

GUIDE TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FIELD PLACEMENTS

PREPARED BY:

**EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FACULTY
School of Community Studies
Fall 2024**



ST. CLAIR

C O L L E G E

INTRODUCTION

This “Guide to Early Childhood Education Field Placement” has been designed to assist the early learning and care staff that will be working with the Early Childhood Education students at St. Clair College.

Our Early Childhood Education course is a blend of theory and practice. A high premium is placed on how well a student can work with a group of children. Because field placement is one of the most important aspects of the student's learning experience, it is essential that the entire placement experience be supportive of the student's growth and development. To accomplish this, the student, college supervisor and placement site contact RECE (Registered Early Childhood Educators) must all work together to make expectations clear and to help the student develop into a competent Early Childhood Educator.

The college staff will plan to visit the placement site as often as is required to facilitate the student's learning. We will be available to consult with the placement site contact RECEs (Registered Early Childhood Educators), to assist in problem clarification and resolution, to offer advice and encouragement to the student and to support the placement experience for all involved.

We look forward to working with our Early Childhood Education Community in the development of tomorrow's RECEs of young children.

We are hopeful that this guide will assist in this process. If the users of this guide have any questions, concerns, suggestions or comments the South Campus ECE faculty or field placement site supervisors can be reached at 972-2727

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Philosophy of Early Childhood Education

Prepared by the Faculty of Early Childhood Education,
St. Clair College, Windsor Campus

We believe in:

- ☞ Respect. All people deserve respect. We believe that issues or concerns should be dealt with face to face and with the parties involved, this includes issues with Faculty. If students need support in resolving conflicts with each other or faculty, we believe asking for help from others is an act of strength, not weakness.
- ☞ Shared similarities amongst people. We all have the same basic needs for food, shelter, stimulation, acknowledgement, belonging and unconditional love.
- ☞ Unique differences amongst people. We are all influenced by our inherited predispositions and tendencies, our current level of development and our perceptions of our experiences.
- ☞ The ultimate power of human development. All humans are designed to grow and move toward their optimum level of skill and ability.
- ☞ Working from strengths. The best programs for young children take note of children's abilities and interests and design interactions, environments and activities that support children in building on these strengths.
- ☞ The overriding influence of families. All children come to educational/care programs as part of a family. The separation of a child from their family is a temporary and illusory thing, as children and families remain constantly tied in spirit.

Fall, 2024

ST. CLAIR COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

GUIDELINES FOR PLACEMENT - SITE MENTOR RECES

Thank you for welcoming our students into your classroom.

1. Orientation to the Setting

It is important that students be given a brief but detailed orientation of the setting. Ideally this should occur when the student first arrives. This allows the student time to clarify misconceptions by questioning, and hence the opportunity exists to adjust to the philosophy and expectations more easily. At that time, it is recommended that the following areas be addressed through discussion:

- a. Placement setting expectations of the student. (Include dress code, communication (phone, e-mail, parent contact), hours of attendance (arrival, break(s), departure)
- b. Student's expectations of the setting.
- c. Student's goals.
- d. Specific rules regarding fire drill procedure, first aid-, emergencies, limits on behaviour for staff and children.
- e. Philosophy of placement setting.
- f. Daily schedule.

2. As part of the orientation, students are asked to spend some time observing. This is seen as a period for the student to become aware of the routines, methods of interaction and general programming structure. The student can participate in the program but is encouraged to refrain from busying themselves with cleaning and other chores that would prevent them from understanding the overall program. It is expected that the student will use this time to learn the daily schedule, the children's names, program policies and to begin their collection of anecdotal observations. Each student should be able to collect observations while fully engaged in all aspects of program implementation.

3. As our students are still learning and are not legally responsible for groups of children, **they must not be left alone with the children**. When they plan and run a section of the program on their own, a mentor RECE should be observing.

A checklist which combines both midterm and final evaluation is to be completed by all mentor RECEs. Each evaluation should be discussed with the student. The purpose of the midterm evaluation is to enable the student to set goals for herself/himself for the rest of the placement. We have found this feedback to be most useful when all staff working with a student have input. We hope that the settings will be able to set aside sufficient time to make this a useful learning experience for the students. It is important that the checklist be signed and given to

the students before the scheduled visit with the College Field Placement Supervisor at midterm and before the student comes to the college for their final assessment. Please give the student the checklist to bring back to the college.

4. As you know, problems develop rapidly from lack of communication, so please phone immediately when you have any concerns. We cannot visit as often as we would like, so please do not hesitate to contact us as soon as you have any concerns. If there are issues, please do not wait until midterm evaluation to address them with the student and the College field placement supervisor.
5. Time should be set aside as regularly as possible to discuss students' progress. Critical feedback is a crucial part of student development. Even if a student is doing well, it is essential that they understand their strengths. At minimum we request that you meet with the student once a week to review their performance, curriculum plans and implementation.
6. We are trying to help the students understand that a professional Registered Early Childhood Educator is responsible for the entire program. During all parts of the day, the role of the Educator is to be alert and attentive to the children.
7. Please allow the students opportunities to do their assigned activities. Students should plan activities according to the needs of the group of children they are working with in the placement setting. For the student(s)' success, we will encourage them to be prepared to repeat activities as necessary (e.g., morning and afternoon programs). In addition, the mentor RECE may request that an activity be repeated to enable the student to correct mistakes made the first time around.
8. Students should be included in staff and parent meetings when appropriate and encouraged to take part in the planning.
9. While maintaining a clean and orderly classroom is certainly a part of every RECE's job, we request that our students be permitted to spend as much time as working with the children. We would appreciate it if the total amount of time spent cleaning were no greater than 10% of their placement hours.
10. The Field Placement has an identified number of days the students are required to complete to be successful on the Field Placement. Students are required to make up any time missed during the Field Placement experience within a designated period.
11. Inclement weather can impact on attendance in classes and on placement. If the

College is officially closed due to poor weather conditions, students are not required to make up Field Placement hours. Alternatively, if the Field Placement site closes and the College does not, the students are not required to make up the time.

12. In **collaboration with** the Field Placement Mentor, students will create a calendar outlining a timeline for completion for all Field Placement requirements. The calendar is to be available to the RECE at the site and to the College field placement supervisor. Students are responsible to share the requirements of the placements with their RECE mentor, and organize their placement to ensure that the requirements are all accomplished.

PROCEDURE FOR PLACEMENT SETTINGS EXPERIENCING CONCERNS WITH STUDENT(S) PERFORMANCE

At times, problems in the field placement will arise. Concerns regarding the student(s) level of performance, professionalism, motivation, commitment to the field can develop. At such times we, where possible, prefer the supervisor and/or mentor RECE to meet with the student to try and develop strategies to resolve the problem.

After this initial meeting, if no observable behaviour or skill change has occurred, it is important that the supervisor or mentor RECE contact the College field placement supervisor assigned to supervise the student(s). Conference time will be set up, all appropriate parties will be involved if possible and where warranted. Our goal is to support the students. Unfortunately, there will be times when a student's placement needs to be terminated. This and future discussions regarding the student(s) performance will be documented. Documentation will ensure that communication is clear. Documented areas perceived as important include:

1. Any dates when discussions with the student occur.
2. Areas of concern.
3. Goals and objectives.
4. Plan of action/strategies for improvement.
5. Re-evaluation.

Clear documentation ensures that student, program and placement rights and standards are maintained.

We would ask that if any of the following situations occur, that you contact the College immediately:

- Actions considered to be unprofessional (consistent lateness, falling asleep, swearing, dressing inappropriately, cell phone useage, gossiping etc.)
- Clear violation of College or Placement Site policies (e.g., allergies, child guidance, etc.)

- A serious occurrence caused by the student's actions or neglect.

All decisions regarding assignment of grades are the responsibility of the College field placement supervisor but we appreciate your support and expertise in these matters.

Thank You,
The Early Childhood Education Department

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Workers Compensation

For Students on Unpaid Work Placements

Background

As of July 1, 1993, students on an unpaid Work Experience with an employer covered under the Workers' Compensation Act, are entitled to benefits under the Act if injury occurs.

Students placed with an employer not covered may receive benefits under the College's Insurance Coverage.

Reporting Procedures

In the event of an accident, the appropriate forms must be completed immediately and faxed to the Manager of Occupational Health and Safety (Phone: 519-972-2727 ext. 4686 or Fax 519-972-2752). The ECE Program Officer must also be notified (call 519-972-2727 ext. 4541).

“It is the student’s responsibility to make sure that this procedure is followed.”

If you have questions regarding the above procedures or require assistance in completing the forms, please contact the ECE Program Officer at 519-972-2727 ext. 4541 or Chair, Community Studies at ext. 4404.