



## **Playground Safety Policy**

Revised: August 19, 2016, October 16, 2017, Feb 22, 2018. May 8, 2018, August 9, 2019, September 26, 2019

Reference: Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014

Date approved by Board of Directors: January 18, 2018

Secretary: Margaret Moore

### **Purpose:**

Outdoor play is an integral part of the daily schedule and plays an important role in the development of children's overall well-being. In order for children to thrive in outdoor play, it is crucial that there be sufficient toys and equipment for children to engage in active play and that the educators engage as active participants in the play.

The How Does Learning Happen? Ontario Pedagogy for the Early Years document describes how children thrive in programs where they can engage in vigorous physical play in natural outdoor space and playgrounds that present manageable levels of challenge. In addition to providing physical benefits, active outdoor play strengthens functioning in cognitive areas such as perception, attention, creative problem solving and complex thinking

While these environments need to be safe, it is also important for them to provide children with interesting opportunities for a reasonable degree of risk-taking

The purpose of this policy is to set out the responsibilities of the Orde Day Care staff, students and volunteers in ensuring that the outdoor play provided is safe and well-supervised environment for children and meet Canadian Standards Association (CSA) standards. Staff is required to plan daily activities that promote active play while maintaining ratios and optimum positions of supervision at all times.

All staff, volunteers and placement students are required to review the playground policy when commencing employment, training or volunteering and annually thereafter. A written record of the review will be signed annually by the individual and the Supervisor to ensure compliance. Staff must stay informed of all current playground requirements and restrictions.

Any new and current equipment or renovations, repairs or replacements will meet CSA Standards. All playground inspections, daily, monthly and annually are performed while ensuring the Canadian Standard Association standard is met. A yearly inspection is performed by a Certified Playground Safety Inspector annually and a written report is kept on file.

### **Policy**

- Orde Day Care will ensure that there are enough play materials available that are appropriate for the children's age and learning and developmental needs during outdoor play.

### **Procedure: Playground Inspections/Checks:**

To further ensure safety we have developed a Playground Safety Binder that includes:



1. **Accident Reports** (program staff) to track all injuries on playgrounds.
2. **Playground Injury Log** (Site Supervisor) to highlight problem areas.
3. **Daily Inspection Checklist** (program staff/caretaking staff) done prior to children entering playground which ensures:
  - a. children will not use the playground unless the playground checklist has been completed
  - b. staff must review the daily playground inspection prior to going outside to ensure that it has been inspected – this must be done both in the am and pm dependent on the program
  - c. on days that the playground is not used due to inclement weather or a field trip the daily playground checklist must indicate the reason why the playground was not used or inspected
  - d. any identified hazards will be verbally communicated to the Supervisor and noted on the daily check
  - e. weekly playground checklist must be submitted to the Supervisor on a weekly basis with the programme plans
  - f. The Supervisor will review the daily playground checklist to ensure compliance and identify any ongoing issues
  - g. Supervisors will inform caretaking staff that ropes or plastic tape cannot be used to cordon off a defective area**
4. Monthly Maintenance Inspection (Supervisor) to record hazards or defects that need immediate attention or require a plan of action within a specific timeframe.
  - Supervisor will maintain an ongoing Repair Log
  - Supervisors will log any repairs or maintenance issues in the Playground repair log from the daily, monthly and annual inspections on the Playground repair log,
  - Playground repairs will be emailed to the caretaking staff of the TDSB and the school principal (Orde Site) or the playground manufacturer.
  - Supervisors will note the date the TDSB or the manufacturer of the structure was emailed on the log
  - Supervisor will review the log on a monthly basis to ensure repairs or concerns have been address.
  - If repairs are still outstanding, Supervisors will send a secondary email to the caretaking and Principal if applicable and note the second date on the repair log.
  - If repairs are still outstanding after a second notice, the Supervisor will inform outside inspectors of the needed repair ie Toronto Public Health inspector, Ministry of Education, Program advisor and City of Toronto, Children Services consultant
  - Once a repair has been completed Supervisors will enter the date of completion on the playground repair log
5. Maintenance of playground repair log for any problems or unresolved issues on the playground which includes;



- a. The date the issue was identified
  - b. Documentation of what steps and efforts have been taken to address any identified items which cannot be repaired immediately due to circumstances beyond the daycare's control
  - c. All request for repairs through the TDSB will be emailed to the head caretaker and principal of the school, and/or playground manufacturer to ensure documentation of the requested repair
  - d. Supervisors will note date of email on the repair log
  - e. Supervisors will review the log on a monthly basis and provide written updates on log
  - f. If repair is outstanding for more than one-month Supervisors will send a secondary email to the caretaking and Principal if applicable and note the second date on the repair log.
  - g. If repairs are still outstanding after a second notice, the Supervisor will inform outside inspectors of the needed repair i.e. Toronto Public Health inspector, Ministry of Education, Program advisor and City of Toronto, Children Services consultant
  - h. Once the repair has been completed the date of completion will be noted in the log
  - i. If the repairs cannot be completed immediately, the area or space requiring repairs will be sectioned off to prevent children from using that are in order to protect their safety and reduce risk of injury, Children will be supervisor at all times during outdoor play to ensure that they do not approach or use spaces that are sectioned off pending repairs. Tape or string should not be used to cordon off areas
  - j. Any repairs requiring alterations or renovations to the playground premise will not begin until site or playground plans are approved by the Ministry of Education Director
6. And a 3<sup>rd</sup> party inspection which is conducted annually for the fixed structures and surface check of the playground  
The third-party inspector must:
- a. Declare non conflict of interest including declaration of non- affiliation with playground equipment and protective surface manufacturers, suppliers and/or other contractors involved in retrofit, upgrade or repair of the playground or the protective surfaces:
  - b. Has proof of current Professional Errors and Omissions insurance coverage and
  - c. Has proof of playground inspection certification
  - d. Action Plan to record results of the annual 3<sup>rd</sup> party inspection, including timeframes to address each specific issue.

All documentation and reports are filed by the Supervisor in the Playground Inspection Binder.

**Compliance with CSA Standards:**

- Any outdoor play space, fixed play structure or surfacing under those structures that is constructed or renovated will meet the requirements set out in the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) standard CAN/CSA-Z614-14 "Children's Playspace and Equipment"
- Written confirmation of compliance with the CSA standard will be obtained from a "Certified Playground Inspector", upon completion of any repairs or renovations which



have resulted in a non-compliance, with the CSA standard as outlined in a playground inspection

Playground experiences are an integral part of our program and planning. A playground safety checklist must be completed daily by a designated staff and outdoor program plans must be posted weekly. Programs are designed as an extension of our program, with opportunities for learning and enhancement of many skills identified in the ELECT document.

### **Playground Procedures:**

When we are outdoors, safety is our top priority. Safety of the children includes monitoring for proper use of equipment. Staff are encouraged and expected to play with the children and/or lead them in games and activities while ensuring that all areas are properly supervised.

### **Playground Safety:**

- h. CCYA ratios must be maintained at all times, reduced ratios are never permitted on the playground
- i. staff must review the playground rules with the children on a regular basis
- j. emergency contact information is available
- k. main attendance and transition attendance is brought on the playground
- l. allergy and dietary restriction information is available
- m. children are transitioned in small groups based on permitted ratios.
- n. children should always enter and leave the playground in an orderly fashion
- o. staff must redirect aggressive or unsafe behaviour
- p. all scarves, drawstrings or cords must be tucked inside children's clothing
- q. NO skipping ropes, gimp, loose toggles, loose scarves, toys, etc on structures or wheeled toys
- r. **If skipping ropes are available to the children, they must be closely supervised for appropriate use on the turf area only**
- s. **children should never use rope for tying each other up**
- t. **The number of skipping ropes brought out by the staff should be reflective of the interest and will not exceed 15 at one time**
- u. food or snacks are to be eaten ONLY if the child is sitting with a staff member
- v. children should not hang off or sit on gates, or anything that is not considered playground equipment
- w. children should not go behind sheds or climb on fences
- x. children should keep their shoes on at all times
- y. children should always come down the slide feet first, never jump from top of climber
- z. bikes must be ridden in designated areas only
- aa. helmets must be worn when riding two wheelers

### **General Information:**

#### **Orde Site**

- first aid kit is available in each emergency trip bag which is taken on the



playground

- accident reports are available in attendance binder of each room
- keys or combinations to the shed are kept with the attendance binder
- both entrance gates must be closed with a chain while supervising children in the yard
- children should not be on stairs leading into the school

**Satellite Site**

- a first aid kit is located in the shed and emergency trip bag
- accident reports are located in the shed and trip emergency bag
- staff must ensure that one of the programs has a cell phone/walkie talkie
- keys for the lock are available in the trip bag of each room
- the shed and gates must be locked after each use
- infants and toddler children will be separated from other children during outdoor activities

**Equipment:**

- outdoor toys and equipment must be put away at the end of end of day (or after each use, if need be)
- the shed should be left tidy and organized
- all toys and equipment needing repair should be brought to the attention of the Site Supervisor

**Structures:**

- the compaction of the ground/mulch under all structures must be tested prior to use
- staff must check absorbency of mulch to a depth of 4" inches minimum
- children must not use structures when snow or ice covered or when ground surface is frozen

**Playground Safety:**

- bb. staff must review the playground rules with the children on a regular basis
- cc. CCYA ratios must be maintained at all times, children are transitioned in small groups based on permitted ratios.
- dd. children should always enter and leave the playground in an orderly fashion
- ee. staff must redirect aggressive or unsafe behaviour
- ff. all scarves, drawstrings or cords must be tucked inside children's clothing
- gg. NO skipping ropes, gimp, loose toggles, loose scarves, toys, etc on structures or wheeled toys
- hh. **If skipping ropes are available to the children, they must be closely supervised for appropriate use on the turf area only**
- ii. **children should never use rope for tying each other up**
- jj. **The number of skipping ropes brought out by the staff should be reflective of the interest and will not exceed 15 at one time**
- food or snacks are to be eaten ONLY if the child is sitting with a staff member
- children should not hang off or sit on gates, or anything that is not considered playground



equipment

- children should not go behind sheds or climb on fences
- children should keep their shoes on at all times
- children should always come down the slide feet first, never jump from top of climber
- bikes must be ridden in designated areas only
- helmets must be worn when riding two wheelers

### **Playground Repair and Maintenance Log:**

To ensure the ongoing safety of the playground the following procedures will be followed:

- All daily inspections which identify hazards will be verbally communicated to the Supervisor and noted on the daily inspections
- **Supervisors will inform caretaking staff that ropes or plastic tape cannot be used to cordon off a defective area**
- Supervisors will review the daily inspections on a weekly basis to identify any ongoing issues
- Supervisor will maintain an ongoing Repair Log
- Supervisors will log any repairs or maintenance issues in the Playground repair log from the daily, monthly and annual inspections on the Playground repair log,
- Playground repairs will be emailed to the caretaking staff of the TDSB and the school principal (Orde Site) or the playground manufacturer.
- Supervisors will note the date the TDSB or the manufacturer of the structure was emailed on the log
- Supervisor will review the log on a monthly basis to ensure repairs or concerns have been address.
- If repairs are still outstanding, Supervisors will send a secondary email to the caretaking and Principal if applicable and note the second date on the repair log.
- If repairs are still outstanding after a second notice, the Supervisor will inform outside inspectors of the needed repair i.e. Toronto Public Health inspector, Ministry of Education, Program advisor and City of Toronto, Children Services consultant
- Once a repair has been completed Supervisors will enter the date of completion on the playground repair log



**Orde Street Site - Outdoor Supervision Procedure:**

- a staff member is responsible for giving the playground an overview for safety each time it is used
- daily playground checklist and the key for the she is stored in the Playground binder
- staff ensure that children have been toileted & are properly dressed for the weather, prior to going out
- staff must take attendance and do a head count before going out to yard
- only day care children are allowed in the playground during day care permitted hour
- CCYA ratios must be maintained at all times
- **all staff must broadcast to all staff present the number of children they brought into the yard and the total number of children in the yard when arriving and departing**
- **when entering and leaving the playground staff should only have a small number of children with them as per the required ratio**
- there must be an adequate number of activities for the children on the playground
- any child who has had an accident or is feeling ill must be escorted to the day care office by an adult
- when taking a child in for any reason ensure that another staff is made aware and covers your position
- staff must indicate each child's departure time on the attendance sheets
- when re-entering school, children should line up at base of stairs in room groupings
- one staff member must scan the yard calling for children to line up
- count the children and do a roll call against the attendance sheet before returning to the building
- parents should be discouraged from picking up child by calling through the fence or from their cars

**Positions for Supervision in the West Yard:**

Depending on the number of staff available, staff must position themselves to ensure that all areas are supervised when in use.

1. General
  1. (1 person) Play Structure and gate
  2. (1-3 persons) Play Structure, gate
  3. (1-4 persons) Play Structure, gate and bike area.
2. Play structure (1-3 persons)
  1. (1 person) must monitor monkey bars **when being used at all times- CLOSED DURING THE WINTER (when children are wearing gloves)**
  2. Wooden logs- **CLOSED DURING THE WINTER – slippery when wet**
3. Front Gate (1 person)
  1. Keep children away from the gate, and off the fence, monitor retaining wall, monitor people coming and going and ensure gate is closed at all times and the chain is over the gate
4. Storage Sheds and Back Gate (1 person) this area must be closed to children.



5. Access to stairs and behind the Kindergarten storage sheds must be blocked.
6. Attendance binders must be staffed at all times so children leaving can be marked off and notes given to parents. Whenever possible part-time staff should be recording the time of departure of children. This allows full-time staff to communicate with parents.

**Positions for Supervision in the East Yard:**

Depending on the number of staff available, staff must position themselves to ensure that all areas are supervised when in use.

1.
  - i. (1-2 person) Along east fence facing "Astroturf" area and school building
  - ii. (1-3 persons) Picnic tables with quiet activity, Play Structure, and main gate
  - iii. (1-4 persons) same as above and where needed.
2. Inform "non-daycare" people using the yard that they must leave the area until our permit expires. Question any adult who may be hanging out and contact Supervisor.
3. Keep children away from the gate and off the fence, monitor people coming and going.
4. Attendance binders must be staffed at all times so children's departure time can be marked off and notes given to parents.

Staff Name:	Supervisor Name:
Staff signature:	Supervisor Signature:
Date:	Date:



**Satellite Site - Outdoor Supervision Policy**

- a staff member is responsible for giving the playground an overview for safety each time it is used
- prior to going outside staff should ensure that children have been toileted and properly dressed for the weather
- staff must ensure that scarves, drawstrings and cords are tucked inside children’s clothing and not tied around their necks
- staff must take attendance and do a head count before going out to yard and a 2nd head count once in the yard
- **all staff must broadcast to all staff present the number of children they brought into the yard and the total number of children when arriving and departing the playground**
- the gate must be opened and closed by an adult
- **when entering and leaving the playground staff should only have a small number of children with them as per the required ratio**
- ratios must be maintained at all times
- the staff member conducting the playground check must ensure that the cell phone/walkie talkie is working and take it with them
- no staff member is permitted outside alone with children unless they have a cell phone/walkie talkie
- when taking a child in for any reason ensure that another staff member is made aware and covers your position
- in an emergency staff can call the office or kitchen for assistance or bring their group inside
- there must be an adequate number of activities for the children on the playground
- staff must indicate each child’s departure on the attendance sheets
- count the children and do a roll call against the attendance sheet if available before returning to the building
- one staff member must scan the yard calling for children to line up
- toadstools and balance beam may only be used as seating apparatus

**Positions for Supervision in the Yard – Satellite Site**

Staff must position themselves to ensure that all areas are supervised when in use.

**Toddler Yard:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> staff – gate area
- 2<sup>nd</sup> staff – walk around the climber area
- 3<sup>rd</sup> staff – sandbox

**Preschool Yard:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> staff – rung ladder
- 2<sup>nd</sup> staff – fence wall near children’s picnic table
- 3<sup>rd</sup> staff – chain net with rails

Staff signature:	Supervisor Signature:
Date:	Date:

Comments:

