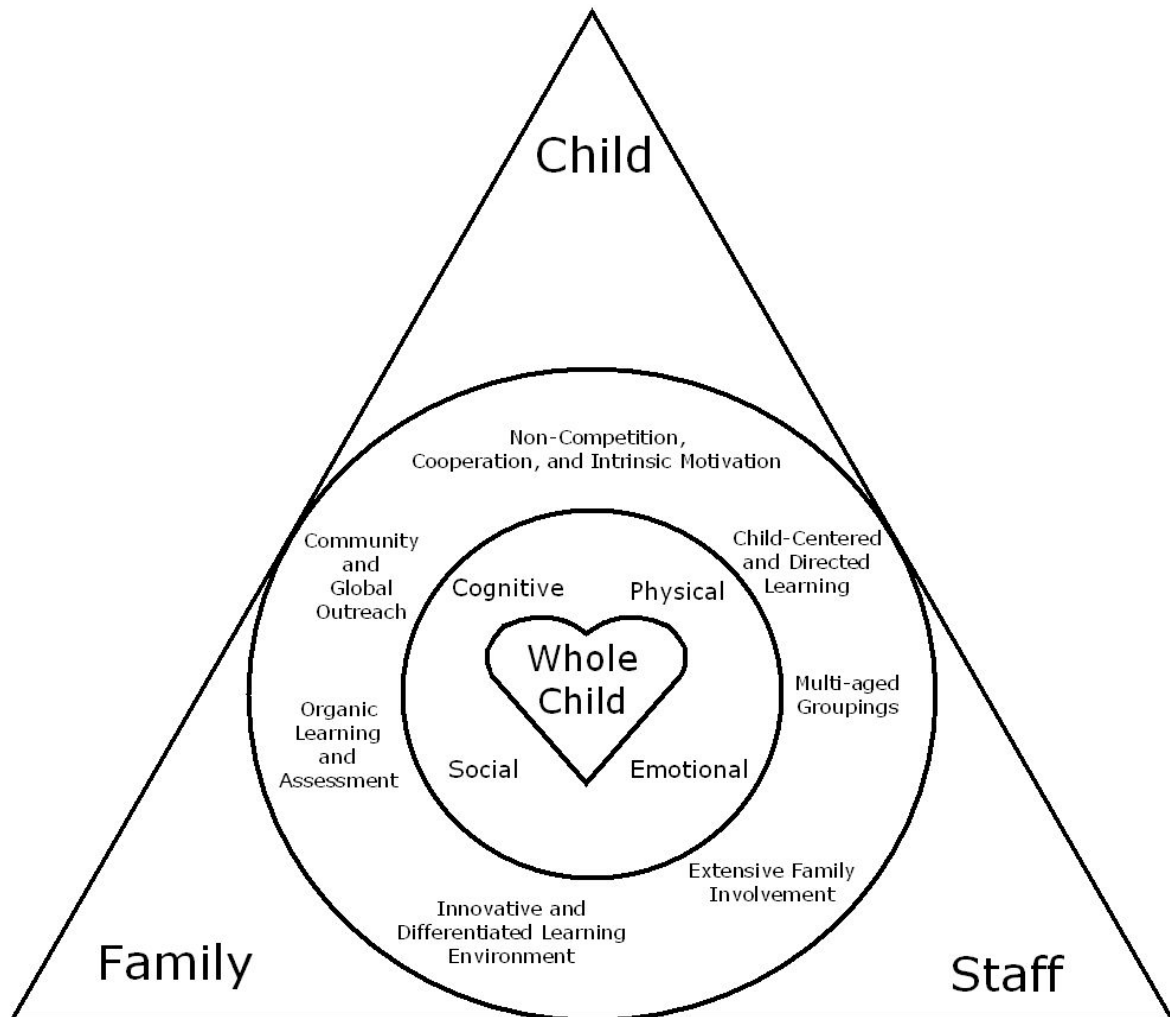


The Alternative Program at Churchill



At Churchill Alternative School, students, school staff, and families work together to create an inclusive, non-competitive, and nurturing learning environment.

Central to our program is the commitment to nurture the whole child, recognizing the importance of cognitive, physical, emotional, and social development. Seven core principles and a learning triad consisting of the child, their family, and the school staff help to guide and support the Alternative Program and sustain the learning environment of the school.



Non-competition, Cooperation and Intrinsic Motivation

Churchill Alternative is safe, inclusive, and welcoming. There is no competition for marks, for prizes, or for attention. Instead the emphasis is on cooperation, working together, and valuing everyone's contributions. Students are motivated by curiosity and the natural desire to learn.

look for:

All can participate in activities – there are no try-outs.

Everyone's contribution is valued: no awards or prizes are given.

No marks or rankings are recorded on student work.

Child-Centered and Directed Learning

At Churchill, students' voices and interests are valued. Collaboration on meaningful projects among students, teachers, and community members of all ages is encouraged. Students help set their own learning goals, and help make decisions on school policies and projects.

look for:

Collaborative problem solving, and restorative conflict resolution.

Classrooms arranged for group work and varied student groupings (desks not in rows).

Students are heard through sharings, student councils, and class meetings.

Multi-Age Groupings

Churchill is a community where older and younger children, teachers, staff, and families learn together in a variety of settings and groupings. A commitment to combined-grade classrooms and shared activities bring students of different ages together.

look for:

Intentional use of mixed-grade classrooms.

Inter-class collaboration on projects.

Reading buddies, mentoring, and student leadership.

Innovative and Differentiated Learning Environments

At Churchill, students learn through activities and projects that touch on many aspects of the curriculum simultaneously, and that engage all learning styles.

look for:

Outdoor classrooms, and other non-traditional learning environments.

Extensive use of community resources and field trips.

Project-based learning.

Extensive Family Involvement

Families participate in a variety of ways, including substantial classroom-volunteering, involvement in the school council, organizing events, running clubs, and in helping prepare classroom materials.

look for:

Co-teaching and planning with parents and community members.

Families are true partners in education and collaborate with teachers.

School council helps inform school policies and procedures.

Organic Learning and Assessment

Churchill provides an environment that nurtures the whole child, and engages them in learning that is natural and individualized. Assessment of student learning reflects this approach – the primary purpose of assessment is to help students meet their learning goals.

look for:

Extensive communication between teachers, families, and students.
Student-led conferences.
Reduced emphasis on grades and traditional tests in favour of authentic learning and assessment.

Community and Global Outreach

At Churchill, the community is welcomed into the school, and the school often goes out into the community, fostering a sense of involvement and belonging. Students are encouraged to have a sense of global citizenship and stewardship.

look for:

An inclusive school environment.
Participation in community events and global projects.
Student-led fundraising for community and global concerns.
Learning partnerships with community groups and businesses.