughout the day. For example, lunch is 15 minutes late and educators implement a spontaneous learning experience to support children during this time, or educators adjust the schedule to reflect the children's interest to stay outside longer.

All educators use teachable moments to further develop positive social behaviours

All educators are observed reinforcing positive social behaviours by encouraging the children "in the moment." For example, when a child is shouting at their friend across the room, the educator approaches the child and encourages the child to walk over and speak to their peer.

Does Not Meet Expectations

Educators repeatedly interrupt while others are talking

Any educators are repeatedly observed interrupting others during conversations. For example, educators are intruding in the conversations of others or stopping others from expressing themselves.

Educators are repeatedly disrespectful

Any educators are repeatedly observed behaving in a disrespectful manner to any individual in the environment. For example, educators are observed dismissing the opinion of others, educators are not following the requests of families or co-workers or ignoring the children's cues.

Meets Expectations

All educators direct positive attention to all children

All educators are observed speaking and interacting with children in a positive and supportive manner. This includes being aware of facial expressions and body language.

Exceeds Expectations

All educators display empathy

Empathy is the ability to take another person's perspective and understand that individual's feelings about the situation. Empathetic educators acknowledge the experience, or the message given by others. All educators acknowledge the situation by rephrasing what is said or has happened and adjust their tone of voice and body language to reflect the emotions of the individual. For example, an educator is sitting with a child working on a puzzle and says "Yes, I see that you have been working a long time at putting the puzzle together," or an educator holds and comforts a crying child and says, "I know it's hard, mommy had to leave to go to work."

26. Supervision of Children

Intent: Educators maintain constant awareness of the whereabouts of all children in their care. This is accomplished through effective communication among team members, ensuring that everyone is informed about each child's location. By collaborating, educators provide seamless supervision throughout the program space. This teamwork enables them to balance engaging interactions with children while always prioritizing their safety.

Reflective Questions: What are the strategies in place to ensure educators are aware of all children in the program space? How do educators position themselves to be able to scan the whole program space? How do educators ensure effective supervision in the program space? How do educators openly communicate about the location of all children throughout the day?

Does Not Meet Expectations

Educators unaware of the number of children in the room

Any educators are unaware of which children are present or who has left the room.

Educators unaware of the location of the children

Any educators are unaware of what the children are doing. For example, a child hiding in a closet, or educators are unaware a child has left the room.

Educators repeatedly do not scan the room

Any educators are repeatedly observed not scanning the entire program space. For example, educators are busy interacting with only a few children and unaware of what the other children are doing.

Educators repeatedly position themselves with their back to the children

Any educators are repeatedly observed to have their backs turned to the children. For example, educators position themselves where they cannot see the entire program space or are busy with cleaning and/or paperwork instead of supervising the program space.

Meets Expectations

All educators scan the room at all times

All educators are observed scanning the program space to ensure the safety of the children.

All educators work as a team to position themselves so all children are supervised

All educators are observed using verbal and/or non-verbal communication with each other to supervise and interact with the children within the program space.

All educators consistently balance supervision with interactions

All educators are observed balancing supervision of all children with interactions. Educators are aware of what the children are doing while being engaged in play with the children. For example, educators are observed in the block area with a group of children, while monitoring and responding to the children playing in other areas of the room as needed.

All educators anticipate situations to support children's interactions and learning experiences

All educators are aware of the children's behaviours and can anticipate situations. Educators are observed supporting the children's individual needs to ensure positive interactions and outcomes.

Exceeds Expectations

All educators communicate with each other about the location of children

All educators are observed communicating with each other regarding the number and location of children within the program space. For example, verbalizing where children are playing in the program space, such as "Michelle is in the tent."

All educators are seamlessly weaving from one learning experience to another, balancing support with monitoring and supervision

All educators are observed engaging with the children throughout the program space, monitoring the needs of the children and supervising the group. For example, while one educator is engaged in a small group experience, the other educator is moving throughout the program space monitoring and engaging with other children.

Supervision is conducted in a non-disruptive manner

Attendance verification is completed without interrupting the children during play. Educators' supervision allows the children freedom to move throughout the entire program space.

Does Not Meet Expectations

Educators are repeatedly unable to balance supervision with interactions

Any educators are repeatedly observed unable to manage between supervision and interactions. For example, educators either focus on interactions with a small group of children or solely supervising and not interacting with any children.

Meets Expectations

Exceeds Expectations

27. Foster Children's Independence

Intent: Educators consistently observe children throughout the day, adapting their verbal and non-verbal interactions to respond to each child's cues. This attentive approach helps children understand natural consequences resulting from their choices. Educators enrich these meaningful experiences by offering a range of choices both individually and in groups, at times that meet the children's needs and the program's goals. Children are given ample time to engage in play and complete learning activities, while also being encouraged to develop their self-help skills.

Inspiring Pedagogy: "When children initiate experiences, generate ideas, plan, problem-solve, make meaningful choices, and act spontaneously through play, they are more likely to be happy and get along well with others, to have lower levels of stress, and to be attentive and motivated to learn." (HDLH, page 35).

Reflective Questions: How do educators follow the children's lead? How do the children direct their own play? How are the children supported in developing self-help skills that will support their development in the future? How can the children access the materials in which they are interested? How are the children seen as capable individuals and encouraged to follow their own interests? How do educators remove barriers to ensure all children, including those with a disability, have a choice of accessible learning experiences?

Does Not Meet Expectations

Educators do not follow the children's cues
Any educators are observed disregarding the cues of the children. For example, a child sitting at the table falling asleep is being told to eat, a child who is signing is not acknowledged, or an upset child is being ignored by educators.

Educators repeatedly do not allow children to make their own decisions

Any educators are repeatedly observed making all decisions for the children. For example, educators decide which learning experience the child will participate in or educators do not allow a child to leave the small group activity.

Educators repeatedly do not encourage developmentally-appropriate self-help skills

Any educators are repeatedly observed not allowing the children to try for themselves or making the task too difficult for a child to follow. For example, educators dressing and/or feeding children.

Meets Expectations

All educators consistently follow the children's cues

All educators are observed following the children's learning cues. Educators are aware of the children's individual needs and personalities. For example, educators recognize when a child needs to use the washroom, or a child says they are thirsty, the educator helps them to get a drink of water.

Children are provided with choices

All educators are observed providing appropriate choices for the children based on their abilities. For example, the choice of learning experiences, adapting equipment and/or activities, or the sequence of tasks.

All educators provide time for children to complete tasks

All educators are observed allowing children the time to complete tasks and learning experiences. Children are not rushed through any routines and are given more time to complete learning experiences at their own pace.

Exceeds Expectations

Children are provided with choices within their interests

All educators are observed providing children the choice of learning experiences or tasks based on their interests.

All educators provide spontaneous resources to allow the child to follow their own learning path

All educators are observed providing resources, such as play materials, to extend the child's learning and inquiry. For example, if a child has expressed an interest in trains, the educator may provide trains/tracks, books, dress up clothes from the cupboard to the child.

All educators create opportunities for enhancing self-help skills through play

All educators are observed creating opportunities to enhance the children's self-help skills through play. For example, educators provide fine motor activities such as lacing cards, button, and zipper boards to practice self-dressing.

28. Supporting the Development of Self-Esteem

Intent: Educators consistently work to create an inclusive environment that promotes self-expression and well-being. They provide ongoing encouragement in task completion, helping children feel confident in their abilities. By identifying and articulating emotions, educators equip children with the language necessary for self-awareness and understanding the feelings of others. This expressive practice nurtures empathy, encourages perspective-taking, and supports self-regulation. Additionally, educators engage with children in ways that enhance self-esteem, using each child's name and preferred pronouns to affirm their identity and foster a sense of belonging.

Inspiring Pedagogy: "Studies show that when educators modelled and helped children express feelings, recognize others' feelings, and help others, children developed positive social skills such as perspective taking, empathy, and emotion regulation and were less likely to engage in problematic behaviours." (HDLH, page. 24-25)

Reflective Questions: How is positive attention directed toward all the children? What strategies are used to ensure the children are made to feel proud of their effort no matter the outcome? How is the process of the children's efforts the focus rather than the end product? How do the children have an opportunity to share their accomplishments no matter what they are? How are the children encouraged to develop a sense of belonging within the program? What opportunities are in place to promote ongoing interactions to support children with developing self-regulation skills? How does the program support neurodivergent children in observing and participating in activities and routines tailored to their unique needs?

Note: General terms of endearment such as "Buddy, Sweetie, or Honey" are discouraged.

Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<p>Educators do not demonstrate inclusive practice Any educators are observed segregating, dismissing individual needs, or excluding children from the group. For example, children being excluded from learning experiences due to their adaptive equipment, being separated from the larger group due to dietary restrictions or forced to sit during a group experience.</p> <p>Educators repeatedly only use terms of endearment Any educators are repeatedly observed using general terms of endearment instead of the child's correct name, the name families prefer, or the name identified by the child. For example, general terms of endearment such as "Buddy", "Sweetie", or "Honey".</p>	<p>All educators address children by their real name All educators are observed addressing the children by their name and pronoun. Educators should address children by the name and pronoun identified by the family or child.</p> <p>All educators consistently demonstrate inclusive practices All educators are observed including all children, regardless of individual needs or abilities, in learning experiences and routines. For example, a child eating on their own due to behaviours or severe allergies may have their table or chair placed in a position where they can still interact with children during meals and snacks; or learning areas, equipment and play materials in the program space are adapted and arranged to support a child using adaptive equipment.</p>	<p>All educators assist children to process their own emotions All educators are observed supporting the children to understand their emotions. For example, an educator comforts and acknowledges the emotions of a child who lost a toy, discussing the different feelings of sadness and anger or identifying joy and pride when a child has completed a puzzle.</p> <p>All educators encourage children to identify the emotions of others All educators are observed encouraging empathy in the children. Educators label the emotions as well as role-model support for the children. For example, an educator explains to an inquiring child why one of the children is crying, or why a child is jumping up and down with excitement.</p>

Does Not Meet Expectations

Educators repeatedly give too many directions for a child to follow successfully

Any educators are repeatedly observed giving multi-step directions that are not developmentally-appropriate and/or are too difficult for the child to follow.

Educators repeatedly do not show encouragement

Any educators are repeatedly observed interacting with the children with a flat or negative affect. For example, educators do not encourage the children or show support for the children.

Educators repeatedly do not acknowledge children's emotions appropriately

Any educators are repeatedly observed dismissing the children's emotions. For example, educators telling the child there's no reason to cry, they're okay or ignoring the child's joy at completing a task.

Meets Expectations

All educators break down directions into individual steps

All educators are observed simplifying directions to ensure children are successful. For example, using visuals, first/then instructions.

All educators focus encouragement on how the tasks are completed

All educators are observed showing support and encouragement to the children as they complete tasks and how they complete the tasks. For example, "you must be so proud of yourself."

All educators role-model how to accomplish tasks

All educators are observed showing children how to succeed at completing tasks without doing it for the children.

Exceeds Expectations

All educators use key words with children in their preferred language

All educators are observed using words and/or visuals in the children's preferred language, as required or preferred by families.

29. Behaviour Guidance

Intent: Educators use strategies that are developmentally-appropriate to effectively support children's behaviour within the program space. By role-modeling positive guidance techniques, educators promote self-regulation, problem-solving skills, and peer interactions. When redirecting children, educators consistently apply these strategies, tailored to each child's unique needs. They are aware of the individual personalities of the children in their care, allowing them to anticipate and address potential challenges proactively.

Inspiring Pedagogy: "Traditionally, educators have found that much of their communication with children involves directing them – giving instructions, telling children what to do, and correcting their behaviour – rather than really connecting with them in a meaningful way. However, an approach that emphasizes listening, responding to, and building on child-initiated communication and conversation can be a more effective way to promote children's language acquisition and their development of social skills, empathetic understanding, and ability to pay attention." (HDLH, page 41).

Reflective Questions: How are the educators equitable when dealing with the children's behaviours? How do educators ensure redirection strategies are appropriate for the specific incident? How are the children encouraged to develop the ability to self-regulate and express themselves?

Does Not Meet Expectations

Educators are physically abrupt with children
Any educators are observed being aggressive with the children. For example, educators are observed grabbing children, using threatening body language or pushing children.

Educators expectations repeatedly do not match the developmental level of children
Any educators are repeatedly observed placing expectations on the children that do not match their level of development. For example, expecting a child to sit in circle beyond their abilities, or expect a child to remain on their cot when they are not sleeping.

Educators repeatedly explain consequences in an abrupt manner
Any educators are repeatedly observed explaining consequences in an abrupt, harsh manner. Educators appear angry at the children for their behaviours. For example, an educator is observed speaking to a child in an angry tone regarding not grabbing toys/items from others or threatening consequences for a child's actions.

Meets Expectations

All educators consistently explain consequences in a calm manner
All educators are observed consistently explaining consequences in a calm manner. For example, an educator calmly explains that hitting hurts and there are other ways to express themselves without hurting the other person, before redirecting the child to an alternate activity.

Positive behaviour is reinforced
All educators are observed reinforcing positive behaviours in the children. All educators acknowledge and support the positive behaviours exhibited by the children. For example, tidying up the room as a team, helping a classmate find their shoes or being courteous to others.

All educators use redirection strategies that are developmentally-appropriate
All educators are observed using strategies that are developmentally-appropriate. For example, educators observe a child dumping bins of toys; the educators redirect the child to the sand table with shovels and buckets.

Exceeds Expectations

All educators adapt expectations based on the individual needs of the children
All educators can adapt expectations based on the individual needs and personalities of the children. For example, shortened wait times or steps for younger children, or longer wait times for the children who have a stronger ability at self-regulation.

All educators respond to all children involved in an incident, to resolve the issue in a calm manner
All educators are observed supporting the emotional needs of all children involved in a conflict situation. Educators address all perspectives in a calm manner to resolve the issue. For example, engaging in problem solving and helping them work together.

All educators monitor group dynamics to anticipate situations
All educators are aware of the different personalities within the group and can anticipate situations before they arise.

Does Not Meet Expectations

Educators repeatedly do not use appropriate behaviour guidance strategies

Any educators are repeatedly observed using inappropriate behaviour guidance strategies. For example, children being given a "time-out" because they were not listening or using empty phrases like "sharing is caring".

Educators repeatedly do not follow through with strategies

Any educators are observed repeatedly not using strategies that are developmentally-appropriate. For example, an educator tells a child that they must take turns with a toy but does not stay with the children to support this strategy.

Meets Expectations

All educators consistently follow through with strategies

All educators are observed consistently following through with strategies. For example, a child refuses to wear a jacket outside; educators help the child to understand why a jacket should be worn and support the child either by encouraging self-dressing or prompting the child to ask for help.

All educators model turn taking/sharing

All educators are consistently observed role-modelling turn taking and/or sharing. Educators stay with the children while role-modelling the strategies to ensure the children understand the process and are successful.

Exceeds Expectations

Children demonstrate awareness of classroom expectations

Children are aware of the classroom expectations. For example, the educators inform the children it is time to tidy up. Children can follow through with the direction without having to be repeatedly reminded by educators.

All educators encourage children to problem solve to resolve peer conflict

Children are encouraged to problem-solve conflict situations with one another and express why they are upset so that they may come to a resolution with the support of educators. Educators model deep breathing, counting to 5 to support children to develop de-escalation skills.

30. Supporting Development of Communication Skills

Intent: Educators skillfully balance verbal and non-verbal interactions with children, creating rich experiences and opportunities for inquiry that enhance learning for everyone. They actively engage in play, role-modeling positive social interactions that encourage connection and collaboration. Ongoing, meaningful discussions foster a mutual exchange of information, allowing educators and children to explore new concepts and perspectives together. Key components of this dynamic environment include active listening, open-ended questioning, recalling past experiences, and introducing spontaneous resources. These practices foster complex play, inquiry, promote engagement, and nurture a strong sense of belonging.

Inspiring Pedagogy: "When educators are aware of and able to understand and respond to the many "languages" children use to communicate, they give every child a "voice". Regardless of the child's age or ability, reciprocal communication exchanges (especially those that allow children to initiate conversation with others) build a sense of connection and enhance children's language skills, social conversational skills, and cognitive activity." (HDLH, page 41).

Reflective Questions: How are the children's conversations valued by the educators? How is non-verbal communication from the children acknowledged by educators? How do educators engage as co-learners with the children? How do educators engage meaningfully with the children and ask critical questions about their play to extend learning? How are the children encouraged to express themselves within their play? How do the educators encourage children to make meaning from their play, engage in reflection, and express their thoughts aloud?

Non-verbal interactions: Includes facial expressions, body language, body contact, eye contact, personal space, and tone of voice.

Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<p>Educators do not initiate verbal/non-verbal interactions Any educators do not initiate or respond to verbal/non-verbal interactions with the children.</p> <p>Educators repeatedly do not build on or expand on verbal/non-verbal interactions Any educators are repeatedly observed not expanding or building on the children's verbal/non-verbal interactions.</p> <p>Educators repeatedly do not role-model descriptions and directions that are developmentally-appropriate Any educators are repeatedly observed not role-modelling descriptions and directions that are developmentally-appropriate. Educators will tell the children to do one thing, but then not follow the same directions. For example, educators ask a child to give another child some room, then tell them there is no room for them at the table at a later time.</p>	<p>Verbal/non-verbal interactions are a balance of teacher and child directed All educators are observed balancing their interactions with those of the child. Educators allow children to respond by using language or gestures, responding to gestures initiated by a child.</p> <p>All educators model active listening skills All educators are observed modelling active listening skills, such as maintaining eye contact with the speaker, repeating and/or re-phrasing the speaker's comments, and responding appropriately.</p> <p>All educators are observed participating in play with children All educators are observed actively participating in the learning experiences with children. For example, using open-ended questions and encouraging inquiry.</p>	<p>All educators extend verbal/non-verbal interactions with materials All educators are observed using play materials to extend language opportunities. For example, a child talks about a TV program they watched about volcanoes, so the educator provides the materials for the child to create his own volcano.</p> <p>All educators extend children's vocabulary All educators are observed using language wherever possible to extend children's vocabulary. For example, providing descriptive words, braille, or sign language when talking about a science experiment.</p> <p>All educators encourage verbal/non-verbal interactions between children All educators are observed encouraging interactions between children. For example, children are playing a game, and the educators encourage the children to discuss the rules and/or expectations which promotes social development and turn taking.</p>

Does Not Meet Expectations

Educators repeatedly do not ask open-ended questions

Any educators are repeatedly observed asking children questions that require only a "yes" or "no" response.

Meets Expectations

Exceeds Expectations

31. Extending Children's Learning

Intent: Educators encourage children to ask questions, problem-solve, and experiment, fostering a culture of exploration and discovery that is inclusive of all identities and experiences. This process of trial and error not only reinforces the belief that every child is a competent and capable learner but also ensures that each child's unique voice and perspective are valued. By being attuned to the diverse personality traits, sociocultural backgrounds, and learning styles of each child, educators can respond effectively to a wide range of learning experiences. This approach supports equitable growth and development, ensuring that all children feel seen, respected, and empowered to thrive in their educational journey.

Inspiring Pedagogy: "Educators can gain a deeper understanding of children's developing skills and evolving learning approaches and can support new learning by collaborating with children in discovery and sustained, shared thinking." (HDLH, page 35).

Reflective Questions: How is critical thinking encouraged to extend the children's learning? How do educators respond to all learning opportunities? How are educators using learning materials and equipment to create an environment of acceptance? How are the children's individual interests acknowledged by educators? How are the children's learning cues nurtured? How are educators using sociocultural play materials to extend children's learning?

Does Not Meet Expectations

Educators repeatedly solve the children's problems immediately

Any educators are observed solving the children's problems.

Educators repeatedly miss opportunities to build children's knowledge

Any educators are repeatedly observed ignoring opportunities to extend children's learning.

Educators repeatedly do not allow children to try for themselves

Any educators are repeatedly observed not allowing children to attempt new tasks or engage freely within their environment.

Meets Expectations

All educators encourage children to find solutions

All educators are observed encouraging children to problem-solving and find solutions to tasks and/or activities. All educators allow children to follow their own natural curiosity and inquiry in the moment. For example, educators and children are engaged in completing a large floor puzzle, or finding a solution to an obstacle course that offers opportunities for enhancing critical thinking skills.

All educators support children to follow through with strategies

All educators are observed working with children through a problem, breaking solutions into small steps and supporting the children throughout the process. For example, educators ask the children what outdoor clothes need to be put on first to go play in the snow: snow pants or boots?

Exceeds Expectations

All educators balance the abilities of the child with the complexity of the learning outcomes

All educators are aware of the children's abilities and provide opportunities to extend learning opportunities where appropriate. For example, one child may be provided a two-step direction, whereas another child may be given a four-step direction.

All educators recall past experiences to extend current learning opportunities

All educators are observed recalling past activities or experiences and linking them to new learning opportunities. For example, while playing in the sandbox with diggers and other construction props, the educator recalls the time they went for a walk in the community and encountered some construction occurring on a local street or when they are doing a planting experience, they recall a time when they read a book about Indigenous peoples and appreciation of the land.

Does Not Meet Expectations

Meets Expectations

Exceeds Expectations

All educators support the children's learning

All educators are co-learners with the children. All educators are engaged in the children's learning experiences, encouraging new vocabulary, and suggesting ideas to extend the learning opportunity. For example, asking open-ended questions about what happens to the ingredients used in the process of making playdough, talking about a sociocultural display and how it reflects their family and community or learning about the seasons as represented in the Medicine Wheel.

All educators are responsive to learning opportunities

All educators are responsive to children's inquiries, new learning opportunities, and cues. They take advantage of these new learning opportunities by using language, materials, and children's natural curiosity to enhance the children's play experiences.