



City of Cornwall Children's Services Division

Child Care Business Practice Guideline 2024

For Child Care Service Operators



January 2024

Contents

Introduction.....	1
Policies	1
Serious Incident Reporting	1
Conflict of Interest.....	2
Funding.....	2
Child Care Fee Subsidy.....	3
Overview	3
Children’s Services Division Responsibilities.....	4
Child Care Operator Responsibilities	4
Termination and Withdrawal from a Program.....	6
Confidentiality.....	6
Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (CWELCC)	7
Special Purpose Funding.....	7
Service Objectives	7
Purposes, Goals and Objectives.....	7
Restrictions.....	8
Application Process	8
Guidelines for Repairs and Maintenance Funding	9
Application Process for Repairs and Maintenance Funding.....	11
Guidelines for Capacity Building Funding	11
Application Process for Capacity Building Funding.....	12
Guidelines for Transformation Funding	13
Guidelines for Play Based Material and Equipment Funding	14
Application Process for Play Based Material and Equipment Funding	14
General Operating Grant Funding	15
Priorities	15
Eligibility Criteria	16
Implementation.....	16
Allowable Expenses.....	17
Inadmissible Expenses	17
Accountability	18
Inclusion Services (Special Needs Resourcing)	19
About Special Needs Resourcing.....	19
Overview of Special Needs Resourcing Services.....	19
Responsibilities of the City of Cornwall’s Special Needs Resourcing Team.....	20

Child Care Advisors	20
Professional Development	21
Specialized and Adaptive Equipment and Resources	21
Enhanced Support	22
Transition to School or Between Licensed Child Care Programs.....	23
Responsibilities of the Child Care Program	23
The Service Model	24
Policy for Complaints and Resolution	25

Introduction

The City of Cornwall Children's Services Division is the designated Service System Manager for Child Care and the Early Years for Cornwall and the Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry. As such, the Children's Services Division has set out policies and guidelines, contained within this document, which must be followed by all child care operators who access funding through the Division.

The Child Care Service Operator must ensure that all programs will be delivered adhering to appropriate legislation and/or quality assurance program. In particular, the terms of the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA), Early Childhood Educators Act (ECEA), and the Education Act, and any other requirements as set out by the province of Ontario.

The Child Care Service Operator will provide services in accordance with the applicable Service Description Schedule(s), which will include completion of the annual Information Submission package and the annual financial reporting template.

Policies

As Service System Manager, the City of Cornwall Children's Services Division must ensure that appropriate policies and procedures are in place. In addition to policies that are mandated through legislation (CCEYA, 2014), child care operators who receive funding through the City must also adhere to the following policies:

- Serious incident reporting
- Conflict of Interest

Serious Incident Reporting

As per the CCEYA, 2014 child care operators are required to complete Serious Occurrence reports through the Child Care Licensing System (CCLS). As the service system manager, the Children's Services Manager has access to these serious occurrence reports, as well as all submitted updates. Child care operators must provide the City with additional updates, as requested. It is the responsibility of the Children's Services Division to keep elected officials up to date on relevant community information.

At times, other serious incidents may occur that are not required to be reported through CCLS. These serious incidents must be reported directly to the Children's Services Manager via email at kgreaves@cornwall.ca.

Serious incidents that must be reported to the service system manager include:

- Breach of confidentiality involving a fee subsidy client or City employee
- Incidents that may result in media attention

Conflict of Interest

It is important for the public that service operators accessing Ministry of Education funds distributed by the City of Cornwall are being well managed. Situations occur where a person or business interest dealing with service provider has a conflict of interest that could damage public confidence in our programs. The following definition shall be used when determining if there is a conflict of interest.

Conflict of interest is a situation where the other personal or business interests of a party are in conflict with the best interests of the child care operation. A conflict of interest may occur under the following 2 circumstances:

- 1. a direct or indirect personal gain or benefit is given or received by a party, or a family member of a party, or*
- 2. a direct or indirect advantage or privilege is given to or received by a party, or a family member of a party*

Service operators must closely monitor their relationships, arrangements, contracts and agreements and not engage in any that may result in a conflict of interest.

Service operators must advise the Children's Services Division immediately should a conflict of interest arise.

Funding

The City of Cornwall enters into service contract agreements with existing non-profit child care operators on an annual basis. Child Care Operators who have a purchase of service agreement with the City of Cornwall are eligible to receive financial supports including:

- General Operating Grant funding
- Provincial Wage Enhancement funding
- Funding to support the objectives of the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (CWELCC), if enrolled
- Pay Equity funding, if applicable

Funding provided to the child care operators is reconciled on a quarterly and/or annual basis through reporting templates provided by the Children's Services division. Adjustments for overpayments or underpayments are applied after each reporting period. Funding not spent for its intended purpose is recovered by the Corporation. Child Care Operators in receipt of funding are required to submit to the Children's Services division audited financial statements on an annual basis to verify that all funds received have been used for the purpose intended. Guidelines for funding related to fee subsidy, special purpose applications and enhanced support are outlined within this document.

Child Care Fee Subsidy

Overview

The Child Care Fee Subsidy program helps eligible families pay for the cost of licensed child care for children up to the age of 12 years. Child Care fee subsidy is an essential support for many families, helping them balance the demands of work and family while actively participating in the workforce or pursuing education or training.

To be eligible for child care fee subsidy, parents or legal guardians must be working, attending school or training, or be in receipt of Ontario Works (OW) or Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) benefits while participating in an approved activity. Child care fee subsidy may also be provided, at the discretion of the Children's Services staff, if the child has a recognized special or social need.

The amount of child care fee subsidy, if any, is determined using the Ministry mandated income test on the Ontario Child Care Management System (OCCMS). Eligible hours of child care are based on the parent's hours of work or school, as well as custody agreements. Child Care fee subsidy will be approved as per the following definitions:

- **Full Day:** Services consisting of 6 or more hours of care (as per the Ministry of Education's definition of full day care).
- **Half Day:** Services consisting of less than 6 hours of care
- **Before and/or After School Care:** Services accessed prior to the start of the school day and/or after the end of a school day
- **Extended hours:** before 7:00 a.m. and/or after 6:00 p.m.; weekend hours
- **Additional Days for School Aged Children,** as per full day and/or half day as listed above: to allow for children who normally attend care only for before and/or after school to access care on school breaks and snow days.
- **Varied Schedule:** Care is approved as a 'varied schedule' for families who do not work set shifts and therefore the days and hours that care is required will change from week to week. Based on the average number of hours that the parent(s) typically work, care will be approved for either 3 days per week or 5 days per week.

For child care centres who are closed on statutory holidays fee subsidy will only be paid if the child would have normally attended and only at the rate of their regular care code.

Fee subsidy for special needs and social referrals are given on a temporary part-time basis and are prioritized for children who are eligible for school in the upcoming school year.

Parents are also required to provide documentation as per Ministry guidelines and local policy to qualify for child care fee subsidy. Once a parent/guardian is deemed eligible

to subsidized care for his/her child or children, he/she must continue to meet eligibility criteria to remain eligible for subsidy.

In order to receive Child Care Fee Subsidy, families will choose a Child Care Program within the City of Cornwall and the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry that has available space and with a Program that has an existing "Purchase of Service Agreement" with the Corporation.

Children's Services Division Responsibilities

Child Care fee subsidy will be paid to the Child Care Service Operator as per the operator's posted daily rates. Daily rates are paid based on the age of the child. The foregoing fees will be supplemented by an amount of \$5.00 per hour for the provision of non-traditional hour services on a weekend, during evening hours or overnight (Before 7:00 a.m. & after 6:00 p.m.). This additional fee is only paid if the family schedules and/or the child attends care during non-traditional hours. Note: Licensees that opened after March 27, 2022 are not eligible to receive the extra fees for non-traditional hours of care.

The subsidy is provided to licensed child care programs on behalf of eligible families.

When a family is deemed eligible for child care fee subsidy, the Child Care Program will be notified and advised of the start date, the approved child care code, the approved schedule for attendance at the centre including the days and hours approved for care, and the parental contribution.

If a family is determined by the City of Cornwall Children's Services staff to have "available income" to contribute towards the costs of the Child Care, the Child Care Program is responsible for the collection of this amount from the family.

If the family is determined by the City of Cornwall Children's Services staff to have "available income" to contribute towards the cost of the child care, the Case Manager will advise the centre of the amount owing from the family. Centres are not permitted to charge families more than the parent contribution as communicated by the City of Cornwall Children's Services staff.

Children's Services staff conducts ongoing reviews with families to verify continued eligibility and will inform the Child Care Program of any relevant changes to subsidy or forthcoming withdrawals.

Child Care Operator Responsibilities

Child Care Service Operators are required to report attendance monthly. Authorized individuals within the Child Care Program must verify the actual days/times of attendance, as per the approved schedule, at the applicable child care program. This must be completed and submitted to the Corporation on or before the 10th day of each month to enable payment to the Child Care Program. Attendances not submitted by the end of January of the following calendar year will not be accepted. Once received, Children's Services will process and pay the attendance invoice by the second Thursday following submission.

Child care operators are required to monitor attendance and ensure the approved schedule is being followed. Should a family indicate to an operator a change in schedule, please direct them to communicate with their Case Manager for approval. Attendance will only be approved as per the most recent Notification of Fee Subsidy form that has been sent to the centre. Should a client attend care outside of this schedule, it will be the center’s responsibility to collect fees for any additional hours and/or days directly from the family. Child care operators must inform Children’s Services of all program closures, both planned and unplanned. Child care operators may not bill for days where they choose not to operate (for example, if an operator chooses not to operate between Christmas and New Year’s, the operator cannot bill for these days).

The following attendance codes are to be used by the child care operator when completing the monthly attendance:

Attendance Type	Code	Description
Absent / Sick / Vacation	A	Used when a child does not attend on a scheduled day.
Withdrawal	W	Indicates last day for which the program will receive payment.
Statutory Holidays	H	Used on recognized Statutory Holidays and paid as per the regular care code, only if the child would have normally attended as per the most recent fee subsidy notification.
Present	P	Used when child attends a scheduled day, as per the most recent fee subsidy notification.
Non-Paid Days	N	Used when the centre plans a closure on a non-Statutory Holiday; a comment is required.
Other	O	Used for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varied Schedules (example: family schedules only 2 of 3 approved varied days, third day is to be coded “O” with a note stating “varied schedule”), or • Unplanned closures (example: snow day or other extenuating circumstance); a comment is required.

All child care fees that are incurred by a family, when determined ineligible for child care fee subsidy will be the sole responsibility of the family and collection thereof will be the sole responsibility of the Child Care Program.

Where Children's Services is aware of a forthcoming termination of subsidy for a child, a notice of no less than ten (10) business days will be given to the Child Care Program.

The Child Care Program has the responsibility to monitor absenteeism and to ensure it does not exceed the allotted number of days each calendar year per child with subsidized care. Absenteeism includes sick days, vacation days, unexplained absent days and any days where the child is absent for any reasons and the Child Care Program receives payment from Children's Services. Unused allowed absences will follow the child from program to program and/or from service to service within the same calendar year only. Unusual circumstances may be addressed through the Division Manager on a case-by-case basis.

Termination and Withdrawal from a Program

Five (5) consecutive days of absence without notice to the child care provider is considered to be "withdrawal without notice". The child care program shall notify child care services immediately of five (5) consecutive scheduled days of absence.

Where a child, whose child care fees are subsidized, is withdrawn by the parent/guardian without a notice of no less than five (5) business days, the Child Care Program may receive payment equivalent to no more than five days of care from Children's Services, unless the resulting vacancy is filled within those five (5) days.

Where the Child Care Program is aware that a child, whose care is subsidized, will be withdrawn, the Child Care Program shall notify Children's Services immediately.

Children's Services staff will inform the child care operator in a timely manner of termination dates should a family no longer need and/or qualify for child care fee subsidy.

Confidentiality

When applying for child care fee subsidy, clients consent to the exchange of information between the City of Cornwall Children's Services Division and their Child Care Provider for the purpose of determining a placement for their child(ren), as well as for attendance purposes. As such, Case Managers will not discuss clients' personal circumstances with the child care operator.

The CCEYA, 2014 outlines the personal information that child care operators must have on file for the children that are enrolled in their centres. This information is collected and shared with relevant staff to ensure the proper placement of the child(ren) as well as to ensure the health and safety of the children. Any additional personal information pertaining to the financial circumstances of a client, including if they are in receipt of child care fee subsidy, must not be shared with staff who are not responsible for submitting the monthly attendance reports to the City.

Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (CWELCC)

Child care operators who have opted-in to and have been deemed eligible to participate in the CWELCC program must follow the guidelines for this program as set by the Province and contained within the following document:

[Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Guideline and Application Process](#)

For families attending child care programs who are participating in the CWELCC program, the parental contribution for eligible children will be reduced according to provincial guidelines. CWELCC funding will be provided to child care operators to account for the reduced parental contribution.

Special Purpose Funding

Service Objectives

Special purpose funding has been made available with the intent of supporting licensed child care programs. Special purpose funding is targeted towards items and/or required services that are necessary to ensure the health and safety of the children in child care programs (Repairs and Maintenance), to support professional development opportunities that build the capacity of licensed child care operators (Capacity Building), to cover one-time costs for non-profit child care operators that are involved in business transformation activities and/or require business transformation supports (Transformation Funding) and to help child care operators to create enriching environments that are developmentally appropriate and promote children's exploration and learning through play (Play Based Material and Equipment Expense).

Special Purpose funds will be distributed in accordance to operators that have a current service contract with the City of Cornwall.

Purposes, Goals and Objectives

The following 5 points identify the purposes, goals and objectives of these guidelines and of each of the methods of procurement are to encourage open competition among suppliers

1. to maximize savings for taxpayers
2. to ensure service and product delivery, quality, efficiency and effectiveness
3. to ensure fairness among bidders
4. to ensure openness, accountability and transparency
5. to obtain the best value for the use of public funds when procuring goods and services

The key goals of the procurement process that the City of Cornwall is committed to

achieve in order to maintain the integrity of the process and protect the interests of the Corporation and the public are to ensure the best possible quality of goods and services at the best possible cost, accountability, fairness, objectivity, efficiency, effectiveness and transparency.

Restrictions

No contract for goods or services may be divided into two or more parts to avoid the application of the provisions of these guidelines.

Operators may not pay with/or use any dividend or benefit card for personal gain (e.g. Air Miles, points).

Application Process

Please refer to the following 3 components regarding the application process:

1. Applications will be accepted from child care operators that have a current service contract with the City of Cornwall.
2. Application forms can be obtained on the City of Cornwall website by visiting the following link: [Special Purpose Funding Applications](#)
3. Applicants will complete the appropriate application form(s) and e-mail their application(s) along with the applicable supporting documents to: cs-specialpurpose@cornwall.ca

Please refer to the following 6 points of clarification regarding the application process.

1. Approved applications will receive confirmation of a funding allocation via e-mail.
2. All completed projects require invoices marked paid in full to be submitted to the City of Cornwall along with proof of payment within 30 days. If an operator submits copies of invoices, they are required to keep on file the original invoices for a period of no less than 7 years.
3. Invoices not received within 30 days or by the end of January of the following calendar year for projects completed late in the current year, will result in the money being recovered by the City.
4. No further applications will be processed until the original invoices and other required documentation are received, as per municipal discretion.
5. Payment will be processed once invoices or approved lowest quotes are received and verified.
6. Payments will be issued by direct deposit.

The Special Purpose (Repairs and Maintenance, Capacity Building, Transformation Funding and Play Based Material and Equipment) funding is subject to the following 8 conditions:

1. All applications for Special Purpose funding must be submitted on the designated forms provided by the City of Cornwall.
2. All requested items/services that are in excess of \$5,000.00 (before taxes) must be supported by a minimum of three (3) separate written, competitive quotes prior to the purchase of the item/service. All quotes must be for comparable items/services and must be detailed, including all products/services that will be provided. All quotes must be submitted to the City of Cornwall on the Quotation Summary Form. If the operator chooses to accept a quote that is not the lowest quote submitted, an explanation and request for approval must be submitted to the City of Cornwall prior to the purchase. Funding may be restricted to the totality of the lowest quote.
3. Funding over \$150,000 is subject to City Council approval.
4. Estimates and costs requested from the City must exclude HST rebates, energy efficient rebates, discounts, etc.
5. Special Purpose items/services that are approved may not be substituted unless prior approval has been requested and granted through the City of Cornwall.
6. If there are any remaining funds after the purchase of items/services, this amount must be immediately reported to the City of Cornwall for reimbursement.
7. The operator will be responsible for the difference of any cost that exceeds the approved Special Purpose items/services allocation.
8. All Special Purpose Funding allocations must be spent by the operator by December 31st of each calendar year. All projects must be completed (delivered, installed, etc..) in the same calendar year that the money was received and spent.

Note: Applications for Special Purpose funding is subject to change based on demand and available budget.

Note: An application does not guarantee a funding allocation for proposed projects. Any financial or contractual agreement the Operator undertakes is at their own risk and the City takes no responsibility for any financial investments the Operator makes prior to entering into a contractual agreement.

Guidelines for Repairs and Maintenance Funding

Repairs and Maintenance funding is intended to assist both non-profit and for-profit licensed Operators who are not, or may be at risk of not being, in compliance with licensing requirements under the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*. Priority will be given to fund programs that serve children age birth to 3.8 years.

Common areas of repairs and maintenance concerns include:

<p>Food Preparation</p>	<p>Washrooms</p>
<p>Repair or replacement of the following 3 items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hand washing sink in the kitchen 2. Dishwasher or hot water booster 3. Major appliances 	<p>Repair or replacement of the following 4 items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fixtures 2. Partitions 3. Flooring material 4. Change table
<p>Major Systems</p>	<p>Play Area</p>
<p>Repair or replacement of the following 9 items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leaking roof 2. Building foundation 3. Heating/cooling system 4. Sump pump 5. Emergency lighting 6. Accessibility 7. Windows or doors 8. Asbestos removal or encapsulation 9. Wiring upgrades 	<p>Repair or replacement of the following 7 items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Damaged walls/peeling paint that may contain lead 2. Windows 3. Damaged/worn flooring material or ceiling 4. Damaged/worn outdoor safety surfacing 5. Fencing 6. Drinking water system 7. Heating system
<p>Code Compliance (See the following 3 Codes)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ontario Fire Code orders/recommendations 2. Ontario Building Code orders/recommendations 3. Public Health Code orders/recommendations 	

Applications for Repairs and Maintenance will not be approved for requests that are covered by the Operator’s Lease Agreement with their Landlord.

Application Process for Repairs and Maintenance Funding

In the event of multiple Repairs and Maintenance projects at one location, operators must complete one application form for each project.

Please refer to the following 5 points of clarification regarding the application process:

1. All applications must be received annually by July 15th. In the event of extenuating circumstances, the City of Cornwall may consider applications after this date.
2. Applications will only be considered for operators with a current lease with 12 months or more remaining at application date
3. Applications for large projects such as those listed in the “Major Systems” category above will not be considered for operators who do not have long-term lease agreements of 10 (ten) or more years.
4. Operators will not sell, change the use or otherwise dispose of child care resources obtained through Repairs and Maintenance funds without the prior written consent of the Corporation, which may be given subject to such condition as the Corporation deems advisable. In the event that the Operator should no longer require the resources or should close their doors, the resources will remain the property of the Corporation and be returned to the Corporation.
5. The City of Cornwall may conduct site visits to confirm that funding was used for the approved purpose(s).

Guidelines for Capacity Building Funding

Capacity Building funding is intended to support professional development opportunities that build the capacity of both non-profit and for-profit licensed child care operators, supervisors, program staff/caregivers, special needs resource teachers and non-profit volunteer board members to support the provision of high-quality programs for children ages 0 to 12. High-quality child care programs recognize that each child is competent, curious, and rich in potential, and emphasize positive relationships and reflective practices as critical to children’s learning.

Capacity Building events hosted by the City of Cornwall Children’s Services Division and other local events within the City of Cornwall, or the Counties of S.D. & G. will be prioritized for this funding stream. For Capacity Building events hosted by Children’s Services, it is an expectation that 72 hours’ notice will be provided for any staff cancellations of attendance. Applications for Capacity Building funds will be prioritized based on need and available funds.

Capacity Building funds will also be prioritized to support front-line workers to attend professional development opportunities. Front-line staff are defined as staff who are counted in the daily staff-child ratios. Supervisors, cooks, custodial staff, and other administrative staff are not considered to be front-line staff.

Funding for non-frontline staff will be approved only for professional development

opportunities that directly support their role and/or at the discretion of the Children's Services Manager.

Allowable expenses may include the following 7 components:

1. Professional development opportunities that align with *CCEYA* regulations and Ministry policy (e.g., mentoring/coaching, workshops) offered in Ontario.
2. Program-related professional development that align with the *How Does Learning Happen Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years* and promote reflective practice.
3. Professional development opportunities related to the health, safety and well-being of children (e.g., nutrition, first aid, environmental health, communicable diseases, etc.).
4. Associated payroll expenses for supply staff, if required. Names of supply staff must be provided.
5. Travel costs to support attendance at professional development opportunities. The most cost-effective method of travel will be approved. Only eligible for reimbursement for those traveling more than 100 KM one way from their home address to the location of the capacity building event. Travel costs, including mileage will not be reimbursed for capacity building events offered within Cornwall, SD&G or Akwesasne.
6. Meals. The cost of meals, that are not included as part of the event, including gratuities will be reimbursed with proof of itemized receipt. Alcoholic beverages will not be covered. For meals not supported by itemized receipt, there will be no reimbursement. The maximum that will be paid per meal is as follows; Breakfast: \$10.00, Lunch: \$20.00 and Dinner: \$30.00.
7. Accommodations. Only eligible for reimbursement for those traveling more than 100 KM one way from their home address to the location of the capacity building event with itemized receipt and we will only cover the cost of the preferred rate for the event. Note: Accommodations will not be covered for events held within Cornwall, SD&G or Akwesasne, even if the location is more than 100 km from the staff members' home.

Application Process for Capacity Building Funding

The application cycle for this funding will be continuous and ongoing to allow us to respond to the child care community needs as they arise. Applications will be accepted throughout the year with an expectation that applications are submitted within 30 days of the professional development opportunity. All applications must be received annually by November 30th. In the event of extenuating circumstances, the City of Cornwall may consider applications after this date.

In the event of multiple Capacity Building requests at one location, operators must complete one application form for each request.

Please refer to the following 2 points of clarification regarding the application process:

1. Training costs require invoices marked "Paid" and a copy of a cancelled cheque or proof of payment.
2. For First Aid and CPR trainings, as well as other certificate trainings, a copy of the certificate must be submitted to the City.

Note: In the case of an application for the upgrading of skills, knowledge and qualifications, applications will be approved upon proof of successful completion of the course. A copy of an official transcript must be provided to our office before payment can be issued. Please note there will be no reimbursement for the cost to obtain an ECE Diploma. The Early Childhood Educators Qualification Upgrade Program Grant is available. For more information, please visit www.ecegrants.on.ca

Guidelines for Transformation Funding

Transformation funding is intended to cover one-time costs for non-profit child care operators that are involved in business transformation activities and/or require business transformation supports. Applications may be approved only if the project aligns with the Schools-First Child Care Capital Retrofit policy and provincial investment for construction of new child care spaces in schools wherever possible. All applications must be received annually by July 15th.

Business transformation activities are defined as, but not limited to the following 3 points:

- a. The amalgamation of two or more centres in a school or community setting.
- b. The relocation of a child care centre to a school or within the community.
- c. The retrofitting of an existing child care centre to serve younger age groups.

Business transformation supports include the following 7 one-time expenses:

- a. Legal costs (available only to operators that are amalgamating).
- b. Lease termination costs (available only to operators that are amalgamating and/or relocating).
- c. Moving costs (available only to operators that are amalgamating and/or relocating).
- d. Business planning costs.
- e. IT upgrades to facilitate internet connectivity for business purposes.
- f. Play-based material and equipment
- g. Operating funding.

Guidelines for Play Based Material and Equipment Funding

Play Based Material and Equipment funding is intended to help both non-profit and for-profit child care operators to create enriching environments that are developmentally appropriate and promote children's learning through exploration, play and inquiry consistent with the views, foundations and approaches of *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*.

Play Based Material and Equipment Funding may also be used to purchase non-consumable supplies/equipment that supports the regular operation of the child care program (e.g. kitchen supplies, IT, etc.).

Licensed child care operators with a service contract are eligible to receive play-based material and equipment funding; however, funding will be prioritized for applications that result from a recommendation made by the Ministry of Education and/or the City of Cornwall Children's Services staff. Applications will be further prioritized for operators who can demonstrate that the funding will be used to support children's active exploration and learning through play, thus supporting *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*.

Application Process for Play Based Material and Equipment Funding

Applications will be accepted from child care operators that have a current service contract with the City of Cornwall, Children's Services Division.

Please refer to the following 2 points of clarification regarding the application process:

1. All applications will be prioritized based on need and available funds and must be received annually by September 30th. In the event of extenuating circumstances, the City of Cornwall may consider applications after this date. Funding for new licensed spaces will only be issued for approved planned expansion (0 to 3.8 years).
2. Operators will not sell, change the use or otherwise dispose of child care resources obtained through Play Based Material and Equipment funds without the prior written consent of the Corporation, which may be given subject to such condition as the Corporation deems advisable. In the event that the Operator should no longer require the resources or should close their doors, the resources will remain the property of the Corporation and be returned to the Corporation.

General Operating Grant Funding

The purpose of the General Operating Grant funding is to support the costs of operating non-profit licensed child care programs in order to reduce wait times and fees for services, stabilize service levels, and where funds allow, improve access to high quality affordable early learning and child care services for children and families.

Priorities

The 5 following principles to inform operating funding priorities while balancing local needs will be used:

1. Stabilizing and transforming the existing child care system to enable higher-quality, consistent services;
2. Allocating funds efficiently, equitably and with transparency;
3. Increasing choice, convenience and reliability for parents;
4. Supporting licensed home child care agencies and strengthening the licensed home child care system through predictable and consistent base funding;
5. Supporting programs that serve the diverse needs of the community, including children with special needs, Indigenous children and Francophone children;

Key considerations that must be supported with general operating allocations include the following 6 factors:

1. Stabilizing child care fees;
2. Retaining qualified stable staffing and supporting quality programming;
3. Mitigating higher operating costs for younger age groups (ages 0-3.8);
4. Supporting the implementation of the Schools-First Child Care Capital Retrofit policy (e.g. converting licensed child care spaces in schools for younger age groups);
5. Prioritizing funding based on child care licensing history, financial history and viability of programs; and
6. Capacity of programs to access funds through other means.

Upon request, child care operators must demonstrate to the City how the above noted key considerations are being supported with the general operating allocation.

Eligibility Criteria

As per the Ministry of Education's philosophy and vision through the implementation of the School's First Child Care Capital Policy, the City of Cornwall recognizes and values the Ministry's goal of maximizing available school space for child care programs for children under four years of age. The City also recognizes and values the important role of non-profit child care operators in the provision of quality child care services for children and families. Providing ongoing support to this sector is a key factor of the general operating expense category. As a result, the City of Cornwall will allocate general operating funds solely to licensed non-profit programs.

As a result, general operating funds will be distributed as per the following 3 elements of the eligibility criteria:

1. To support existing non-profit licensed child care operators that have a current service contract with the City of Cornwall.
2. To non-profit operators expanding their licensed capacity for approved CMSM/School Board projects under the Ministry of Education's Schools First Child Care Capital Retrofit Policy (SFCCCRP).
3. To home child care providers that have a service contract with the City of Cornwall's Home Child Care Agency.

Child care operators are required to demonstrate to the City that they are able to meet their minimum wage and mandatory benefits requirements without operating funding in order to qualify for funding.

Child Care Service Operators must have prior written approval by the City of Cornwall Children's Services Division in order to increase licensed capacity. No general operating funds will be provided for spaces where the operator failed to obtain the consent of the City.

Implementation

Licensed, non-profit operators currently in the child care system and that have a service contract with the City are eligible to receive general operating grant funding. Expansion of current programs must be approved by the municipality and will only be considered for younger age groups (ages 0 to 3.8).

General Operating Grant funding will be distributed based on the following 7 factors:

1. Operating Capacity: The number of children per age group the centre is able to accommodate based on current staffing levels;
2. Staff: Child ratio requirements for each age group;
3. Incentive for rural programs;
4. Incentive for third party operated programs in schools;

5. Incentive for Francophone programs;
6. Incentive for programs that operate 24 hours a day;
7. For home child care providers, a point system based on number of hours of care and ages of the children served. In addition, an incentive will be offered for home child care providers who have their Early Childhood Education diploma and are registered with the College of Early Childhood Educators of Ontario.

The General Operating Grant may be adapted and/or changed to reflect changes in Municipal and/or Provincial policy and legislation and/or significant changes in local system needs.

The City of Cornwall may distribute year end General Operating Grant surplus according to identified individual agency operating pressures.

Allowable Expenses

General operating funding may be used for ongoing costs, including staff wages and benefits, lease and occupancy costs, utilities, administration, transportation for children, resources, nutrition, supplies, and maintenance. Expenses must be at fair market value. General Operating funding can only be used to offset salary costs over and above the operator's regulatory requirements for minimum wage and mandatory benefits.

Wage enhancement funding may not be used to replace general operating funding provided to operators to support wages. Wage enhancement funding is to be provided in addition to existing staff wages, including general operating grants.

Inadmissible Expenses

The following 6 expenses are considered inadmissible:

1. Bonuses (including retiring bonuses), gifts and honoraria paid to staff are inadmissible expenses except for in the case that they are provided as a retroactive wage increase that will be maintained the following year;
2. Debt costs including principal and interest payments related to capital loans, mortgage financing, and operating loans;
3. Property taxes;
4. Non-arm's length transactions not transacted at fair market value.
5. Fees paid on behalf of staff for membership in professional organizations such as the College of Early Childhood Educators are inadmissible expenditures; and,
6. Any other expenditure not listed under the allowable expenses section.

Accountability

Please refer to the following 4 elements of the accountability criteria:

1. Child Care Service Operators, by means of a special purpose report, will reconcile the general operating funds against actual expenditures. The special purpose report requires a third-party review engagement to verify that the general operating grant has been used for the purpose intended (refer to the General Operating Grant Summary (GOG) spreadsheet provided by the City of Cornwall). Child Care Service Operators shall submit separate audited financial statements, within 4 months of their year-end.
2. Operators in receipt of General Operating Grant funding must immediately report the following 3 factors:
 - a. Changes to either licensed or operating capacity;
 - b. Sale, transfer or potential closure of business operations; and
 - c. Other as deemed necessary for the calculation of a Direct Operating Grant.
3. The City of Cornwall reserves the right to adjust calculations mid- year based on changes to items identified in section 2.
4. The City of Cornwall reserves the right to calculate reimbursement of General Operating Grant funding in the event of a sale or closure of child care businesses without 60 days advance written notice as per signed City of Cornwall Service Agreement.



Inclusion Services (Special Needs Resourcing)

The Ministry of Education's vision for the Early Years and Child Care states that *"All children and families have access to a range of high-quality, inclusive and affordable early years and child care programs and services that are child- and family-centred and contribute to children's learning, development and well-being."*

About Special Needs Resourcing

Special Needs Resourcing services support the inclusion of children with special needs in licensed child care settings, including home child care, camps and "children's recreation programs", at no additional cost to parents / guardians.

The intent of Special Needs Resourcing Services is twofold:

- To support the inclusion of all children in early years programs; and
- To increase the capacity of program staff to be confident and capable of providing an inclusive quality program for all children; therefore, the client is the licensed child care centre and its staff.

As Service System Manager, the City of Cornwall Children's Services Division is responsible and accountable for the planning and management of Special Needs Resourcing services within Cornwall and the Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry.

Overview of Special Needs Resourcing Services

1. On-going regular visits by the City of Cornwall's Child Care Advisors to provide general supports related to inclusion and quality at all program sites.
2. Identification of Need for Services (additional supports) at the child care setting.
3. Request, by the child care setting, for additional supports through the City of Cornwall Children's Services Division
4. Observations, Recommendations and Coaching conducted by the City of Cornwall's Child Care Advisors for Special Needs Resourcing
5. Increased Capacity of the child care staff and therefore decreased support required.

Every time Special Needs Resourcing services are activated the service provider assembles the team who will work together to ensure the successful inclusion of all children into the program. This team will consist of the following members: the Child Care Advisor, the Child Care Program Supervisor, the Child Care Program staff who work directly in the class receiving support, the parents/guardians (if applicable), and other early years professionals as applicable.

Note: Not all child care programs that have children with special needs enrolled will require additional supports; and not all needs for additional supports are a result of having children with identified special needs enrolled in the program.

Responsibilities of the City of Cornwall's Special Needs Resourcing Team

Child Care Advisors

The City of Cornwall will hire an adequate number of Child Care Advisors to provide quality services to the programs as outlined below.

The Child Care Advisors will make regular visits to sites on their caseload to offer supports related to inclusion and quality. In addition, while visiting the centres the Child Care Advisors will educate the program staff and the site supervisors about the City's consultation services and how to apply for additional supports.

Programs that are eligible for Special Needs Resourcing Services include:

- Licensed Child Care Centres
- Licensed Home Child Care Agencies
- Camps and Children's Recreation Programs

Services to be provided by the Child Care Advisors include:

- Regular visits to sites on their caseload to offer general supports related to inclusion and quality.
- Child Care Advisors will coach/mentor staff and provide recommendations to support inclusion through scheduled visits to the program. They must actively participate in the child care programs to develop and teach/model techniques that will facilitate participation of all children in the program. The intent of this service is to build the capacity of the program staff to be capable and confident in providing an inclusive program for all children. Frequency and length of the program visits will depend on the need of the program staff.
 - There are two types of support that can be accessed by a program:
 - Consultations: Consultations are support for the staff of a program/classroom. This support can be a result of having a child or children with additional needs in the classroom or as a result of having a challenging group dynamic in the classroom. The intent of this service is to build staff capacity in creating inclusive environments for all children.
 - Training Support that involves the delivery of training and training plans specific to promoting inclusion.
- All recommendations made by the Child Care Advisors to a program must align with *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*.

- As needed, the Child Care Advisors will document their visits to the program, including details on strategies being implemented, observation made, and resources that have been provided to the program. Note: it is the responsibility of the classroom staff to share relevant information with the families, if required.
- Child Care Advisors may attend and assist in facilitating meetings scheduled by program staff with parents/guardians to discuss goals and progress. Included in these meetings, the Child Care Advisors may link families to community resources and services as applicable.
- Child Care Advisors work with program staff and support the development and maintenance of Individual Program Plans for children with special needs.
- Child Care Advisors provide resources and training to program staff, as needed.

Authentic, positive, respectful, caring, and responsive relationships between the Child Care Advisors, the program staff, the children, the families, and other community agencies is critical to the success of the services provided.

Professional Development

- Child Care Advisors develop and provide training for the supervisors and staff of licensed child care settings to support quality, inclusive programming for all children.
- Training may be provided in several formats, including but not limited to:
 - Topics as requested by a program supervisor and takes place during a staff meeting.
 - Topics as requested by a program supervisor and takes place in the format of Lunch and Learn training sessions.
 - Workshops / events designed for the early years and child care staff in Cornwall and the Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry. Topics may include those identified through site visits as a community need; through conversations with the Service System Manager; or those as a means to educate the early years and child care community on new information and trends.
- Training that is developed and/or provided by the Child Care Advisors needs to be up-to-date and relevant at all times.

Specialized and Adaptive Equipment and Resources

- The Child Care Advisors will research and/or develop resources for program staff to support the participation of all children in the program.

- The City of Cornwall's Children's Services Division will purchase or lease specialized/adaptive equipment and supplies for use/loan to child care operators to support children with special needs. The Child Care Advisors may also recommend for child care settings to purchase toys and equipment that will support their program in being inclusive for children of all abilities. The child care settings may apply to the Children's Services division for play-based funding, to assist with the cost of purchasing required equipment.

Enhanced Support

- Enhanced support is non-ratio staff and may be approved on a temporary basis to facilitate the participation and inclusion of all children in a program.
- Program Supervisors may apply for Enhanced Support through the City of Cornwall's Children's Services Division. If approved, the Children's Services Division will enter into an agreement with the program. The agreement will outline the days and hours for which enhanced support hours are approved: Full Day; Half Day, Before School, After School; or Before and After School. The duration of the agreement will most often be for at least 12 weeks, with declining hours throughout the agreement duration. The agreement may be extended, if both parties agree the need continues.
- Once approved, the program will hire non-ratio staff to work as enhanced support. Ideally the enhanced support staff will be an RECE. Should the program be unable to hire an RECE in this capacity, they should aim to hire someone with related education such as, but not limited to, a Child and Youth Worker. Should the program be unable to hire an RECE or someone with related education, they will hire enhanced support staff who, at minimum, has previous experience working in child care or early years programs. As enhanced support staff is not eligible for the Provincial Wage Enhancement Grant, the staff will be paid at a rate of no less than \$2 above the minimum wage rate in Ontario.
- Enhanced support staff are hired to be an extra 'set of hands' in a program to allow for the permanent program staff to work with the Integration Advisors to develop, learn and implement strategies for the inclusion of all children in the program.
- Enhanced support staff will support the permanent program staff in implementing the daily program for all children, including but limited to: programming and supporting children in play based activities; observations and documentation; daily routines; as well as organize, arrange and maintain all required equipment.
- At no time should any staff, including the enhanced support staff, be assigned to work one-on-one with a child. Integration and therefore inclusion can only happen when all children are included in the program and activities offered. Exception: A child or children who have physical and/or medical challenges that impact mobility

and self-care will require some one-on-one support to be fully included in the program.

The funding for Enhanced Support staffing is subject to the following 3 conditions:

- Funding will be based on the signed enhanced support funding agreements.
- Any additional costs incurred, above what is included in the funding agreements, will be the sole responsibility of the child care operator.
- Funding not used for its intended purpose will be recovered by the Corporation.

Transition to School or Between Licensed Child Care Programs

- The Child Care Advisors may provide support and guidance throughout the transition to school or between licensed child care programs process for children with special needs at the request of the parents/guardians.
- Upon parent request, the Child Care Advisors will participate in case conferences with the child's new school or child care program to share information and the Individualized Program Plan with the child's new teacher(s).

Responsibilities of the Child Care Program

The Child Care Service Operator must offer an inclusive program for all children. All child care settings are expected to follow their inclusion policy as submitted to the Children's Services division by the child care operator. Child care operators must review their inclusion plan on an annual basis and whenever updated, submit a revised version to the City of Cornwall's Children's Services division. Failure to offer an inclusive program may result in a loss of services and/or funding.

Where the educators of a Child Care service operator lack the capacity, training and/or skills, to offer an inclusive program for all children, the Supervisor will request the services and supports offered through the City of Cornwall's Children's Services Division.

The Child Care Service Operator is expected to document reasons for requesting the Special Needs resourcing services, including behaviours observed, strategies used, timelines and other relevant information. The Child Care Operator should only request additional supports if the capacity of their staff is not sufficient to support the full integration of all children into the program. Not all child care programs that have children with special needs enrolled will require additional supports. Enhanced support is only approved if the staff of the program requires time to learn and successfully implement strategies that will allow for the inclusion of all children into the program.

The Child Care Service Operator is expected to partner with parents/guardians, the City of Cornwall's Child Care Advisors, Integration Services and any other regulated health

professional or other person who works with the child in a capacity that would allow the person help to inform the development of an individualized support plan.

The Child Care Service Operator is expected to include information in their parent handbook indicating that they receive inclusion services through the City of Cornwall's Children's Services Division, and as such relevant information will be shared with the Child Care Advisors about the classroom and the children to facilitate the development of effective strategies that promote the inclusion of all children of all abilities in the program.

The Child Care Service Operator is expected to participate in goal setting, implementation and recording involved in the child's individualized support plan.

The Child Care Service Operator is expected to modify program environment and incorporate the goals of the individualized support plan into the program to support inclusion of the child. Note: The environment should be evaluated by the program staff on a regular basis and modifications made as necessary to ensure it supports the inclusion of all children.

The Child Care Service Operator is expected to ensure that Enhanced Support Staff are counted over and above the regular child/staff ratio, and to follow the policies and procedures as outlined in this document.

The Service Model

1. On-Going Support Visits and/or Request for Additional Supports

Child Care Advisors will visit all sites on their caseload regularly to offer general supports related to inclusion and quality.

If additional supports are required for the child care program, an application will be completed by a Program Supervisor. Additional supports may include a request for an increase in the frequency of visits and/or a request for training.

Applications for service can be found on the City of Cornwall website:

<https://www.cornwall.ca/en/live-here/special-needs-services.aspx>

2. Information Gathering

Once an application has been received by the Special Needs Resourcing Service Provider, a Child Care Advisor will connect with the requesting program. At this stage, a discussion of the service needs will take place and a plan for service will be developed.

3. Observation

The Child Care Advisors will use observations to understand the setting, the situation and the people involved. This stage may include the use of a screening tool, if appropriate.

Observations will aid in analyzing and identifying issues and potential solutions as well as to allow them to track progress. Information gathered through observations will be documented and used in the collaborative planning process.

4. Planning

The planning stage will include all members of the team including, the program staff and site supervisor, and staff from other agencies (if applicable, and if possible).

5. Implementation

Observations will continue to be a critical element throughout the implementation stage.

Planning meetings, including all members of the team, may be scheduled at different stages of the implementation of the plan to discuss progress and re-evaluate goals as needed.

This stage may also include the sharing of information about available community services and resources. The relationships and partnerships built with local agencies is key to the success of the program.

6. Service Evaluation

A service evaluation will be conducted annually to evaluate the effectiveness of the Special Needs Resourcing Services.

Data obtained through these evaluations will become the basis for continuous service improvement.

The City of Cornwall's Children's Services Division may conduct surveys to assess the Special Needs Resourcing services. Results of these surveys will be used to identify service strengths and gaps as well as a basis for continuous service improvement.

Policy for Complaints and Resolution

The purpose of the policy is to set out clear and consistent standards for licensed Child Care settings and their Staff, as well as Parents/Guardians that access Special Needs Resourcing Services to ensure that issues and concerns (complaints) are addressed in a timely and transparent manner. In addition, it is intended to support communication and positive relationships between the Special Needs Resourcing staff and the child care programs and families who are involved with their services.

The Special Needs Resourcing staff must support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, and program staff.

Issues/concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing to the Supervisor. Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially, and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff, students, and volunteers, except when

information must be disclosed for legal reasons (i.e. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities and/or a Children's Aid Society).

All complaints received will be reviewed by the Supervisor and a response will be provided in writing within 30 calendar days. If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution, they may submit an appeal in writing to the Manager. The Manager will review and investigate the complaint and a final response will be provided in writing within 30 calendar days.