**Crystal City Community Daycare Inc.**

**Position Description of an Early Childhood Educator (ECE)**

**Date Prepared: March 2, 2015**

**Position: Early Childhood Educator**

**Classification: ECE II/ECE III**

**Employer: Crystal City Community Daycare Inc.**

**Supervisor’s Name: Carol Gardiner**

**Supervisor’s Title: Executive Director**

**Required Education and Training**

* An ECE II must have completed a two year diploma in Early Childhood Education through a recognized program of studies or have successfully completed a Competency Based Assessment and/or Prior Learning Assessment through Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care
* An ECE III must have successfully completed a currently approved ECE II program and a specialized program recognized by the Child Care Education Program Approval Committee; or a Bachelor of Arts with Developmental Studies major, Stream C- Child Development and Child Care from the University of Winnipeg.
* Must be certified in First Aid and CPR

**Key Knowledge, Skills and Abilities Required**

* Must have in depth knowledge of the principles of early childhood development and play based learning, with the ability to develop appropriate programs and curriculum based on a variety of learning styles, ages and cultural backgrounds.
* Must have well developed communication skills with the ability to communicate effectively with children and parents from various socio-economic, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.
* Must have demonstrated ability to solve problems, resolve conflicts, make appropriate decisions and involve appropriate stakeholders when required.
* Must be highly creative and skilled at creating, evaluating, and modifying environments, programs and activities to meet the ever changing needs of children and families as well as the challenges faces by financial restraints and changing legislative requirements.
* Must have excellent teamwork skills, with the ability to involve and support co-workers in day to day activities and issues that may occur
* Must have strong “self management” skills with the ability to remain calm in stressful situations and stressful working environments. This includes ensuring satisfactory overall mental and physical health.
* Must have the ability to multi-task, to be flexible and adaptable in light of changing needs and priorities and to copy effectively with changing environments.
* Must have the ability to mentor others and to be mentored in order to contribute to the personal and professional growth of others and self.
* Must have the ability to demonstrate a high level of maturity which recognizes the importance of a respectful workplace, and putting others’ needs before one’s own.

**Overview of Position**

The Early Childhood Educator is responsible for the care and education of children. This includes preparing for, directing and assessing the positive emotional, physical, social and cognitive development of children by implementing appropriate activities and programs according to each child’s individual developmental abilities, interests, and needs.

**Key Areas of Responsibility**

1. **Establish and Maintain a Safe and Healthy Learning Environment**

The ECE should develop and implement a program that considers the child's basic needs for safe and healthy practices. The child's need to learn through safe and active exploration must also be promoted.

**Safety**

The ECE helps to provide a safe environment to prevent and reduce injuries. Indoor and outdoor areas should be free of dangerous conditions and materials. The ECE should be able to prevent injuries and accidents as well as handle emergencies appropriately if they do occur.

Specifically, the ECE will:

* + Supervise all indoor and outdoor play, being aware of the whole group and positioning their self in order to keep all areas visible
  + Keep both the inside of the centre and the outdoor play area free of debris and structural hazards
  + Regularly check the facility, equipment and toys for hazards and respond appropriately
  + Know how to use safety equipment, such as fire extinguishers and smoke detectors
  + Ensure that safety equipment is in place and operable
  + Practice procedures for fires and other emergencies
  + Anticipate and make plans to prevent potentially dangerous situations
  + Supervise children when appliances are in use and practice kitchen safety
  + Maintain adequate first aid supplies, and keeps the group backpack up-to-date with complete first aid kit and child information cards
  + Record accidents and injuries and reports to the Director. Completes incident report forms as required before completion of shift
  + Ensure that all children are accounted for by when taking a group of children out of a room/playground. Takes regular head counts.
  + Release children to authorized individuals and is aware of procedures to follow if unauthorized person comes to pick up child
  + Follows monthly fire drill procedure and conducts safety checks.

**Health**

The ECE should promote good health and nutrition and provide an environment that does not contribute to or cause illness or disease. Indoor and outdoor areas should be kept free of materials or conditions that could endanger children's health. The ECE should model and encourage good health, wellness, and nutrition habits with children.

Specifically, the ECE will:

* Maintain a clean and healthy environment for children and adults by performing light housekeeping duties and simple repairs
* Maintain an atmosphere that is positive, relaxed and pleasant to reduce tension and stress
* Provide nurturance and affection
* Provide a variety of experiences which teach and model good health and nutrition practices, incorporating information from the children's cultures
* Plan, prepare, and serve a variety of nutritious snacks and meals, in accordance with Canada’s Food Guide, representing a variety of cultures and making eating time relaxed and pleasant
* Establishes routines that make mealtimes a pleasant experience for each child. Avoid “food battles”
* Follow centre procedure for maintaining daily health records and administering medication or first aid
* Monitor children for symptoms of childhood conditions and illnesses, isolate children with symptoms of illness and report suspected illness as per centre and government policy
* Release children only to authorized individuals
* Report incidents of suspected abuse upon discovery as per centre and the child abuse protocol
* Attend to children's physical needs such as diapering, toileting, eating and napping
* Update self daily regarding children with allergies and other conditions which require special care and make this information available to other adults working in the centre
* Recognize and record unusual emotional and physical behaviour and conditions and report according to centre policy
* Provide parents with information on available health and nutrition resources

**Learning Environment**

The ECE should use space, materials and routines as resources for constructing an interesting and enjoyable environment which encourages exploration and learning. A reliable framework of routines with a broad array of stimulating experiences should be used to facilitate children's learning.

Specifically, the ECE will:

* Plan and maintain an environment that is attractive as well as functional
* Plan for and implement a balance of active/quiet, indoor/outdoor, free/structured, individual and group activities that will encourage physical, social, intellectual, emotional and sensory development at the appropriate level for each child
* Plan a balance of goals and objectives for each child with those for the group, and develop realistic plans responsive to the needs of all
* Provide easily accessible materials that children can explore by themselves
* Provide a place for each child to store his/her belongings
* Provide for each child's need for privacy and solitary play
* Organize the day so there is time for individual attention to each child
* Plan and implement activities which stimulate children's curiosity, inventiveness, problem solving and communication skills
* Assist children in expressing themselves by listening and responding with questions, comments or clarification
* Use everyday routines and activities as learning opportunities
* Demonstrate acceptance of each child's background, family structure, race, culture and gender through materials, songs, games, pictures, books and celebrations
* Provide ideas to parents re: free or inexpensive toys and equipment and how to use their homes as learning environment
* Plan and provide experiences which broaden the child's sense of community to enhance learning opportunities

1. **Advance Physical and Intellectual Competence**

The ECE should be aware of normal development and provide a variety of equipment, activities and opportunities to promote children's physical and cognitive development as well as communication skills and creativity. Children should be challenged just beyond their present capabilities. The ECE should be able to recognize signs of developmental delay or difficulty and should consult and report according to centre policy.

**Physical**

The ECE should plan for children to have opportunities, both indoors and outdoors, to develop physically, including using large and small muscles, coordinating movements and using their senses.

Specifically, the ECE will:

* Plan, provide and monitor activities for physical skills and sensory development; and have realistic expectations for each child based on an understanding of child development
* Use a variety of activities such as dance, music and active games, incorporating children's cultures.
* Use opportunities which encourage children to develop all their senses
* Participate daily in physical activities with children indoors and outdoors

**Cognitive**

The ECE should provide activities and experiences that develop questioning, probing, exploration and problem solving appropriate to the developmental levels and learning styles of children.

Specifically, the ECE will:

* Maintain an environment rich in opportunities to explore and discover
* Stimulate children's curiosity, inventiveness, problem solving and communication skills through activities and experiences
* Use equipment and materials that children can explore and master by themselves, helping them go according to their own speed and individual learning styles
* Read with children daily, using a wide variety of literature
* Recognize the importance of play and hands-on activities for learning

**Communication**

The ECE should provide opportunities for children to understand, acquire and use verbal and nonverbal means of communicating thoughts and feelings. Activities should be used that encourage children to listen, interact and express themselves with other children and adults.

Specifically, the ECE will:

* Have realistic expectations for each child's understanding and use of speech and language, based on knowledge of language development and the individual child
* Talk often with children stimulating conversation, modeling appropriate language and allowing children to speak without interruption
* Use activities which encourage children to develop listening and comprehension skills
* Allow children to represent their ideas nonverbally e.g. through painting, music and creative movement
* Help children to develop, understand and use words to express feelings
* Take advantage of community resources and opportunities for language development
* Be respectful of child's first language, encouraging them to teach others new words
* Recognize and respect cultural differences in communication styles, e.g. use of eye contact

**Creative**

The ECE should provide experiences that stimulate children to explore and express their imaginative and creative abilities.

Specifically, the ECE will:

* Maintain an environment and provide opportunities for individual expression and interpretation in art, movement, language, music and dramatic play
* Focus on the process of creating rather than the end product
* Encourage and value individual creative expression rather than conformity
* Encourage children to try new and different activities
* Encourage detailed and continuing exploration of creative materials
* Model creativity
* Encourage each child's efforts by displaying work attractively and respectfully and by providing meaningful commentary
* Provide materials and equipment that can be used in more than one way

1. **Build Positive Self-Concept And Individual Strength**

The ECE should help each child to know, accept and take pride in her or himself and to develop a sense of independence. Children should be given the opportunity to experience success, acceptance and increasingly challenging demands.

Specifically, the ECE will:

* Treat each child as an individual with his/her own strengths and unique characteristics
* Be honest, trustworthy and respectful with children
* Encourage children to respect and support others
* Be sensitive to different values and expectations concerning independence and expression of feelings
* Have affectionate and appropriate physical contact with children
* Support the development of each child's self concept
* Offer children choices in activities, materials and foods and respect their choices
* Encourage and help a child to practice self-help skills
* Use celebrations, food, music, pictures, equipment and activities which reflect a child's cultural and family background
* Offer children challenges and allow successes to be experienced; express delight in child's success.
* Express kindness and support when children are having trouble and help them learn from mistakes
* Help children to recognize and accept all their feelings, and to express them in appropriate ways.
* Recognize indicators of difficulties in developing a positive self-concept and report according to centre policy

1. **Promote Positive Functioning Of Children and Adults**

The ECE should encourage children to develop social skills by encouraging them to interact appropriately with other children and adults. Guidance should be done in a positive way with realistic limits and expectations.

**Social**

The ECE should help children learn to get along with others and encourage feelings of empathy and mutual respect among children and adults.

Specifically, the ECE will:

* Plan and maintain an environment which encourages positive social interaction
* Help children learn positive ways of interacting with children and adults by encouraging sharing, taking turns cooperation and helpfulness
* Have realistic expectations of children's behaviour
* Serve as a model by building a positive relationship with each child individually and encourage positive relationships with other adults in the centre
* Recognize and respect each child's privacy and property rights and help children to respect these rights of others
* Support children's attempts to resolve their differences with others
* Encourage children to express their feelings and assert their rights in socially acceptable ways
* Encourage friendships and play among all children
* Acknowledge, respect and respond to the child’s right to have thoughts and emotions. Express kindness and support when children are having trouble and help them learn from their mistakes

**Guidance and Discipline**

The ECE should provide an environment in which children can learn and practice behaviours which are appropriate and acceptable, individually and in a group. Children need to know what is expected of them and for the expectations to be realistic considering their individual needs.

Specifically, the ECE will:

* Set realistic behaviour expectations for each child which encourage self-control; and gear the explanations to each child's level of understanding
* Evaluate the physical environment to assure it facilitates a positive behaviour management setting
* Provide positive guidance methods, such as positive reinforcements, redirection and positive language; and use each appropriately
* Anticipate confrontations and defuse provocative behaviour
* Help children to use language as a tool for resolving difficulties and conflicts
* Address problem behaviour without labeling, threatening or embarrassing the child
* Contribute to and follow behaviour management's guidelines established by the child care program, maintaining consistency with other adults in the program
* Recognize and accept a variety of cultural expectations re: guidance and discipline
* Provide parents with resources related to child rearing, guidance and discipline
* Helps children prepare for change by explaining what comes next in the routine and giving 5-minute warnings
* Helps children understand the logical consequences of behaviour management plans
* Is able to relinquish personal philosophy to comply with centre policies

1. **Coordinate Home and Centre Child-Rearing Practices and Expectations.**

The ECE should maintain an open, friendly and informative relationship with each child's family and encourage family involvement in the program while recognizing that each family has primary responsibility for its own children.

Specifically, the ECE will:

* Participate in the orientation to the program for new families as determined by centre policy
* Welcome the family and integrate each child into the group upon arrival
* Recognize and respect the unique make-up of each family as well as its culture, social background, child-rearing methods and religious beliefs and practices
* Inform parents about their children's experiences at the centre on a regular basis and send home items made by the children
* Suggest and/or provide activities and materials that parents can share with children at home
* Report problems of suspected abuse and neglect promptly, responsibly, and according to centre policy and provincial law
* Encourage parents to keep the centre informed of important events in the children's lives and ask them periodically for updated information
* Encourage parent involvement and sharing in the ongoing activities of the centre
* Observe strict confidentiality regarding children and families
* Offer parents information about community resources and services
* Demonstrates respect for the diversity of individuals by using body language that is welcoming and encourages interaction.

1. **Supplementary Responsibilities**

The ECE should be involved in the management of the program using an organized approach to planning, record keeping and conducting oneself. Conducting oneself as a professional and continuing to develop new skills is expected of the ECE.

**Program Management**

The ECE should be a competent organizer, planner, record keeper and manager and use all available resources to ensure an effective operation.

Specifically the ECE will:

* Record observations regarding each child's growth, behaviour and progress and use this information to plan an appropriate, responsive program
* Plan a long-range program
* Be familiar with licensing regulations and ensure program is run accordingly
* Work as a member of a team with others in the centre, including substitutes, parents, students and volunteers
* Follow up on any referrals made for individual children and work with the family to meet goals

**Professionalism**

The ECE should seek out and take advantage of opportunities to improve competence, both for professional growth and for the benefit of children and families.

Specifically, the ECE will:

* Follow the philosophy of the child care program and be able to describe its goals and objectives to others
* Attend regular staff meetings for the purpose of program discussion, planning, staff communication, individual child development assessment and general business
* Evaluate own performance to identify needs for professional growth
* Participate in peer evaluation and be able to accept comments and criticism from colleagues, supervisors and parents in a constructive way and solicit supervisors' feedback
* Advance knowledge through additional educational courses, seminars and workshops
* Share own expertise with other staff members
* Keep all information pertaining to children, families, and staff confidential
* Maintain appropriate work habits such as punctuality, clothing, and regular attendance
* Maintain a current membership with the provincial professional association related to early childhood education
* Keep informed about new developments and issues in the Early Childhood Education profession, as well as legislation that affects it
* Be an advocate for children and families
* Demonstrate and personally maintain ethical and professional behaviour
* Must be an MCCA member, paid by the Early Childhood Educator
* Attend 24 hours of professional development opportunity annually
* Demonstrate behavioural changes as a result of constructive criticism and/or suggestions. Understands need for change. Takes appropriate measures to ensure desired outcomes
* Demonstrate professionalism with child care students and high school students. Evaluates and communicates with students and instructors regarding their placement
* Contribute 4% to our designated Pension Plan

**Confirmation**

I have read the foregoing and understand it is a description of the duties assigned to my position.

Employee’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

I confirm that this is an accurate description of the responsibilities required of the position and that it forms the basis for the position and the performance appraisal of the incumbent. The incumbent has received a copy of this position description.

Executive Director’s signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_