

# Parent Policy Handbook



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## **1.0 HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS**

### **1.1 *History***

Alta Vista Co-operative Nursery School (AVCNS) is a non-profit corporation licensed by the Day Nurseries Branch, Ministry of Community and Social Services.

The school was founded and began operating in September of 1984 as the Rideau Park Co-operative Nursery School, located in the Rideau Park United Church at the corner of Cunningham and Alta Vista Drive. In September of 1991, the school re-located to its current address at 480 Avalon Place, occupying the main floor and part of the basement at the Trinity Church of the Nazarene.

AVCNS operates on a co-operative basis, with assistance from the parents of the children enrolled in the school. Parents support the school both in the classroom (as “duty-persons”) as well as outside (volunteers are required for a parent Board of Directors and various committees) — see below, Section 4.0 “Parent Involvement”. The school is not supported by any government funding, however parents may apply for individual subsidy.

### **1.2 *Mission Statement***

To create a special place for children where play is learning and learning is stimulating, challenging, creative and fun;

To encourage parents to understand and enjoy this very valuable time and space;

To foster an interest for life-long learning in this unique child, parent and teacher relationship.

### **1.3 *Program Philosophy***

The philosophy of the Alta Vista Co-operative Nursery School is to direct, encourage and stimulate the development of the whole child.

A balance of self-selected and teacher-directed activities encourages the child in self-expression, independence, social, physical and cognitive skills. The child will learn at his or her own pace in an environment of trust and creative experience.

### **1.4 *Goals and Objectives***

In a safe, nurturing environment the child will be encouraged in:

- social interaction
- language development
- co-operation
- respect for property and each other
- decision making
- building self-esteem

### **1.5 *Goals for Parents***

In an active co-operative atmosphere the parents will:

- observe their children in a happy, secure and creative environment
- share in their child's learning
- grow in the understanding of child development through planned curriculum

### **1.6 *Goals for the Community***

- to contribute to the wholesome growth and development of children in the community
- to contribute to the needs of the community
- to contribute to the goals of early childhood education

## 2.0 PROGRAM: CONTENT

### 2.1 Daily Schedule

#### Preschool:

MORNING	ACTIVITY	AFTERNOON
9:00	Arrival & Greeting	1:00
9:00 - 10:00	Free Play	1:00 - 2:00
10:00 - 10:10	Tidy-up	2:00 - 2:10
10:10 - 10:25	Snack	2:10 - 2:25
10:25 - 10:30	Book Time	2:25 - 2:30
10:30 - 10:45	Circle Time	2:30 - 2:55
10:45 - 10:50	Transition	2:55 - 3:00
10:50 - 11:10	AM: Group/Gym PM: Gym	3:00 - 3:30
11:10 - 11:30	AM: Gym/Group	
11:30	Goodbye/Home	3:30
<b>Outdoor Play</b> (weather permitting)		
11:00 - 11:30		3:00 - 3:30

#### Toddler:

MORNING	ACTIVITY
9:00	Arrival & Greeting
9:00 - 10:00	Free Play
10:00 - 10:10	Tidy-up
10:10 - 10:25	Snack
10:25 - 10:45	Music & Group
10:45 - 11:25	Free Play
11:25	Goodbye/Home
<b>Outdoor Play</b> (weather permitting)	
11:00 - 11:25	

#### JK-SK:

AFTERNOON	ACTIVITY
11:00 – 11:30	Arrival & Greeting
11:30 – 12:00	Free Play
12:00 - 1:00	Lunch
1:00 - 2:00	Free Play
2:00 - 2:10	Tidy-up
2:10 – 2:25	Snack
2:25 - 2:30	Book Time
2:30 – 3:00	Circle Time
3:00 - 3:30	Gym
3:30 – 5:00	Cooperative Games
5:00	Goodbye/Home

## **2.2 Learning Environment**

The learning environment is created on a theme-based, developmental curriculum. The child is exposed to participatory and explanatory experiences to encompass individual needs and appropriate development.

## **2.3 Music and Movement**

Music and movement is considered an essential part of the child's learning and is used extensively in the school's daily planned program. Concentration, memory and vocabulary are enhanced as well as other concepts.

Music is considered a valuable outlet for self-expression and relaxation. It assists in development, co-ordination, active and passive listening.

A regular Music and Arts program for children ages 4+ (3+ for children enrolled at AVCNS) takes place in the afternoon throughout the year.

## **2.4 Snack Time**

Snack time is a special time for the child to assist the duty parent in planning and sharing a nutritious snack. Birthdays are celebrated and family traditions are respected.

## **2.5 Circle**

The children come together to learn each other's names, share songs and stories. Weather and special occasions are discussed. It is a time for socializing, listening and responding.

## **2.6 Group**

The children are divided according to developmental needs. Pictures, games, flash cards, songs and stories are used to teach concepts. It is a time for listening, expressing, taking turns, memorizing and concentration.

## **2.7 Free Play**

The children move freely from activity to activity among organized centres. They learn to share, co-operate, complete tasks and tidy-up.

## **2.8 Creative**

With the use of many creative materials the child develops eye/hand co-ordination, self-expression, appreciation of art, and project completion.

## **2.9 Table Toys**

Through the use of puzzles and games, the child learns to recognize shapes, colours and symbols. Learning takes place in simple logical steps as seriation, classification and manipulation are explored.

## **2.10 Books**

Books are available for spontaneous curiosity and are also used at transition times. Stories are read daily. Children are shown the proper use of books and encouraged in the pleasure of their exploration.

## **2.11 Large Blocks**

Eye/hand and muscle co-ordination are stimulated by block play as well as discrimination, co-operation and satisfaction.

### **2.12 Dramatic Play**

Dress-ups, puppets and other stimulating props assist the children in social development and imagination.

### **2.13 Sand and Water Play**

These two learning environments are extremely valuable in the preschool setting. Many concepts are explored. Co-operation and sharing skills are developed and sheer pleasure is derived from the tactile experience.

### **2.14 Science Area**

Seasonal and theme oriented activities are set up for exploration and independent experimentation.

### **2.15 Physical Fitness**

Our Large Muscle Room is used daily. Gym equipment (e.g. climber, mats, balls and ride on toys) assists in developmental activities.

### **2.16 Outdoor Play**

If weather permits, Groups are simultaneous and outdoor play (or a walk) will take place from 11:00 to 11:25/11:30, or 3:00 to 3:30.

### **2.17 Transitions**

Transitions are very important, especially at the beginning of the year. They alert the children to a change (e.g. tidy-up, story time, gym time). Transitions are cued by a song, calling names, book time or calling a circle. As the year progresses, transitions are an opportunity for children to feel in control, to take charge — "It is tidy-up time!" "It is snack time!" "Is it time to go home?" This brings an awareness of time/space.

### **2.18 Cooperative Games**

Children of the JK-SK program have the opportunity to be exposed to different activities such as show and share, dramatic play, physical fitness, outdoor play (weather permitting) in a collective and sharing manner.

## **3.0 PROGRAM: GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **3.1 Types of Programs**

**AVCNS has several types of programs:**

Toddlers:	18 to 30 months of age
Preschool:	30 months to 4 years of age and toilet trained
JK-SK Program:	4 to 6 years of age
Music & Art Program:	4+ years of age

**Program times:**

9:00 a.m. to 11:25 a.m. / 11:30 a.m.
1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. (preschool only)
11:00a.m. or 12:00 noon to 5:00 p.m. (JK-SK Program)
1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. (Music and Arts program)

**Program Options:**

3 mornings:	Monday, Wednesday and Friday
2 mornings:	Tuesday and Thursday
5 mornings:	Monday through Friday

3 afternoons: Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday (preschool only)  
5 afternoons: Monday through Friday (JK-SK Program only)

\* for program fees, refer to the Registration Package

### **3.2 *School Calendar, Closures and Professional Development Days***

#### **General**

The school year for the Alta Vista Co-operative School will follow generally that of the Ottawa School Boards. As soon as possible in September a calendar of dates on which AVCNS will be closed in conjunction with the public schools will be provided to parents in their child's communication folders at the school. Parents will be notified in advance of any exceptions to this general rule.

#### **Closures before school opens**

From time to time, it may be necessary to close the school due to inclement weather or some other unforeseen issue. In the case of poor weather conditions prior to school opening in the morning, a message will be recorded on the AVCNS telephone answering machine by the Director of AVCNS by 7:30 a.m. advising whether or not the school is open or closed. Parents must call the school to be sure it is opened before bringing children to AVCNS.

#### **Closures once children are at the school**

Should the Preschool need to be closed due to worsening weather conditions, or some other situation, after children have arrived at school, parents will be telephoned and advised of the need to pick their child[ren] up and of the necessity to make alternative arrangements for their care during the time they normally would be at AVCNS. Therefore it is important that all parents provide AVCNS with their current contact numbers, business extensions, cell phones, or alternate care giver telephone numbers, so that children are picked up from the Preschool in a timely and safe manner.

#### **Closures due to Church Events**

On the rare occasions the school may have to be closed due to a church event (such as a funeral) parents will be notified ahead of time.

#### **Professional Development Days**

It is vital that our teachers be given the opportunity to improve their skills and to be aware of important developments in the field of early childhood education. Consequently, AVCNS has a policy of allowing each teacher two professional development days per school year. Parents will be notified in advance of the date of Professional Development Days.

### **3.3 *Staggered Entry***

In September, the children will be phased into the program in small groups. This is to ensure that each child is given the individual attention required in a new school experience. We expect you to remain with your child on the first day of school unless your child is returning to AVCNS. The necessity of remaining with your child depends on his/her adjustment to the environment.

### **3.4 *Arrivals and Departures***

We require that the teachers' preparation time be respected before and after programs. Expectations for morning program drop-off and pick-up are 9:00 a.m. and 11:30 a.m., respectively. Afternoon program drop-off and pick-up expectations are 1:00 and 3:30, respectively. JK-SK Program pick-up is not later than 5:00 p.m. A child should not be left at school until a staff member has been made aware of their presence. The child will be returned to the parent or parent designate at the end of class.

### **3.5 Early Drop-Off/Late Pick-Up**

Early drop-off and late pick-up is available by pre-authorized arrangement. It will require a \$2.50 fee for each 15-minute occurrence, with fees billed at end of month.

### **3.6 Lunch Option**

Supervised lunch is available from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm, by pre-authorized arrangement. Fees will be billed at the end of the month. Parents must provide the child's lunch. Please see the registration package for current lunch option fees.

### **3.7 Authorization to Pick Up Child**

Verbal and written authorization is to be given to the Director if a child is to be picked up by persons other than the parents.

### **3.8 Illnesses and Absences**

The school should be notified if a child is absent due to illness or vacation. Children should remain away from AVCNS for 48 hours after the illness has passed.

A child should remain at home if he/she is displaying any of the following symptoms: 1) is feverish, 2) has an upset stomach, 3) vomiting, 4) diarrhea, 5) heavy nasal discharge, 6) expressive or uncontrollable cough 7) thick or crusty eye discharge 8) fatigue / lethargy, 9) rash and / or 10) sore eyes/ears.

Children who become ill during school hours will be kept separate from other children and a parent or an alternate representative will be contacted regarding the child's illness. The expectation is that the child be brought home as soon as possible.

Children who become ill outside of school hours (eg become symptomatic while at home or at another JK/SK program) should not be brought to AVCNS for nursery school programming. Information about communicable diseases is on file at the school and is available for parental review.

### **3.9 Clothing**

Please dress your child in comfortable easy-care clothing. Rubber-soled shoes are safest. Children in the process of toilet-training are required to have extra diapers and wipes. **All children should have a change of clothing in a back pack or tote** in the event of an accident.

Outdoor play is enjoyed when weather permits. Please ensure weather-suitable clothing is available for your child (e.g. snowpants, boots and mitts). Labelling these items would be helpful. A tote bag is suggested for personal belongings and artwork.

### **3.10 Sunscreen**

Sunscreen is an important item to be included in your child's tote bag. Before school application would be desirable, with an additional top-up of their personal brand before outdoor play. Sunhats are also recommended.

### **3.11 Toys from Home**

Toys that are needed in the early days of adjusting to school or toys that are treasures for a special occasion are acceptable. Otherwise, please encourage your child to keep home toys at home.

### **3.12 Birthdays**

Birthdays are celebrated at snack time. Please feel free to participate and send a special snack. Special snacks should be sent in addition to the regular snack. A "Special Birthday Day" will

occur once during the year for all children whose birthdays do not fall during the school term. Please speak to the head teacher for more information and direction.

### **3.13 Information to Parents**

Parents will receive regular newsletters with program information and special school activities schedules.

### **3.14 Drinking cups**

Please provide a labeled plastic drink cup for your child to use during snack. **The cups are only rinsed after use so they must be taken home each day, washed thoroughly and returned the next school day for use.** Drop off the cup on the tray at the front door marked for your child's group. Please pick up the cup here at the end of the program as well.

### **3.15 Fire Drills**

Fire drills are conducted monthly once the children have settled into school and are familiar with the routine.

### **3.16 Duty Parent Schedule** (Not applicable to JK-SK program and PM Preschool)

As a co-operative, the parents of each child enrolled commit to assist in the classroom as a "duty-parent" on a rotation basis (see below, "4.0 Parent Involvement – Duty Parent Responsibility"). A "duty-day" schedule will be provided to parents on a month-by-month basis. The number of duty days asked of each family will depend on the number of children in the class and the frequency of class days. If you are unable to participate in your "duty-day", you can find a substitute "duty-parent" from the school's "duty-day" substitution list. The substitute duty person is responsible for providing snack for your child's class.

### **3.17 Community Resources**

Walks and field trips encourage awareness of the community. People of the community are encouraged to share their special skills or interests in the program.

### **3.18 Co-operative Education Program**

We welcome students from the Co-operative Education Program of the Boards of Education to observe, assist and learn quality childcare. Algonquin College, La Cite Collegiale, Heritage College and Mothercraft students are also accommodated on occasion.

### **3.19 Complaint Procedures**

As a parent co-operative member, should you have any concerns regarding the program, the following complaint procedures have been established to assist and guide effective and straightforward complaint resolution for the AVCNS program.

#### **Definition of a complaint**

AVCNS has defined a complaint as follows: "A complaint is considered to be any communication received by a parent/caregiver either in writing, or by telephone, or in person, which expresses dissatisfaction about any aspect of the school program, the standard of service or action or lack of action by the school". Each complaint(s) whether legitimate or not is to be recorded in a log book as it is received. All follow-up action including lessons learned related to the complaint(s) will also be recorded in the log book in a timely manner.

#### **The AVCNS three (3) stage procedure**

The three stage procedure is intended to guide the school in handling parent/caregiver complaints. The main aim at all stages of this procedure will be to ensure that the complaint is fully considered and is resolved, in so far as it is possible to do so, to the satisfaction of the complainant. It is not intended that these guidelines should replace the normal discussion which takes place in the school on day-to-day problems and concerns as they arise. It is only where the complainants remain dissatisfied with the outcome of such discussion that further steps may need to be taken.

### **Step 1 (informal stage)**

The informal stage is the first complaint stage. Parents/caregivers are encouraged to settle the matter with your child's particular teacher. Most straightforward complaints and problems are likely to be resolved at this point, thus avoiding unnecessary disruption to the school program and staff. It is recommended that this discussion be conducted outside of teaching hours.

### **Step 2 – Letter to the Director**

The second stage (and first formal stage) is where the parent/caregiver is not satisfied with the informal response from your child's particular teacher. At this stage, the parent must notify the school Director in writing (not email) within 5 working days of the incident. The Director is responsible for investigating the complaint(s) before providing a formal response in writing back to the complainant within 5 working days of receipt of the parent/caregiver's letter.

### **Step 3 – Letter to the Parent Board**

The third stage will be where the parent/caregiver is not satisfied with the outcome of the first formal stage. They should be advised to put their concerns in writing to the parent Board for consideration.

The parent Board is responsible for investigating the complaint before providing a formal response in writing back to the complainant within 10 working days of receipt of the parent/caregiver's letter to the director of the school.

### **Stage 4 – The Ministry of Community and Social Services**

The fourth stage will be where the parent/caregiver is not satisfied with the outcome of the parent Board. At this junction the parent/caregiver is responsible for notifying the Ministry of Community and Social Services who will be responsible for investigating the complaint before providing a formal response in writing back to the complainant and the school.

### **The AVCNS Program Authority**

The Director is ultimately responsible for the oversight and delivery of the AVCNS program. The teachers, teaching assistants and parent Board also play a role to ensure the overall well-being of the co-operative. Therefore, as a co-operative, it is the duty and responsibility of all parent/caregivers/helpers to follow the teachers' direction, provide support, and actively promote a positive learning environment.

### **Responsibility and Duties of Parents/Caregivers**

The fulfillment of the responsibilities of the parent/caregiver/helpers is essential to the efficient and successful functioning of the school.

Failure to assume these duties and responsibilities will result in the parent/guardian being asked to withdraw their child from the school.

## 4.0 PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents are vital to the successful operation of the school. As a co-operative parent, you are **required** to:

- **assist as a duty parent** (see below “Duty Parent Responsibility”) (not applicable to JK-SK program);
- participate in fundraising events;
- serve as a director or on a committee;
- attend General Meetings.

Parents are **required** to read, understand and agree in writing to be bound by these policies.

### 4.1 *Duty Parent Responsibility (not applicable to JK-SK program and PM Preschool)*

#### **General**

Each parent is required to assist at the school according to a duty roster. Your presence on your assigned duty day is essential to the operation of the school—our license under the *Day Nurseries Act* depends on maintaining the permitted ratio of children/adults for each and every class. Each parent should acquaint themselves with the policies set out in this Handbook, as well as those set out in “Golden Rules for Enjoying Parent Duty Days/Parent Duty Day Expectations”.

#### **Substitutes**

Should you be unable, for any reason, to assist in class on your assigned duty day, you are responsible for finding a substitute duty person for that day. Please give your substitute a brief summary of their duties (e.g., bringing a suitable snack for the entire class), should they not be familiar with the school. **All substitutes must have approved Criminal Reference Checks** (see below, “Criminal Reference Check”).

**If you are unable to find a substitute, you will be charged a \$30.00 fee for each duty day missed.**

#### **Siblings**

Parents should be aware that their duty day is for sharing with the nursery school child as well as for contributing to the smooth functioning of the program. Our license is granted based on a maximum number of children in each licensed space and the maintenance of an approved child/adult ratio. **For these reasons, alternate arrangements must be made for siblings.**

#### **Arrival**

The duty parent should arrive 15 minutes before the program and be prepared to remain 15 minutes after to assist with clean-up and vacuuming.

#### **Snack**

The duty parent is to provide snack for the whole class. Juice, crackers and/or prepared fruit/vegetables are nutritious snack suggestions. Children will bring their own cups, but any other service required should be supplied by the duty parent. Cake and other sugar treats are not appropriate, with the exception of special occasion days. **All snacks must be peanut/nut free.**

#### **Special Occasion Snacks**

Thanksgiving, Halloween, Christmas, Valentine’s Day, Easter, Graduation and Birthdays are special occasions. The teachers will co-ordinate special snack arrangements with the duty parent.

## **Telephone**

The duty parent will check messages on the answering machine midway through the program. If any message requires immediate attention, the parent will inform the Director. Otherwise, the message should be recorded for the Director to respond to after the program. Please remember to note the time and date of the call.

## **Duty Rotation**

The frequency of duty days will be determined by the size of the class and the number of class days per week (e.g., preschool class of 20 children, twice a week, translates into a duty day roughly once every 10 weeks; toddler class of 12 children, three times a week, translates into a duty day approximately once every 4 weeks). A parent volunteer is in charge of drawing up a duty roster and circulating same to all parents within the class. Any preferences as to duty days should be discussed with the duty roster parent prior to its issue. Once the duty roster has been published and distributed, it is the parent's responsibility to ensure their day is covered.

## **Suggestions for Duty Days**

Parents are referred to "Golden Rules for Enjoying Parent Duty Day/Parent Duty Day Expectations". In addition, the following may be of some help:

- **Before Program:** Perhaps your child will be clingy and possessive the first few times you help at school. It is anticipated and understood. Talk over with your child the duty day responsibilities and the expectations to assist with all children. Allow your child to help prepare the snack. It may give him/her a sense of contributing to the special day. Please bring your own interests and talents to share with us and enrich the program.

- **During Program:** When interacting with children, speak to them at their level and listen to their response. Encourage children to use their own resources and to help themselves. Do help if assistance is requested. Do not disturb a child unnecessarily. Observe and listen. Watch for deterioration in play and redirect attention. This may involve changing the course of an activity or closing it altogether. Give directions positively (e.g. "Please walk" rather than "Don't run", "The sand stays in the box", "We paint on paper"). Negative tones should be kept for dangerous situations (e.g. "You must not throw blocks—they hurt").

Give the child a choice only when one is available. If no choice is possible, use a positive statement (e.g. "We're tidying up now and I need your help over here").

Establish possession and turns, for example by saying "she has it now, but you may use it later". Quietly remind the child with the toy when he/she is finished: "Tommy would like a turn".

Avoid talking about children during the session. If you see behavior that disturbs you, or you have doubts about handling, discuss it with the teacher after the children have left. If it is urgent, seek the teacher out immediately.

Above all, enjoy your day. Have fun with your child at nursery school.

## **4.2 Meetings**

A mandatory orientation meeting is held at the beginning of the school year. This meeting is extremely important, and every effort should be made to attend. Board meetings are held monthly and parents are welcome to attend.

### ***Annual General Meetings***

The AVCNS Annual General Meeting is held in April/May for presentation of the annual reports of the outgoing Board of Directors and in order to elect the Directors for the next year. Also, capital budgets, fees and capital fundraising for the following year may be reviewed and approved.

### 4.3 *Board of Directors*

The school is administered by a volunteer Board of Directors, made up of parents whose children attend the Nursery School, together with the school Director. The following are the offices held by the voting members of the parent Board, also known as the core board:

- President:** Co-ordinates the overall administration of the school.
- Vice-President:** Will assist the President in all aspects, taking on special responsibilities as required. The Vice-President will also act on the President's behalf in his/her absence.
- Registrar:** Establishes registration procedures in conjunction with the school Director (i.e. viewing of program, annual registration events, entry of children). Maintains lists of children currently enrolled, waiting lists, and records of withdrawals and transfers.
- Treasurer:** Is responsible for the finances of the school (deposit of fees and fundraising proceeds, payment of expenses, payroll); budgeting for the following school year.
- Secretary:** Responsible for the minutes of meetings of the Board, correspondence of the school and related duties.
- Fundraising:** A chair organizes fundraising events; attends meetings of the Board of Directors, reports to Board of Directors on fundraising activities and receives approval for same; co-ordinates reporting of funds with Treasurer; reports at General Meetings.
- Promotion/Outreach:** A chair promotes the school in the community; develops advertisements for any special events such as registration events, general meetings etc.; assists fundraising committee in promoting events and school.

### 4.4 *Committees*

There are a number of committees organized to provide essential services to the school. Those parents who have not been elected to the Board of Directors are expected to assist on one (or more) of these committees.

#### **Fundraising**

Members help advise, plan, promote and carry out various fundraising events.

#### **Duty Roster**

Each member (one from each program) prepares parent duty rosters approximately every six weeks and makes copies for each parent; each member maintains the parent information files for the program, checking on a weekly basis to ensure that information has been collected and contacting parents if necessary; sets up files for new members as notified by Registrar/Assistant Registrar.

#### **Newsletter Editor**

Posts deadlines for articles/ads well in advance; collects articles for publication from staff, Board and others; edits material and creates a balanced newsletter; arranges for duplication upon completion.

## 5.0 ADMISSION POLICY

### 5.1 *General*

Admission to the program is first made available to parents whose children are currently enrolled in the school. New registrants are then accepted, depending on availability in the classes. Each year, the parent Board comply with reviews the forms necessary to registration of a child in the

school, to ensure that the policies of the Ministry of Community and Social Services are complied with. Registration forms will include the following:

registration form with personal and health information;

department of health immunization record;

consent to criminal reference check (see below, "8.0 Criminal Reference Check") (not applicable to JK-SK program and PM Preschool program); and

Policy Handbook, with acknowledgment and consent form.

### 5.2 *Integration*

Integration of children with special needs into regular programming is a goal promoted by the staff of this school. In order to achieve this goal, we must remain mindful of the needs of the child, the program itself and the availability of resources. Each situation will be weighed carefully in consultation with parents, staff and the parent Board of Directors. A probation period will be required during which time program content will be monitored, reviewed and expectations discussed. An agreement will then be made in mutual respect of the child, the program, the staff and the child's family.

### 5.3 *Fees*

**Registration Fee:** a non-refundable registration fee is payable at the time of registration. The amount of the fee is determined from year to year by the Board of Directors.

**Monthly Fees:** monthly fees are payable by way of a series of **post-dated cheques**, dated for the first of each month.

**Additional Fees:** Bank charges for any NSF cheques will be the responsibility of the parent. In addition, AVCNS will charge a \$25.00 administration fee for each NSF cheque. AVCNS will charge \$25.00 for any cheque submitted late for the monthly deposit. As mentioned in "4.1 Duty Parent Responsibility", a \$30.00 fee will be charged for any missed duty days. Late pickup or early drop-off will result in a charge of \$2.50/15 minutes, or any part thereof.

### 5.4 *Health Forms*

A medical form from the regional Department of Health must be completed at the beginning of each school year and **submitted to the school Registrar before the first day of school**. This form must set out current information with respect to immunization, family illness or allergies.

### 5.5 *Administration of Medication*

If allergy or other medication is required to be administered by staff, parents must provide the necessary medication (e.g. EPIPEN) and complete a *Day Nurseries Act* registration form. An administration of medication schedule must accompany the form each time medication is required. Children with anaphylactic allergies must have medication (EPIPEN) at the school to attend the program. It is the parent's responsibility to verify expiration dates/presence of medication each day child attends.

## 5.6 *Immunization*

All children entering child care facilities in Ottawa-Carleton must have up-to-date immunization. **The public health department may decide to exclude your child until they have complete immunization records.** In the event that a parent should object to having their child immunized for health or family reasons, the Ottawa-Carleton Regional Health Department requires that the parent complete and submit an exemption form with their registration package. **In the event of an outbreak of communicable disease at AVCNS, the unimmunized child will be required to remain at home until the outbreak has passed, for his/her own protection.**

## 6.0 WITHDRAWAL POLICY

The school's withdrawal policy is drafted to minimize the effect of an early withdrawal on school finances. Notice periods are required to permit staff and directors to advertise and fill vacancies arising from early withdrawal. Parents are required to provide the Registrar with a **written notice** of an early withdrawal, specifying the last date on which the child will be attending school.

1. No refund of fees will be made if the child is withdrawn in the last two months of school.
2. In all other cases, a parent wishing to withdraw their child must provide a minimum notice of one full calendar month.
3. Should the **effective date of withdrawal** specified in the notice (i.e. the child's last day of school) fall on a date which is not the last school day of the month, there may be a partial refund of fees for that month, **provided** that proper notice has been given.

**Example:** withdrawal on February 15<sup>th</sup>, with notice given on or before January 1<sup>st</sup>:

- January cheque will be cashed to cover January fees;
- February cheque will be applied to February fees, with pro-rata refund to be issued for classes in February following the 15<sup>th</sup>; and
- March to June cheques will be destroyed or returned.

In certain circumstances, there may be consistent evidence indicating that a child is unable to cope with the preschool experience. In such a case, a parent may be asked to withdraw their child, in which case all cheques for periods after the date of withdrawal will be returned.

## 7.0 BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

### 7.1 *Ministry of Children and Youth Services (Day Nurseries Act)*

Policies and Procedures:

1. There shall be no corporal punishment of a child by an employee of the operator or by another child or group of children.
2. There shall be no deliberate harsh or degrading measures to be used on a child that would humiliate a child or undermine a child's self-respect.
3. There shall be no deprivation of a child of basic needs including food, shelter, clothing or bedding.
4. No one shall lock or permit to be locked for the purpose of confining a child, the exits of a day nursery, or use a locked or lockable room or structure to confine a child who has been withdrawn from other children.
5. Should any child's behavior cause serious problems and disruption within the classroom, that child's teacher will withdraw the child from the class to talk to that child and explain that his/her behavior is inappropriate. The child must understand that he/she is causing disruption, and once the teacher is satisfied that the child understands this, he/she will be taken back into the classroom. It is important that staff talk to misbehaving children in a kind and patient manner. If the child's behavior persists notwithstanding discussions with the child and the child's parents and, the Director feels that behavior indicates that the child is unable

to cope with the program, the Director will consult with the Board and the Board may request that the parents withdraw their child. In such a case all cheques for periods after the date of withdrawal will be returned.

## **7.2 *Alta Vista Co-operative Nursery School***

### **Guiding Children**

The philosophy of behavior management in the nursery school is to guide the children in a positive non-threatening way.

Each child is to play and interact in a socially acceptable manner.

Expectations for classroom behavior are clearly stated and gently reinforced.

When the child's safety or that of another is threatened the situation is discussed and proper conduct stated.

If the situation occurs again, a "sitting out" time is required.

### **Discipline**

When a situation requires a "sitting out" time the teacher will interact with the child.

The teacher will seek all information surrounding the incident.

The teacher will explain to the child the reason for interaction.

The teacher will have the child sit out of the group activity but close enough for observation.

The child will be encouraged to rejoin the activity when appropriate behavior is possible.

Parents will be advised when a problem arises.

Solutions will be sought through parent and teacher cooperation.

## **7.3 *Agreement to be bound***

As part of each annual contract with the AVCNS, **staff members** will be required to sign an attestation stating that they have read and agree to abide by this Behavior Management Policy and stating that they have also read and understand the consequences arising in the event of contravention.

**Students** assisting in the program as part of a placement with AVCNS will also be required to sign an attestation stating that they have read and agree to abide by this Behavior Management Policy and stating that they understand that their placement/participation in the program may be terminated in the event of contravention, as set out in 7.4 below.

**Parents/caregivers/other volunteers** (i.e. "duty persons") who work directly with the children: parents will, upon registration of their child for the school year, sign an acknowledgement attesting that they have read and agree to abide by this Behavior Management Policy, and that they understand the consequences arising from a contravention of the Behavior Management Policy, whether by a parent or any volunteer which they may send to fulfill duty days, set out in 7.4 below.

## **7.4 *Contravention of Behavior Management Policies***

**Staff:** Failure by staff to comply with this Behavior Management Policy will be dealt with as detailed in "Personnel Policy—Discipline, Suspension or Termination Procedure".

**Students:** In the event of a serious breach, or in the event of repeated contravention, determined at the discretion of the Director, a student's placement may be terminated by written notice from the Director.

**Parents/Duty Persons:** In the event of a failure to comply with this Behavior Management Policy, duty persons will be given warning of the breach. If the Director in her discretion considers the breach to be serious, or in the event of a continued breach of this policy, a written warning will be given, referring the parent to this Policy and requesting that a special Board

meeting be convened, which the Director and the parent/volunteer will attend. At the meeting, the Board may in its discretion require that an acceptable alternate duty person be provided by the parents of the child enrolled, or may terminate enrolment in the school, in which latter case all fees following the date of termination will be refunded.

Notwithstanding any of the above, any allegations of child abuse will be reported to the CAS without delay.

### **7.5 *Monitoring of Behavior Management Practices***

All staff will have a responsibility to ensure that school policies, including this Behavior Management Policy, are complied with by all those working directly with the children. The Director will be primarily responsible for monitoring behavior management practices of the staff, students, duty persons and other volunteers. However, all staff shall be expected to conduct ongoing peer review in this respect. Any concerns regarding the behavior management practices of any person working directly with the children shall be reported to the Director for appropriate action, as determined by this Policy. Where the Director's behavior management practices are in question, concerns shall be dealt with in accordance with the "Grievance and Appeals Procedure".

### **7.6 *Recording Behavior Management Practices***

A record shall be kept of any concern, complaint or incident regarding behavior management practices, including all steps taken to resolve the matter.

In accordance with the *Day Nurseries Act*, all persons working directly with the children will receive written feedback on their behavior management practices (i.e. a letter that advises the individual that he/she has or has not complied with the Behavior Management Policy). In cases where an individual has not complied, the letter will be forwarded immediately following the identification of such contravention of the Policy. In the cases where individuals have complied, they will be advised upon completion of the school year or upon such time as the individual is no longer associated with the school. Records of any behavior management matter shall be kept for a minimum of two years.

### **7.7 *Review of Behavior Management Policy***

Each year, prior to pre-registration for the following school year, the Board of Directors or its designate, together with the Director, shall conduct a review of the Behavior Management Policy. Amendments approved by the Board will be incorporated into registration materials for the following year. The Board or its designate will, upon completion of the review, sign and date a copy of the Behavior Management Policy, to be kept on file by the Director.

## **8.0 CRIMINAL REFERENCE CHECKS (not applicable to JK-SK or PM Preschool)**

### **8.1 *General***

In 1995, the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) issued a policy directive to all of its licensed and funded agencies, including Alta Vista Co-operative Nursery School (AVCNS), regarding the screening of employees and volunteers who provide direct service to or are in direct contact with vulnerable clients (i.e. children). The directive **requires** that a Criminal Reference Check (CRC) be conducted on school employees and volunteers when these individuals provide direct services to children or vulnerable adults.

A CRC is a generic name that describes a process undertaken by the Regional Police of Ottawa-Carleton to obtain information of a criminal nature about, in this case, teachers and duty parents or persons doing duty on behalf of parents.

## **8.2 Objectives**

AVCNS owes a quality of care to its children, to its teachers and to its duty persons. This quality of care will be reflected in all school programs, services and activities as well as in its policies and procedures.

Although AVCNS is required to comply with MCSS directives such as that related to CRCs, AVCNS believes that in so doing it continues to strive for the safety of its premises, its programs, and the conduct of its staff, and to ensure that no harm comes to its children, teachers or duty personnel.

## **8.3 CRC Policy and Procedure**

### **Employee and Duty Person Screening**

In order to comply with the directives of MCSS, all teachers, co-op students, volunteer drivers and duty persons must submit to a CRC according to the procedures current when the individual applies for employment or registers their child with an AVCNS program.

A CRC will be required as a condition of employment and must be submitted in the final stages of a job offer. For parents, consent to a CRC will be included in the AVCNS registration package and must be returned at the time of registration. Failure to meet deadlines or a form that is filled out incorrectly and is returned to the school will result in a charge to the parent equal to any fee charged by the Ottawa police for a late-submitted CRC.

If there is a delay in the CRC report coming back from the police, and if for some reason the applicant/duty person must start work before it is received, this individual's hiring/acceptance is conditional on the receipt of the report, and is subject to current policies regarding acceptance and exclusion of employees and duty persons.

### **Confidentiality**

It is the objective of AVCNS to assure, to the best of its abilities, the confidentiality of all CRC reports. In accordance with this objective, the following policies have been enacted:

**Receiving information:** Only the Director and President of AVCNS will be privy to information obtained from the CRC.

**Keeping information:** All CRC responses from the police will be kept under lock and key in a separate file and will be returned to the named teacher/duty persons at the end of the school year or if the teacher or child leaves the program before that date.

**Destroying information:** Confidential information will be destroyed in the presence of the applicants should they not wish to remove it from the school themselves.

### **Exclusion of Applicants**

#### ***Failure to submit consent***

Any applicant for employment who refuses or fails to submit a consent to a CRC will not be employed by AVCNS. A child whose family either fails or refuses to submit a consent to a CRC for at least one person to fulfill duty parent obligations will not be accepted for registration, until such consent is provided.

#### ***Positive CRC***

In the event of a positive CRC, the individual affected may:

1. Establish to the satisfaction of the President and Director of the school that all offenses which appear on the person's criminal record in no way relate to:
  - a) crimes against children;

- b) any acts of violence;
- c) substance abuse; or
- d) driving offenses (duty parents are required to be available for driving to CHEO in the event of an emergency; also, parents will be asked to participate in field trips).

The individual will consent to the release of his/her criminal record to the President/Director of the school, to be subject to the same confidentiality as the CRC report.

The President and Director will determine whether any offenses appearing on the individual's criminal record fall within the categories listed above. If so, a candidate for employment will not be accepted, and a duty parent will be asked to make alternate duty day arrangements (see below). Failure to make and keep such alternate arrangements may result in discontinuation of enrolment for that individual's child.

The President and Director will **not** judge the relative seriousness of the offence(s) or engage in deliberations as to whether the individual is acceptable as an employee/volunteer notwithstanding the offence(s);

2. Establish to the satisfaction of the Director and the President that all criminal offenses appearing on the individual's criminal record and which fall into any of the above-mentioned categories, as determined by the President and Director, have been pardoned. Until such times as pardon(s) is (are) established, the individual must provide or pay for a suitable substitute for any assigned duty days (see below). The individual will consent to the release of his/her criminal record to the President/Director of the school, to be subject to the same confidentiality as the CRC report;

And, in the case of a duty person, the affected individual may also:

3. Provide a substitute duty person whose CRC is clear; or
4. Pay the fee of \$30.00 for a substitute to be hired by the school on each assigned duty day.

#### **Amendment of Policy and Procedure**

These procedures may be amended at any time with approval of the AVCNS Board of Directors.

### **9.0 SERIOUS OCCURRENCES**

In the event that a child suffers a serious accident during the hours of the Nursery School, which cannot be remedied on the spot, 911 will be called by Head Teacher or nursery school teacher. Ambulance transportation to the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario at 401 Smyth Road will be requested.

The Director will contact the child's parent immediately. Please have your contact information up to date. Please be accessible or have an alternate accessible by phone in case of emergency.

The Director will contact the school's insurance company immediately.

The school Director will notify the Program Advisor, Ministry of Children and Youth Services, within 24 hours of the incident (Lise Hamer: (613) 787-5278).

### **10.0 PREVENTION OF HIB/HIV**

In compliance with a directive received from the Ministry of Community and Social Services, it is the policy of AVCNS that all staff and parents involved in the school will follow the Universal Precautions described below and taken from the article produced by the Ottawa-Carleton Regional Health Department, *Recommendations for Child Care Facilities on the Prevention of Hepatitis B and HIV Infections*. Staff and parents will be required to read, understand and agree in writing to comply with this policy.

### **10.1 Precautions: Sanitizing Procedure & Preparation Using Household Bleach**

Two methods can be used in the clean-up of blood. One involves cleaning first with soap and water and then sanitizing, and the second involves cleaning the blood directly with the sanitizing solution.

#### **1:100 Solution**

Prepare sanitizing solution by diluting 1 part household bleach in 100 parts water (10 ml bleach in 1 liter water). Mix fresh daily and keep solution in a closed container. Label container with solution name, strength and preparation date (e.g. Bleach Sanitizer 1:100, 95/10/31).

1. Clean contaminated surface/object with soap and water and then
2. Sanitize surface/object by either:  
using a spray bottle filled with the sanitizing solution,  
using a single-use towel soaked in the sanitizing solution, or  
immersing the object in a container filled with the sanitizing solution.
3. Leave the sanitizing solution in contact with the surface/object for at least 30 seconds in order for it to be effective.
4. Store solution in a safe place not accessible to children.

**Note:** When a 1:100 bleach solution is used, it is not necessary to rinse toys, equipment and/or environment after a minimum contact time of 30 seconds with sanitizing solution.

**OR**

#### **1:10 Solution**

Prepare sanitizing solution by diluting 1 part household bleach in 10 parts water (100 ml bleach in 1 liter of water). Mix fresh daily and keep solution in a closed container. Label container with solution name, strength and preparation date (e.g. Bleach Sanitizer 1:10, 95/10/31).

1. Clean up the blood directly with the 1:10 solution:  
using a spray bottle filled with the sanitizing solution,  
using a single-use towel soaked in the sanitizing solution, or  
immersing the object in a container filled with the sanitizing solution.
2. Leave the sanitizing solution in contact with the surface/object for at least 30 seconds in order for it to be effective.
3. Rinse after the surface/object has been exposed to the sanitizing solution for a minimum contact time of 30 seconds.
4. Store solution in a safe place not accessible to children.

**Note:** When a 1:10 bleach solution is used, it is not necessary to clean surfaces/objects with soap and water before sanitizing.

#### **Floor Mops**

Clean floor mops with soap and water

Sanitize in 1:10 solution

Wring as dry as possible

Hang to dry

**Note:** Although bleach is recommended for a sanitizing solution, other disinfectants may be used (e.g. quaternary). If choosing another sanitizer, please contact the Environmental Health Directorate at 772-2200 to verify if it has the required sanitizing capabilities.

### **10.2 Use of Gloves**

Use rubber or utility gloves for cleaning and sanitizing the environment.

Sanitize rubber/utility gloves after each use.

Use disposable latex gloves when cleaning blood on a child. While vinyl is an acceptable alternative, latex does offer the optimal protection. Check with the manufacturer to ensure that the quality of the vinyl is comparable to that of the latex.

Discard disposable gloves after each use.

Keep gloves with you at all times.

## **11.0 PROGRAM: PLAYGROUND SAFETY POLICY**

Alta Vista Co-operative Nursery School is required by our licensing agency MCSS to comply to the new playground safety policy effective September 30, 1999. In June 1990, a guideline for Children's Play space and Equipment was approved as a National Standard. Effective May 1998 a new CSA standard CSA Z614-98 was approved as a National Standard of Canada by the Standards Council of Canada.

1) This centre has available, in the Playground Policy Manual, the requirements for the supervision of children on the playground. These requirements promote a safe outdoor play environment as well as creative and constructive play for children.

2) Any new equipment or new renovations, repairs or replacements will be installed to meet the CSA Standard. Written documentation by a Certified Playground Inspector, certifying that all changes meet the Standard, will be maintained in the Safety Log Section.

3) The Playground Safety Log is contained in the Safety Log Section:

- The Injury Report form will be completed for any injury to a child while on the playground; should the injury be of a Serious Occurrence nature, the Injury Report Form will be attached to the Serious Occurrence submission forms and the policies and procedures for Serious Occurrences will be followed.

- Daily inspections, monthly inspections and seasonal inspections of the playground will be completed as outlined in the Safety Log Section. Annual inspections will be completed as outlined in the Safety Log Section or completed by a Certified Playground Safety Inspector who has current certification by the Canadian Playground Safety Institute, is a third party inspector and has proof of current Professional Errors and Omissions insurance coverage.

- Action plans will be noted as outlined on the inspections.

4) A staff person/position will be designated for the logging of the daily inspections; monthly maintenance inspections; seasonal maintenance inspections and plans; doing the maintenance and repairs; the injury log; and the annual inspections. This person/position will be noted by initial or name on the respective inspection forms.

5) An outdoor staff schedule as noted in the Staff Schedule Section and an outdoor program plan as noted in the Program Plan Section will be posted and available for staff and parents:

- The outdoor staff schedule will include a diagram that outlines the playground particulars and activity areas and the supervision schedule will identify areas of staff responsibility.

- This centre will develop outdoor program plans that provide for games and activities to enhance gross motor play, the daily program and provide creative stimulation.

6) All staff will review this policy prior to commencing employment and annually thereafter. The written record of review, in the Appendix Section, will be signed by the staff and the person who made the review, and maintained on file for at least two years.

## **12.0 CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY (PIPEDA)**

Effective January 1, 2004, all organizations who collect and store personal information with regard to clients and or employees, including childcare centres, must have in place a Corporate Privacy Code that stipulates how they are in compliance with the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (Canada) (PIPEDA).

PIPEDA requires that all individuals, organizations and companies who collect and store personal information must set our guidelines for the collection, use and disclosure of the personal information.

The purpose of this law is to ensure that all organizations develop and implement responsible and transparent management practices in a manner consistent to the provisions of PIPEDA.

Personal information protected under this new law includes any factual or subjective information regarding an individual, including a person's name, age, weight, medical records, ethnic origin, social status etc. It does not include any publicly available information, for instance, information available in the telephone book.

Listed below are the nine (9) principles that have been implemented at AVCNS to meet the legislative requirements of PIPEDA.

### **1. Accountability**

It is the objective of AVCNS to assure, to the best of its abilities, the confidentiality of all CRC reports.

### **2. Identifying Purposes for the Collection of Personal Information**

It is the objective of AVCNS to collect personal information from person(s) and employees for the sole purpose of facilitating the operation of the AVCNS Program.

### **3. Obtaining Consent for Collection, Use or Disclosure of Personal Information**

Written consent of the person(s) or employee is required prior to circulating any personal information.

### **4. Limiting Collection, Use and Retention of Personal Information**

It is the objective of AVCNS to collect personal information from person(s) and employees is for the sole purpose of facilitating the operation of the AVCNS Program or as required by law. AVCNS will retain all personal information of person(s) or employee(s) for a period of five years following which; the personal information will be destroyed.

### **5. Accuracy of Personal Information**

It is the objective of AVCNS to ensure that all personal information from person(s) and employees that is collected is complete and up to date as necessary for the purposes for which it is to be used.

### **6. Security Safeguards**

It is the objective of AVCNS to assure, to the best of its abilities, that all personal information is protected by security safeguards appropriate to the sensitivity of the information.

### **7. Openness Concerning Policies and Practices**

It is the objective of AVCNS to ensure that all information specific information related to its policies and procedures related to the management of personal information is readily available to person(s) and employee(s).

## **8. Client and Employee Access to Personal Information**

It is the objective of AVCNS to assure, to the best of its abilities, that all personal information of a person (s) or employee are informed of the existence, use and disclosure of personal information upon request and shall give the individual access to the information. A person(s) and or employee(s) may be able to challenge that accuracy and competency of the information and have it amended as appropriate.

## **9. Challenging Compliance**

It is the objective of AVCNS to assure, to the best of its abilities, that a person(s) and or employee(s) are able to address a challenge concerning the above noted principles to the designated person, person(s) accountable at AVCNS.

## **13.0 PRIVACY RELEASE**

Due to the Freedom of Information/Protection of Privacy legislation in effect in Ontario, AVCNS will require written permission prior to circulating any personal information to parents and or employees within the program.

## **14.0 AVCNS CODE OF CONDUCT**

AVCNS has developed a Code of Conduct through discussions with the parent board and teaching staff. The Code of Conduct is intended to provide a guideline and reference for parents/guardians and employees in determining acceptable behavior in the AVCNS environment. This policy is posted in the school.

### **AVCNS Staff**

#### **Have the right to expect that.....**

- Parents/guardians/students will treat them with respect
- Children's behavior will promote a positive learning environment
- School director will provide leadership and support
- They will have the support and cooperation of children, parents and colleagues in the performance of their duties

#### **Will be responsible for.....**

- Planning, teaching and supervising program activities
- Establishing and maintaining a learning environment which is pleasant, orderly, respectful and conducive to the child's' learning
- Evaluating student achievement and explaining assessment procedures to be used in the program
- Communicating information about student progress, behavior and special needs to children, parents and staff
- Providing an environment that will promote self esteem
- Treating children fairly and consistently
- Respecting the rights of all individuals
- Maintaining open communication
- Striving to support an optimum quality of early childhood education

### **Parents\Guardians**

#### **Have the right to expect that.....**

- School staff will respect others and property
- Reasonable precautions will be taken to ensure the safety of children while in school
- Staff will exhibit leadership and support for children
- Staff will actively supervise and provide instruction in the program
- Clear relevant learning activities will occur in the program along with explanations for the evaluation procedures used

**Will be responsible for.....**

- Treating school staff with courtesy and respect
- Instilling in their son/daughter the desire to work to the best of his/her ability
- Respect for property and resources
- Recognition of the authority of school staff to ensure a safe, secure, non-threatening learning environment
- When possible, attend school events and meetings to give support to the school
- Their child's behavior
- Informing the school when their child will be absent

**15.0 ANAPHYLACTIC AND SEVERE ALLERGIES POLICY**

1. Parents are alerted to requirements for children with allergies and other medication. Children with Anaphylactic allergies must have medication at school (EPIPEN). It is the parents' responsibility to verify expiration date / presence of medication each day the child attends.
2. Parents must fill out complete Emergency Card information in case of emergency evacuation procedures.
3. Parents must sign authorization form allowing staff to administer medication required.
4. Staff must sign acknowledgement of child's medical needs and ability to perform appropriate treatment.

**School Responsibility – all Teachers.**

The child's files are read – allergic reaction information, diabetes, etc., are noted and posted in the classroom above the snack preparation area. A box in the Snack / classroom holds the child's Epipen. The storage space is safe and easily accessible. The child's name visibly printed on the box. Anaphylactic Alert Form is placed on the wall above the snack preparation area, as well as a chart noting other food allergies. Names of the children are posted as well. In case of allergic reactions to bee stings, the child's Epipen will accompany the child outdoors – by the teacher.

1. If an Anaphylactic reaction is noted, the Epipen will be administered by the teacher. If the parent is present, they would be the first person involved.
2. A call is placed to 911, advise them that it is an anaphylactic or severe allergic.
3. Call parents or guardian of child.
4. Make note of Epipen Administration.

- AVCNS is in close proximity to the Ottawa General Hospital and the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario.

- All AVCNS Teachers are current in their St. Johns Ambulance Emergency First Aid & CPR and Anaphylactic procedures.