Waterdown District Children's Centre

ELCC and School Age Program Parent Handbook

(Revised May 14 2026)

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WELCOME TO WATERDOWN DISTRICT CHILDREN'S CENTRE

WDCC Purpose and Mission

Waterdown District Children's Centre is a fully integrated, non-profit organization designed to meet the needs of the families and children in our community. Since our opening in 1992, we have been successful in creating an excellent reputation within the local and professional community. We started as an Early Learning Child Care Centre (ELCC) and have also been providing in-school Before & After (B&A) and School Age Holiday and Summer Camp Programs within Waterdown for more than a decade. We have been continuously updating our methods, approach, and education to help improve our educational practices for toddler and preschool children. In 2013, we expanded our school age camp program to provide a wide range of activities and experiences by utilizing camp themes with experts from specific fields of interest to our children. In 2014, we introduced more technology and STEM interests, and have broadened our technology-based summer camp programs from iCamp, to Lego Robotics and more. We continued to provide remote education services through COVID-19, and have continually adapted our program to meet the needs of our community the best that we can.

We believe in the importance of employing qualified, caring individuals who will provide a safe, warm, and comfortable environment for your children.

We strive to:

- Provide an environment where children can develop a variety of problem-solving and reasoning skills, as well as other cognitive skills and ways of thinking,
- Provide opportunities and activities for gross and fine motor skills, such as hand eye coordination, balance, and flexibility,
- Help a child identify and communicate needs, feelings, and ideas, both verbally and non-verbally, and assist them in improving listening and comprehension skills,
- Provide an opportunity for children to interact with adults and peers in different social settings,
- Assist and model skills in problem and conflict solving,
- Provide opportunities and activities to assist in the development of the whole child through exploration and interaction with their environment.

We are a non-profit, charitable organization, governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. The board is comprised of parents, community members, and fellow educators. The Board is responsible for overseeing the centre in its entirety. They meet monthly to discuss various issues ranging from parental

concerns, personnel issues, quality of care, budget planning and more. We also employee a well-seasoned Executive Director that oversees the day-to-day operations of the Centre.

WDCC Program Statement

Waterdown District Children's Centre will provide early learning and school age childcare and will support families with children aged 18 months (and occasionally from 12 months) to 12 years of age. WDCC uses the Ministry of Education document "How Does Learning Happen" to guide programming and pedagogy. Through this practice, the centre sees children as capable, competent, curious, and rich in potential. In addition, the centre will aim to emphasize the progressive, responsive interactions amongst children, families, and staff. "How Does Learning Happen?" will be used to strengthen the overall quality of the program and will ensure high quality experiences are provided. These experiences will lead to positive outcomes in relation to children's learning, development, health, and well-being, by fostering children's exploration, play and inquiry. WDCC provides an environment that ensures each child has a sense of belonging within the program, that fosters a child's well-being, and that each child has opportunities for children to be engaged and express themselves. The Centre engages all staff in educator development opportunities and promotes research and growth in new methods, protocols and activities.

The program statement will be reviewed annually with all staff, as the goals provided in the appendix are incorporated in all the policies and procedures throughout the employee handbook. We have set the goals and measurable expectations to meet the Ministry's regulated expectations {(O.Reg. 137/15, ss. 46(3)(a-k))}. These goals can be found in the appendix.

General Program Information

Programs

WDCC's Early Learning Child Care (ELCC) centre provides care for toddlers and preschoolers. WDCC also runs Before and After school care programs at Allan A. Greenleaf, Guy B. Brown and Mary Hopkins Elementary Schools, school holiday programs, and a summer camp program.

- Toddler Program: 18 months – 2.6 years
  (in some rare circumstances we can accept an infant 12 – 18 months)
- Preschool Program: 2.6 years – 5 years
- Kindergarten and School Age Programs: 3.8 – 12 years
- Summer Camp Program: 3.6 years – 12 years

Days and Hours of Operation

WDCC ELCC is open Monday to Friday, from 7:00am to 6:00pm*. **(As of September 1, 2024 we will changes our hours to 7:30am – 5:30 pm.)**

We are closed for the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Family Day
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- Victoria Day
- Canada Day
- Civic Holiday
- Labour Day
- Thanksgiving Day

- Our ELCC Program is closed for a 2 Week closure covering Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Day

Please note: WDCC will close completely between Christmas Eve Day and New Year's Day and for a closure period of 2 Weeks full time period throughout the Winter Holiday Period (normally corresponding with the HWDSB Holiday Schedule) and will update with any additional closures or changes by email to families. We normally close for alternate days for statutory holidays that fall on a weekend. Families will be notified in advance of any planned closures.

We are also closed for two Early Childhood Educator Professional Development Days a year (schools remain open, but we will not have a program, and the ELCC childcare Centre is closed). Announcements on these early closures will be made prior to the holiday season. All closures are already included in your fees and not rebated (which are amortized over a year's time and not credited separately).

Meals and Snacks

Our Early Learning Child Care (Toddler / Preschool) Program normally includes a healthy meal plan (mid-day meal, plus AM and PM snacks). We can accommodate most special dietary needs on request. Our facility and meals at the Early Learning Child Care (ELCC) Centre are peanut, and tree nut free. For other programs we follow the school location and Provincial allergy policies, but we require that families do not bring or pack any food items that contain peanuts or tree nuts.

Our Kindergarten & School Age Before and After School Programs includes a healthy snack in the Morning and in the Afternoon. Please do not send any food from home for consumption in these programs, unless there are dietary needs that have first been reviewed by our administrative staff.

Our Kindergarten & School Age Holiday Programs do not include any snacks or meals. Parents / Guardians are required to provide food and a water bottle from home (normally two nutrition breaks and morning and afternoon snacks). All food and drink containers from home must be labelled with the child's full (first and last) name to help us prevent allergic reactions. We require that families do not bring or pack any food items that contain peanuts or tree nuts.

Tips on How to Drop Off Your Child at Daycare

1. Say goodbye to your child every time you leave, even if your child is busy playing.
2. Keep your goodbyes short and sweet. Drawn-out goodbyes can be hard on everybody.
3. Tell your child that you are leaving, that their educators will take care of them, and that you will see them later.
4. Let your child know who will be picking them up.
5. Establish a goodbye routine, such as reading one final book, or waving goodbye at the window.
6. Enlist the support of your child's primary educators if your child is having a difficult time separating.
7. Encourage your child to bring something special from home, such as a blanket or a soft toy.

8. Provide pictures of your family for your child to look at and share with peers when they are missing you!
9. Encourage your child to talk about her feelings when you pick them up. Remind them that you will always come back.
10. Keep in mind that strategies for successful goodbyes that work with one family may not work with another.

ENROLMENT POLICIES

Enrolment Forms

To be added to our Wait List, families must fill out an online registration form.

Each ELCC (Toddler / Preschool) family also receives an enrolment package upon starting at Waterdown District Children's Centre. It is imperative that the enrolment package in completed in full and is returned to the centre on or before the day your child begins care. The enrolment package is designed to meet all requirements from the Ministry of Community of Social Services, and the Regional Health Department.

It is also important to keep us notified of any changes to your children's information, including immunizations, or other personal information, to allow us to keep our files updated and provide your child with care that meets their current needs.

Wait List Policy

WDCC will accept new children when there are vacancies on a priority basis. No family will be discriminated against based on race, ethnicity, language, culture, gender, sexual orientation or other protected grounds. All children of various abilities and health status will be considered for enrolment. The wait list policy is as follows:

1. The director will ensure other organizations in the community have information about our centre through Ministry and HWDSB online listings.
2. The director will maintain a waiting list for each age group.
3. The director will follow the orientation policy for each new family.
4. Outside agencies will be contacted to assist the centre in the admission of a child who may require support within the classroom setting.
5. No childcare licensee shall charge or collect a fee or deposit for the placement of a child on the waiting list for a childcare program.
6. The centre may request a deposit for a confirmed availability.

WDCC gives priority to full time care (5 day) placements for all families, current daycare families, and families enrolled in before and after school care families, for new enrolments and wait list spaces and may choose not to offer part-time or part-days care.

The following is a list of criteria that help determine priority for waitlist spaces:

- Currently attending families in this order: (1) attending children who continue to attend same location and same schedule, 2) new siblings of attending children, 3) children moving from one of our programs or locations to another),
- Care for WDCC Staff required to accommodate employment
- Children of local school staff or community liaisons,
- Demonstrated care needs,
- Community families,
- Full time care required.

Families will be contacted only as a space becomes available to them and must register online to be added to our waitlist. We are not able to accurately predict when a placement may be offered due to the constantly changing wait list, but will inform a parent generally of their place on the wait list if we are able when asked within a reasonable frequency.

Change or Withdrawal of Services

When a family wishes to change the type or frequency of care their child is currently receiving, or when they wish to withdraw their child from our program, they are required to give **one full calendar month's advance notice** to the Executive Director, or the Manager of Administration & Registration, in writing. (For example, a withdrawal request received any time in July would take effect as of September 1st. We do not currently offer partial month withdrawals / fee adjustments. If a change is being requested, we ask that families include the care their child is currently receiving, as well as the care they wish to change to. Changes to schedule are subject to availability. Changes from full time (5 day) to part time care will only occur at the sole discretion of the Executive Director. We do not offer less than 5 days care for Before and After School programs.

Custody Arrangements

If you have a legal agreement outlining custody or restraining arrangements, please provide WDCC with a copy for our records. WDCC will do its best to support the custody arrangement. Families are requested to notify the director immediately upon changes to legal agreements. WDCC will not act as an agent or liaison between parents / guardians, responsibility for payment and all other aspects of a registration lie solely with the Primary Registering Parent / Guardian.

Right of Exclusion

At WDCC, all our educators strive to provide a program that stimulates children in all areas of development, within a group setting. If staff feel that our program is not meeting the developmental, social, or behavioural needs of your child, the following plan will be put into place:

1. A team meeting with the parents, director, classroom educators and other relevant professionals, such as resource teachers (if required), will be arranged to discuss methods of action to deal with the issues.
2. Upon request, dependent upon perceived family needs, or upon suggestion for WDCC; information on or referrals to relevant support services (e.g. speech therapy, Behavioural Therapy Consultation Services at Chedoke), can be provided, to offer support for the child, family, and the centre.
3. Shortening the amount of service provided (e.g. temporarily switching from full days to half days).
4. Movement to a different more applicable grouping if necessary (whether temporarily or permanent).

If all the steps are taken, but solving the situation is still unsuccessful, a meeting will be arranged to discuss the child's continuance at WDCC. The meeting will include all relevant parties, including parents, educators, and the director. The safety of all children in the program is imperative and must

remain our top priority. Therefore, in extreme cases, terminating care, and if possible, assisting the family to find care somewhere else in the community, may be considered.

If for the safety of a child, other children or staff, a child must be separated from their group, they will always be accompanied and supervised by our staff until it is deemed appropriate to return to the group, or until arrangements can be made for their safe pick-up by parent, guardian, or emergency contacts.

WDCC reserves the right to terminate the registration of, or to withdraw a child from program participation at any time. This is done at the director's discretion, in the interest of the child or in the interest of the program and notice will be given in writing.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

CWELCC

As a provincially licensed not-for-profit organization, WDCC has opted-in to the newly introduced Canada-Wide Early Learning Child Care (CWELCC) funding support program being phased in that will provide dramatic reductions in care fees for children aged 0 to 5 years (ELCC and Kindergarten). The Government of Canada in cooperation with the Province of Ontario and managed by the City of Hamilton has created a framework to enhance early learning and childhood development, and to support the growth of the Early Childhood educator community, to help strengthen Ontario's licensed childcare system and provide more economical opportunities for parents of children to join the workforce.

Base fees (approved by the CWELCC program) are the mandatory charges for all families to attend our programs and based on a reduction of our regular pre-CWELCC childcare fees. Non-base fees are additional fees for services provided that are not reduced under the CWELCC program (such as late fees, bank charges, credit card surcharges, administration fees, trip fees, donations, etc.)

For more information on CWELCC, visit: https://www.ontario.ca/page/canada-ontario- early-years-and-child-care-agreement

City of Hamilton School Age Before & After School Affordability Plan (ended June 30, 2025)

This subsidy program has ended.

Fees

Monthly Fee Calculation

Stable monthly fees are determined by taking the approximate number of ELCC care days plus Statutory Holidays, or number of School Instructional Days plus Statutory Holidays in a year times the daily rate, divided by the number of months of care in an annual cycle (12 months for ELCC, 10 months for School Age care). This results in a consistent rate month-to-month. Monthly care rates do not include extra days, or school holiday or PA Day programs which are charged separately. Monthly rates are not reduced for anticipated statutory holidays and program closures.

Forms of Payment and Fee Schedule

Fees are to be paid monthly, in advance. We offer Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD) for payments which are processed through a secure payment processor and approval is completed online.

For monthly ELCC and B&A childcare programs we will only accept Pre-Authorized Debit. In some cases we may offer alternative payment options on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Executive Director.

For School Holiday and PA Day programs we currently accept payment only by PayPal or INTERAC eMail Money Transfer only (these are not charged to your PAD).

INTERAC payments, where permitted, are subject to a $10 added administration fee per payment.

An official tax receipt will be distributed in late February – early March for the previous calendar year.

Non-Sufficient Funds (NSF) returns and late payments are subject to a service fee of $50.00 which will be billed and/or charged to your account. If you have any questions regarding your account, they can be directed towards the director.

Fee Subsidies

WDCC currently holds a Purchase of Service agreement with the City of Hamilton. Fee subsidies are available through their offices, to those families who qualify. Please contact the director for more information. You must receive a confirmed placement offer from us before applying for a subsidy approval.

Fee Schedules

Base Fees for CWELCC (Early Learning Child Care 0 – 5 years)

The following fees for the WDCC Child Care Program are in effect as of January 1, 2025.
We currently only offer 5 day placements in our child care program.

Program	**Pre-CWELCC Market Rate** **Monthly Rate /** *(Daily Rate)*	**2025 Daily Market Rate Monthly** *(Day Rate)*	**2024 CWELCC Market Rate** **Monthly Rate /** *(Daily Rate)*	**2025 CWELCC Market Rate** **Monthly Rate /** *(Daily Rate)*
	At March 31, 2022	As at January 1, 2025	Effective January 1, 2024	Effective January 1, 2025
Toddler (5 days)	**$1045.00** *($48.23)*	TBA *(TBA)*	$ 494.00 *($ 22.80)*	$ 467.67 *($ 22.00)*
Preschool (5 days)	**$920.00** *($42.46)*	TBA *(TBA)*	$ 434.85 *($ 20.07)*	$ 434.85 *($ 20.07)*

Monthly Rate = Daily Rate x (number of days of care per week) x 52 weeks / 12 months

Base Fees for CWELCC (Kindergarten JK/SK 4 – 6 years*)

The following fees were retroactive to April 1, 2022. We currently only offer 5 day placements in our school care program. Monthly Rate set by CWELCC

Program	**Pre-CWELCC Market Rate** **Monthly Rate /** *(Daily Rate)*	**2025 Daily Market Rate Monthly** *(Day Rate)*	**2024 CWELCC Rate** **Monthly Rate /** *(Daily Rate)*	**Current CWELCC Rate** **Monthly Rate /** *(Daily Rate)*
	At March 31, 2022	Effective January 1, 2025	Effective January 1, 2024	Effective January 1, 2025
Kindergarten Before (5 days)	**$267.80** *($13.35)*	TBA	$ 240.00 *($ 12.00)*	$ 240.00 *($ 12.00)*
Kindergarten After (5 days)	**$412.00** *($20.60)*	TBA	$ 240.00 *($ 12.73)*	$ 240.00 *($ 12.00)*
Kindergarten Before and After (5 days)	**$538.69** ($26.93)	TBA	$ 254.60 *($ 12.73)*	$ 254.60 *($ 12.73)*
Kindergarten Full Day Programs	*($45.00/day)*	*TBA*	*($ 23.27 /day)*	*($ 22.00 /day)*

Grade 1 – 8 Before and After School Program 2025-2026 School Year // Monthly Rates (Ages 6 years and up)

# Days per Week	*Before School Only*	*After School Only***	*Both Before & After*
5	**$ 156.80** *($8.00/day)*	**$ 235.20** *($12.00/day)*	**$ 392.00** *($20.00/day)*
5 day Market Rates after City of Hamilton Grant Expiry	**$ 287.53** *($14.67/day)*	**$ 397.49** *($20.28/day)*	**$ 509.21** *($25.98/day)*

Part-Time Schedules and Single Extra Days are **not currently being offered due to overwhelming demand for 5 day placements.*
*** Rates may vary if a program is offered at Flamborough Centre Elementary School (based on community interest).*

From September 2025 to June 2026 we have negotiated a grant with the City of Hamilton Child Care to offer our families an Affordability Grant to subsidize school age child care rates (shown in green above).

Current daily rates are for ALL families without an individual family Subsidy Approval.

- Monthly rates are based on Daily Rate for 196 days (187 Instructional Days + 9 Statutory Holidays) and amortized over 10 months (September to June)
- We do not charge for PA Days or School Holidays (other than statutory holidays) and any care programs offered during those days is an additional charge at the full daily rate shown below.
- We anticipate two Child Care Professional Development Days during the school year (TBC) organized by the City of Hamilton **during which all of our programs are closed** so that our staff may attend. If the City of Hamilton compensates us for those days (as they have in the past), then we pass the credit to currently enrolled families.
- Grade 1 children who have not yet reached their 6th birthday are normally given the CWELLC program rate until the month of their 6th birth date, however we extend the lower rate with City Grant applied.
- We are not offering part-time schedules (less than 5 days) or Single Extra Days care at this time.
- All B&A fees are paid by Pre-Authorized Debit. *(Any special authorization for alternative payment is subject to a $10 per payment administrative fee.)*
- Insufficient funds are subject to a $50 administrative fee per occurrence.

*CWELCC Kindergarten Rates will apply for any child under 6 years old; and up until June 30 in a calendar year for any child who (a) turns six years old between January 1 and June 30 in that calendar year, and (b) is enrolled in a kindergarten group.

CWELCC Kindergarten rates will apply to any child attending Grade 1 until the end of the month of their 6th birthday, however the lower of CWELCC or any other rates offered shall apply.

Full Day Program Rate for School Age (6 - 12 years)
$50.00 per day from June 30, 2025

Non-Base (CWELCC Ineligible) Fees

We charge the following fees and surcharges that are not CWELCC applicable:

- Rates for children who are not CWELCC Plan eligible.
- Non-Sufficient Funds returns fee ($50)
- Late Payment Fee ($50)
- Early withdrawal without full notice period (if granted) ($50)
- Late Pick-up Fees ($20 per every part of half hour after closing)
- $10 Surcharge to pay by INTERAC Email Money Transfer when permitted.
- Trip Location Entry and Bus Fees (as applicable).
- Charitable donations to the organizations (donations above $50 can be issued a charitable receipt upon request).

Cancellations and Refunds

A minimum of 1 full calendar month's advance written notice (i.e. before the end of the month prior to your last billing month before withdrawal or schedule change) is required to withdraw your child from our program or to drop sessions from your schedule (example: if you give us notice of an upcoming withdrawal during April, then billing can stop AFTER the month of May is billed at the existing rate).

- Should a Full Program Week be cancelled in advance due to a requirement by the Minister of Education, the Hamilton-Wentworth School Board or Hamilton Public Health, then we will refund your paid fee for that week in full.
- You must pay the balance of your fee upon registration (for daily or weekly programs), within 2 business days of request for emailed billing, OR by the prescheduled billing date for automated monthly billing (for monthly programs), and in all cases before the beginning of your care for the period.
- No refunds are offered for voluntary cancellation of your registration or non-compliance with our policies unless approved by the Executive Director of the program for limited reasons.
- No discount or refund is given for partial week attendance.
- Credits or refunds are not given for late cancellations, late arrival, early departure, illness, absences, dismissal, or program / facility closures due to emergency, weather.
- Credits or refunds are not given for absence due to any personal occurrence of communicable illnesses or parasites (cold, flu, chicken pox, mumps, lice, etc.), elective or scheduled medical/dental reasons.

- Cancellations due to serious and emergency medical reason (requiring hospitalization or affecting ambulatory mobility and ability to participate) for all programs are subject to the Executive Director's approval and receipt of an original and verifiable doctor's letter.
- Granting of less than full withdrawal period (when applicable at discretion of WDCC) is subject to a $50 administrative fee
- Non-Sufficient Funds returns are subject to a $50 administrative fee.
- Late payment (more than 2 business days after invoice, or after the first week of the month) is subject to a $50 administration fee.
- Any refunds granted will be returned within 4 weeks time.

Due to the high demand, limited enrolment and need to secure program resources; we require our families' full commitment upon offer of placement and reserve the right to cancel your registration should you require a reduction in care within the first 2 months of attendance in any program.

Absences from Program

Parents are required to pay for all regularly scheduled days of attendance, including statutory holidays, early closure holidays, snow day closures, and all vacation or sick days.

Late Pick Up Fees

Children become anxious when parents are late. It is the responsibility of the parent to arrive at their program location to pick up their child before the stated closure time. If a parent is unable to arrive by the stated closure time, we ask that you inform us as soon as you are aware that you will be late only by the location telephone number. We also ask that you make alternate arrangements for your child to be picked up, and when these are known, inform the staff at your program. A late fee for $20.00 for every part of half an hour, per child, will be charged for any pick up that occurs after the stated closure time. This fee will be charged to your account. The clock at your program location shall be used as the official time for documenting late pick-ups.

BEGINNING YOUR WDCCELCC JOURNEY

Registration

To register your child at Waterdown District Children's Centre Early Learning Child Care (ELCC) Program for Toddlers and Preschoolers, we ask that you a) register for our Wait List online, b) review the online tour and program information. Once a placement in our ELCC program is offered, a tour of the centre will be scheduled that allows you to see how WDCC runs as a childcare centre, meet the educators, and see if WDCC is the right fit for you and your child. The tour includes a look into each classroom, an overview of the menus, lunches and snacks and an experience of what a typical day looks like. This is also a chance to ask any questions you have! Since you can refuse offer of care any time before paying your first deposit (which can be after your scheduled tour) any other tours or entry to the program are subject to approval of the Executive Director in advance due to the overwhelming demand.

Orientation and Transition

Prior to ELCC enrolment, you and your child will be invited for a play visit. It is important for your family to attend the play visit, to help your child transition into the childcare centre, and allow them to meet their educators and peers. WDCC recommends coming for at least two play visits prior to enrolment. During the play visit, parents or guardians are required to be in the classroom and can help encourage their child to interact and engage in the childcare environment. Parents or guardians can get to know the educators, get familiar with the routine, and ask any questions they have!

Key Contacts

For any questions or concerns, your key contacts are:

Shelley Bradaric: Executive Director of WDCC, 905-689-5342

Megan Bradaric: ELCC Program Administrator, 905-689-5342

Before and After School Programs, 905-689-5342

Email register@campwaterdown.com or info@campwaterdown.ca for questions regarding online registration.

Communication

WDCC educators openly communicate with all families frequently throughout the care day or Before and After School period. Our educators also recognize the difficultly of leaving your child in childcare for the first time.

Upon enrolment in our ELCC program for Toddlers and Preschoolers, you will be offered the chance to have a profile for your child uploaded to our communication app "HiMama". This is a mobile app that allows our educators to communicate quickly, clearly, and frequently with families about their child's day. Your child receives a profile which is set up in their group's classroom on HiMama. The app provides opportunities for educators to communicate about children's days, including how they ate, how they slept, their toileting activity, any items (such as extra clothes, diapers or wipes) that you will need to bring in, as well as pictures of your child having fun throughout the day! A full report of all the

information that has been inputted into your child's profile for any given day is sent to you when you pick up your child and they are "checked out" of the HiMama app.

In addition, our educators make immediate phone calls to families regarding more urgent matters, such as any illnesses a child may pick up throughout the day, or if a situation requires a verbal conversation. Our educators at all programs will also inform parents at pick up about their child's day when asked, and can address any questions or concerns that parents may have.

Personal Belongings

For any child, the transition into an ELCC childcare centre can be difficult. To help the transition, children are welcome to bring in special toys, stuffies, blankets, and soothers from home. School age children may have similar comforts that are to be stored in their backpack when appropriate. Electronic device use by children is discouraged during our program without permission for a special purpose. Please ensure that all items brought from home are clearly labelled with your child's name as we will in no way be responsible for their loss or damage at any time. It is also helpful to let your child's educator know when they have brought in something special from home that they may not bring in very often. This can help educators keep an eye on it, and at the end of the day they can help ensure the item goes in the correct cubby (for the ELCC program) or goes home with the right family.

If you see there is a certain topic of interest happening in your child's class, or in the centre, and you have items at home that you feel could enhance the interest in the subject, please feel free to bring these items in and we will attempt to augment them into our program and will return them to your family.

WDCC is not responsible for any toys, clothes, electronics, valuables or home items that may be soiled, damaged or go missing at our programs. We understand losing, damaging or soiling a special item can be extremely difficult, and staff will do our best to ensure all home items are returned to a child's cubby or family, but accidents do happen. Any valuable items that you cannot risk losing should be left at home. Our staff will also do our best to look for and find any items that do go missing and will return anything we find as soon as we find it. If we find something, and we do not know who it belongs to, our educators will place the item in the lost and found. It is the responsibility of families to check the lost and found frequently, as all items not collected are donated or discarded monthly as appropriate.

On your child's first day, we recommend you bring the following (and can keep the following stocked up throughout your child's time at WDCC).

- Indoor/outdoor shoes (weather-dependent),
- Diapers, wipes, diaper cream and other toileting needs (clearly labelled) (ELCC program)
- Spare clothes, and outdoor clothes (seasonally-dependant) clearly labelled,
- A clearly labelled water bottle or cup,
- Clearly labelled comfort items (stuffed animal, blanket, soother) (ELCC program or as appropriate)
- A family photo (ELCC program or as appropriate)
- Anything else your child may require (medication with appropriate forms, sunscreen, milk, etc..).

Clothing

Playing and learning is hard, and often dirty work! Here are a few clothing tips to help your child play and learn:

- Dress your children in comfortable, washable play clothes,
- Let your child wear comfortable, rubber-soled, close-toed shoes, or have these types of shoes available as extra shoes for your child's cubby or in their backpack,
- Avoid use of belts, sashes hats and mittens with strings, as they can be hard for children to undo and can pose a choking hazard,
- Check your child's clothing to see if buttons and fasteners are easy for the children to undo themselves,
- Provide weather-appropriate clothing, either according to daily weather, or for semi-permanent storage in children's cubbies (or backpack) for use when dictated by weather. This includes, but is not limited to, coats or sweaters for all seasons, snow/splash pants, winter/sun hats, winter/rubber boots, mittens, socks, scarves, neck warmers, etc…,
- Choose durable snowsuits and outdoor clothing that are washable and waterproof when possible. It is a great idea to bring extra hats, mittens, and socks when possible, as these frequently become wet after outdoor play,
- Please ensure your child always has at least one complete change of clothes in their cubby or backpack at all times, in case of accident. Please label all extra clothing (including all winter/weather dependent clothing) clearly with your child's name. If your child has an accident, or needs extra clothes, educators will inform you,
- If your child has borrowed spare clothes provided by WDCC, please launder the items and return them as soon as possible, as our supply is limited,
- All items found with no name and that cannot be identified by staff will be placed in the Lost and Found,
- **Please make sure your child knows that it is okay to get dirty**. Children sometimes refuse to participate in fun learning activities if they are worried, that they will get dirty.

Daily Schedules and Routines

WDCC provides a daily program which has a balance of quiet activities and rest, outdoor activity, and age appropriate active and engaging activities planned around the children's interests. The programming activities are designed by our educators to enhance the development of each child, including cognitive skills, social and emotional literacy, and fine and gross motor skills. Our educators use the document "How Does Learning Happen" to design programming activities to foster belonging, engagement, expression and well-being in all children, and to ensure the programming meets the needs of all children. Programming documentation addressing "How Does Learning Happen" is posted in each ELCC classroom, and is sent to ELCC parents through Lilio (formerly HiMama), daily and weekly.

WDCC also incorporates a consistent, while flexible, care routine, including indoor and outdoor play opportunities, fine and gross motor activities, lunch/snack times, toileting and diapering, sleep and rest times, and dressing/undressing routines. Detailed schedules for each group can be found in the appropriate classroom.

Outdoor Activities

All children at WDCC play outdoors for at least two hours each day, weather permitting. School age programs normally try to incorporate 30 minutes of outdoor play or more as appropriate. Outdoor play is a vital part of a child's day, and an important part of our program. Therefore, if a child is not well enough to participate in outdoor play, they are considered not well enough to attend care, and the child should be kept home until they are feeling better.

During hot weather, our educators will ensure each child has a water bottle that accompanies them outside, and on any walks or trips we may take. We also ensure plenty of access to shade, and encourage water breaks and rest breaks throughout our outdoor time.

Each day, our educators will assess the weather by visually checking the weather outside, assessing as they enter program, and checking local weather networks for any relevant information including daily temperature, humidex level, UV index, wind chill, cloud cover, and current and anticipated weather conditions (e.g. precipitation, sudden changes). Decisions upon whether children will have outdoor time, and the length of the outdoor time will be assessed on a daily basis by the director. Any changes to outdoor time will be noted on the daily attendance record. Additionally, educators will also monitor the weather as the children are outside. If the weather changes suddenly, the children may be brought inside before the two-hour or 30 minute length.

Should the children be unable to play outdoors due to weather, their play and programming will be supplemented with active, indoor play activities. This can include small push cars, thick mats, individual-use trampolines, and access to the gym in the high school for more gross motor opportunities.

Sun Safety

During the hot spring, summer and fall months, WDCC educators promote sun safety each day. We ask that, before drop off, or upon arrival, parents ensure their children have sunscreen covering any skin that may be exposed to the sun. We also ask that parents provide a hat, shirts with covered shoulders, and any other sun protective clothing, for children.

Sunscreen will be re-applied to your child in the afternoon, before afternoon outdoor time occurs. In school age programs children will be assisted when they express a need for help with sunscreen application. Please indicate on the provided Sunscreen Permission form which sunscreen your child will be using. It is the parent's responsibility to then bring in their choice of sunscreen, clearly labeled with the child's name, and to ensure their child always has sunscreen at the centre. All school age program children must supply their own sunscreen. WDCC staff will do their best to inform you when your child is running out of sunscreen.

Water Play

Additionally, water play is a fun and exciting part of our program's outdoor time. WDCC and school age educators may schedule water play activities, or may do unplanned water play activities. It is a good idea to pack a spare bathing suit for your child, and lots of extra clothes in the summer months, in case children are engaging in water play outside.

If your child wears a bathing suit outside, WDCC educators will ensure or ask that all areas of the skin that are exposed to sun are covered in sunscreen.

Cubbies (WDCC ELCC Program Only)

Upon enrolment, each child in our ELCC program at the Centre will be assigned a cubby to keep their personal belongings at for the duration of their time at WDCC. We recommend using a small backpack to transport and store personal items that are brought to the centre each day. Items that remain at the centre for extended periods of time (such as extra outdoor clothes and shoes) should be clearly labeled with the child's name, and stored neatly in the child's cubby area. As a reminder, it is the parents' responsibility to ensure that their child's cubby is emptied frequently, and to keep their child's cubby clean and organized, ensuring that they have all the items they may need.

Special Excursions and Activities Off the Premises

Throughout the year, WDCC (ELCC Program) may take the children on walks through the community, or on special field trips to local places of interest. For community walks, WDCC educators will provide parents with 24 hour's notice before taking your child away from the property. Please watch for such notices in your Lillio profile or posted on the front door of the centre.

For all programs, for field trips to local places, a notice will be sent home in advance of the excursion, informing you of the destination, time, date, and any other details pertinent to the field trips. This notice will also include a permission slip to be signed and returned prior to the date of the trip. If the trip requires a minimal cost, this will also be included on the slip, and will require payment upon returning the signed form if not pre-paid. Adult volunteers are always needed and welcomed but require a current (within the last 6 months) vulnerable sector screening from the local police department. Upon volunteering, adults will be required to review our policies and procedures and always follow the direction of our educators.

Should your child require transportation to our program (e.g. via school bus), we require written consent from the parents. WDCC does not arrange nor provide transportation to/from our programs. WDCC educators are prohibited from transporting children to or from the program in their personal vehicles.

ELCC Birthdays

Your child's birthday is extremely exciting! In our ELCC program we will help celebrate your child's birthday by singing Happy Birthday with all the children in their class! If you would like to bring in something special to share with your child's ELCC group, we ask that you please first inform us that you will be brining something in, so we can ensure that it is allergen free. We ask that you please bring in something that is store-bought, with an ingredients-list so we can ensure the treats are safe for all friends to enjoy!! We do not advise bringing any food items to our Before and After School program due to a variety of dietary needs and inability for us to provide alternatives for all children in time.

Child Evaluation

Our educators spend large parts of the day or hours with your child and are observing and assessing them throughout. Should our staff have any concerns regarding your child, or their development, we will bring them to your attention as soon as possible. Our staff will also support you and your child throughout the day or their time in our program to ensure that their needs are met, and personal development is supported.

Role of Parents in the Program

Parents and guardians are the most important people in a child's life. Your suggestions, feedback and involvement in the program are vital to our operations. You will look forward to ongoing feedback and communication, as well as a parent survey that is distributed typically once a year, which is used to set goals for the coming year. Parents also serve as members of our Board of Directors. If you are interested in being part of our Board of Directors, please watch for notices requesting applications for new members, which generally are sent out in the spring of each year.

Finally, we encourage parent participation in our program. Frequently, we hold events at the centre or our full day school age programs for parents to join us in. We welcome parents and family members to these events, and if you cannot attend, documentation of your child's participation in the event may be sent to you. We also encourage parents to visit the classroom so children can show them what they have been working on and playing with during their days! Parent engagement in their child's learning and development is an important part in fostering children's growth!

Open Door Policy

At WDCC, it is our goal to maintain an "open door" policy. We feel it is important to have open communication with parents and families. Registered parents are always welcome to drop by during the day to visit with their child, normally without giving notice. Because of school door locking policies we may require advanced notice to have staff available to permit entry at our school age programs. Please feel free to call the ELCC program anytime during the day to check on how your child's day is progressing. Educators and the director are always available for any questions, concerns, or comments you may have. We will respond to your phone messages to our school age programs as quickly as we are able if we do not answer your call directly. We always appreciate your suggestions and feedback. Program Tours are normally only offered once an offer of enrolment is given although we do provide a Virtual Tour of our ELCC program location online.

Moving your Child to the Next Group (ELCC Program)

The decision to move your child up to the next age group in our ELCC program is based on three things:

1. Available space in the older age group.
2. Chronological age.
3. Developmental readiness.

The director, along with all appropriate classroom educators, will make the final decision on moving a child to a different age group. When the child is ready to move up to the next age group, they will have the opportunity to visit the new classroom and interact with the children and educators in the days and weeks prior, to provide a smooth transition.

Updating your Contact Information

It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to ensure that we have the most up-to-date contact information on file. Please keep educators informed of any changes to your contact information, emergency contact information, mailing address, or any other information you feel is relevant to the care of your child. Although you may update your information online, this will not usually update our

educators for a program that is in progress and so we ask that you reach out to your educators and to the program registration manager to highlight and forward changes for our onsite safety records.

WDCC STANDARDS AND ADMINISTRATION

Licensing

WDCC is a high-quality childcare centre and school age program which is licensed yearly by the Ministry of Education. The Child Care and Early Years and its accompanying regulations form the basis for the licensing procedure. WDCC is inspected regularly, as well as annually, and a renewal license is issued, provided all requirements are met. The license is displayed in the centre for parents to review. Please feel free to ask educators or the director for more details about the licensing requirements.

Ratios and Maximum Group Size

General Age Description	Age Description	Primary Staff Member to Child Ratio	Maximum Number of Children in a Group / Room
Infants	Infants less than 18 months	3:10	10
Toddlers	18 months to 30 months	1:5	15
Preschool	30 months to 6 years	1:8	24
Kindergarten	Junior and Senior Kindergarten (44 months to less than 7 years as of Aug 31 of the year)	1:13	26
Before and After School	Out of School Grade 1 and Up	1:15	30

Reduced Ratios

Reduced ratios apply during the first hour and half our programs are open, and the last hour before closure. Ratios can also be reduced during rest time, where the children are not engaged in active play (eg. sleeping, resting, or engaged in quiet, inactive play).

Name of Age Category	Number of Children in Room	Number of Staff Required
Infants	Licensed infant groups must always maintain full staff-child ratios as required by Schedule 1 (3:10)	
Toddler	1-8 9-15	1 2
Preschool	1-12 13-24	1 2
Kindergarten	1-20 21-26	1 2
Primary/Junior School Age	1-23 24-30	1 2

Safe Arrival

To ensure your child's safe morning arrival at our program, we ask that you escort your child into their room / classroom each day via the entrance designated for your program. Please inform our staff directly each time that your child has arrived, as that is when our educators' responsibility for your child begins. It is also a good opportunity to inform your child's educator of any messages regarding your child as appropriate (eg. restless sleep, nothing for breakfast, medication administered, etc…) and any changes to their pick-up or future arrivals. If your child will not be attending the program on any day for any given reason, we ask that you telephone call the centre or your program location no later than 9:00am, or as soon as possible thereafter. We will not relay absence messages received by email as they may not reach the appropriate staff in time.

Additionally, WDCC has a Safe Arrival Policy, that ensures your children has arrived safely at our centre. This policy states that a child who is not present in our care by 9:00am, or at the scheduled start of your program as appropriate, without having informed staff of their absence or late arrival in advance, receives a phone call or other agreed communication method, from an educator, to ensure their child is safe, and to ensure they do not need care for the day, or are expected to arrive late. If we are unable to reach you, we will begin escalating our Safe Arrivals protocol that includes phone calls to work numbers, emergency contacts and finally to authorities such as police services.

We do not facilitate a child's arrival to our program by any school bus or transportation service.

Safe Departure

When you arrive to pick up your child, you may consider allowing them time to finish the activity they are engaged in, which is a reason to arrive earlier than the closing time. This also gives you time to communicate about your child's day and receive important messages from your child's educator. Before leaving, please ensure you let your child's educator know you are leaving with your child, so the educator can sign them out on the daily attendance. Once the child has been signed out, transfer of care has taken place and all responsibility to the child passes to the parent. Please pick your child up before closing time. You must call your program location if you foresee a late pick up. Review our late pick-up policy for more information.

Children will only be allowed to leave WDCC with a parent, or a person authorized on the registration form and our safety contact sheet, unless they are older than 9 years and have prior written permission to leave without supervision. If someone other than a parent is picking up your child, educators must be notified in advance. Additionally, the designated pick-up person is required to present educators with a piece of photo identification until all staff are familiar with them. Children will not be released until these conditions are met. If a person comes to pick up a child and staff have not been notified, a phone call to parents/guardians to confirm the individual is authorized to pick up the child will be made, and the child will not be released until verbal confirmation from the parent is received. The individual is still required to present a piece of photo identification.

If a parent or authorized pick-up person arrives to take a child home, and staff feel as though the individual is impaired in any way (i.e. drugs, alcohol, etc), the following procedure will be followed:

1. If a staff member believes the individual is impaired, they will look for other signs of substance abuse, including but not limited to:
    - Smell of alcohol on breath,
    - Pupils too large or too small,
    - Glossy or red eyes,
    - Slurred speech,
    - Unsteady when standing.
2. If any of these signs or symptoms are present, the staff member will:
    - Inform the individual they cannot remove the child from the premises based on the policy for impaired pick up.
    - Try and persuade the individual to call another parent, guardian, or emergency contact person to pick them up. Staff may also make this call.
    - If unsuccessful, ask the individual to call a cab.
    - The child will always remain at the centre until alternate arrangements can be made.
3. If the individual is uncooperative, attempts to leave the centre, or decides to walk or drive home with the child, the staff member will:
    - Tell the individual they will be contacting the police.
    - Immediately call 911. Tell the dispatch the details about the situation, and that they require immediate assistance.
    - Ask for assistance from other staff, adults or parents arriving at the centre.

Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a Child

Everyone, including members of the public, and professionals who work closely with children, are required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. If a parent or guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused, the parent will be advised to contact the Hamilton Children's Aid Society directly. Staff members or other individuals who become aware of such concerns, or who have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is or may need protection, are also responsible for reporting this information to Children's Aid Society, as per the "Duty to Report" requirement under the *Child and Family Services Act.*

Abuse has been defined in Section 47(1) of the Child Welfare Act as:

1. Physical harm.
2. Emotional abuse or neglect.
3. Malnutrition or mental ill health of a degree that, if not immediately remedied, could seriously impair growth and development, or result in permanent injury or death.
4. Sexual molestation.

Any staff member who suspects that a child is being abused or neglected has a legal responsibility to report the suspicion or incident to the Children's Aid Society.

Serious Occurrences

WDCC values the safety and well-being of all children in our programs, and it is our highest priority to ensure our centre is a safe environment for all children, families, and staff. WDCC complies with all Ministry of Education legislation regarding reporting serious occurrences. The Ontario Government requires that information regarding serious occurrences that happen at childcare centres is

posted clearly. To support increased transparency and access to information, a Serious Occurrence Notification Form must be posted at the childcare centre, in a visible location, for ten days. A serious occurrence **could** include the following: serious injury to a child, a fire, or complaints about service standards.

Confidentiality

WDCC uses the following policy to ensure confidentiality is maintained for all members of our program:

- Staff or Board Members: individuals may not publish addressed or telephone numbers of any staff or Board member without prior consent,
- Families: all family dealings with WDCC shall be of a confidential nature. No information shall be given to persons or agencies without prior written consent,
- Children: all records regarding children, including parent-teacher conversations will be kept strictly confidential. Only first names of children will be used when posted in the classroom for any reason. The children shall not be discussed over the phone, or in a casual manner with anyone except the parents or the persons representing an agency that has prior written consent from parents.
- No photographs or videos will be taken of any children without signed parental consent.

Release of Information

As a licensed childcare centre, WDCC shall not require, as a condition of providing care for a child at a childcare centre, a prior consent from a parent of the child to the release of information with respect to the child. This provision provides that no child is refused service because a parent has refused prior consent to release information as a condition of enrolment.

The policy is to align with the following protection of privacy principles:

1. Information collected should be the minimum needed to serve the purpose or the service provided.
2. The right of every child and family to privacy should be recognized and protected to the greatest extent possible.
3. Parents are to have access to their child's records and should be informed of who may have access to their child's records on an internal basis.
4. The appropriate informed written consent of a parent should be a requirement prior to the release of personally identifiable information to third parties. This includes the release of any information through social media (e.g. posting photos to Facebook).

The written consent of a parent must be obtained before a child's personally identifiable information is released to an outside researcher and/or a child participates in any research project conducted at the childcare centre. Parents must also sign a written consent to share personal information regarding child's behaviour or well-being between school related officials (eg. teachers, principals), and the WDCC staff. This is done to better respect privacy and improve communication between school staff and WDCC staff in regard to the child's best interests.

Access to a child's records without parental consent may only be given to officials of the following agencies:

- Coroner's Office,
- Courts, in response to a warrant or court order,
- Ombudsman,
- Authorities vested in provincial or federal statutes,
- The Minister of Education and officials whom they have delegated the authority (e.g. program advisors).

HEALTH, SAFETY AND NUTRITION

Nutrition

At WDCC, ELCC children are provided with two snacks each day, as well as a mid-day meal. Children receive a continental-style breakfast snack in the morning, which includes fruit options, grain options, dairy options, as well as cereal with milk, cold cut meat products, and alternative options for children with food restrictions. The Kitchen Manager at WDCC designs a four-week rotational menu of mid-day lunches and afternoon snacks. These meals are created according to the Child Care and Early Years Act, and Canada Food Guide Regulations, and are reviewed for approval by the director. The menus are posted in the main hallway for parents to read. All allergies, and special dietary needs will be considered, and these should also be discussed upon enrolment. Changes or substitutions to the menus will be posted on the menu as soon as they are detected. These changes will also be reported on the child's daily report on HiMama, along with a summary of how their child ate that day.

For our Before and After School care program we provide a healthy pre-packaged non-allergenic snack.

We do not provide any food or drink (other than access to water) at our Full Day Kindergarten / School Age programs, parents/guardians are responsible to pack a healthy nut-free lunch and sufficient snacks. Each lunch/snack container and water bottle must be labelled with the child's full (first and last) name to help ensure that food is not mixed up or shared due to potential allergies.

Anaphylaxis, Allergies, Medical Conditions

Upon enrolment, families must inform us of any known allergies their child has, and whether they are anaphylactic allergies, and any existing medical conditions their child may have that requires them to have support.

All allergies, including anaphylaxis, will be posted in the kitchen or food prep area, and in each classroom plans will also be in the attendance binders. This is to help ensure that all educators in the classroom are aware of children's allergies, and to support an allergy-aware environment. WDCC and all other affiliated programs aim to be a peanut and tree nut free centre.

If you child has an anaphylactic allergy, you must fill out an Anaphylactic Allergy Emergency form upon enrolment and in advance of attendance and provide the centre with an EpiPen for your child, complete with a label including your child's name, the dosage, and the expiry date. This form will be developed in consultation with the child's parent, and any primary care physician that may be required. The EpiPen will be kept with the child's educator, in a spot with easy access to staff but inaccessible to children. These forms will be updated annually, and whenever changes occur, and will be

reviewed by all staff upon your child starting care, upon a new staff member starting, and whenever changes are made.

If your child has a medical condition (e.g.,seizures, diabetes, etc.), you must fill out a Medical Needs Plan form upon enrolment at the centre, or upon discovery and prior to attendance thereafter. The plan will be developed for each child, in collaboration with the child's parent, any required health professionals the parents feel are required, and will include support plans for different aspects of the day, or when the child requires support for their condition, and emergency procedures. These forms will be updated annually, and whenever changes occur, and will be reviewed by all staff upon your child starting care, upon a new staff member starting, and whenever changes are made.

Dietary Restrictions and Food from Home

If your child has any dietary restrictions due to cultural or medical reasons, or due to parent preference, please inform the director or registration staff upon enrolment. You may also be asked to fill out a brief dietary restriction form, which you can modify when changes to your child's diet are required. Every effort will be made to accommodate your child's needs and generally we can accommodate dietary restrictions, however, dependent upon the nature of your child's restrictions, you may be asked to provide supplemental snacks or drinks for your child. If this is required, an agreement will be made prior to having to provide your child with food from home, so you are aware.

Regarding bringing in food from home, we ask that unless arrangements have been made for you to provide your child with food from home (such as at our full day camps), you do not send your child to the centre with snacks. Please discuss bringing in food from home with your child's educator or program supervisor before you do so. To provide all children with a safe environment, we ask that you do not send food from home, except where indicated for full day kindergarten and school age programs, as other children may have allergies you are unaware of. If you are directed to bring food and/or drinks for your child to our programs, their containers and drink containers must all be labelled with the child's full (first and last) name per Ministry requirements.

Medication Administration Policy

WDCC utilizes the following policy for administering prescription (or non-prescription medication with accompanying doctor's note stating dosage) to children while in care:

1. Parent must fill out a Medication Authorization Form upon enrolment and prior to attendance, which provides the centre with written authorization for the administration of medication to their child.
2. Authorization must be provided by the parent, and must include the following information:
    - Date
    - Name of Drug
    - Schedule of Times to Administer Medication, and when to end medication administration
    - Dosage
    - Any special instructions
    - Instructions regarding storage (e.g. refrigeration)
3. Medications are only administered when they are supplied in their original containers, bearing the following information:

- Child's name, clearly labeled
- Name of drug or medication
- Dosage
- Instructions for storage
- Instructions for administration
- Date of purchase (in the case of prescription medication)

4. All medication must be stored in locked containers, inaccessible to the children, including refrigeration.
5. The supervisor will administer the medication. In the absence of the supervisor, an educator in each classroom will be designated and pre-trained to administer medication and all staff are made aware of all medication requirements for children in their care.
6. The educator accepting the medication must ensure that the authorization form is completed and signed. The educator must read the label of the medical prior to storage in the locked area, and ensure the medication information matches the authorization form.
7. The supervisor or designate will read the label when the medication is taken out for administration. They will read it again and compare it to the authorization form immediately before administering the medication.
8. Each time the medication is administered, it will be recorded on the authorization form. This includes the time the medication was given, the amount that was given, as well as the name of the staff who gave the medication and any notes.
9. The authorization form will be filed in the child's file after the medication is finished.
10. Parents will be notified immediately of any error in medication.
11. WDCC is no longer requires a medication administration form for sunscreen, lip balm, skin lotion, insect repellant, hand sanitizer, and diaper cream. They can be applied as long as they are non-prescription, and they are not for acute symptomatic treatment. We will continue to use the forms as outlined in the policies and procedures, but if there is no form available, parents may provide a written and signed statement stating that we may apply the specified treatment. All medications must be stored properly, administered properly as indicated on the bottle and with parents' authorization, and clearly labelled. The medication must be applied only to the child it is specified for. In order to administer these products, they must follow all the required guidelines that drugs, and medication require for administration, as listed above.

Lice and Nit Policy

In childcare settings, an outbreak of lice is always a possibility. Staff members at WDCC reserve the right to check all children during the program for head lice if a case of head lice is suspected. If lice are found on your child, a call will be made to inform you, and you will be asked to pick your child up. If a case of lice is confirmed, a notice will be sent home to parents or guardians informing them of the cases, but confidentiality will be maintained. Children must be 24 hours lice and nit free before they are able to return to our program. When lice are found, our staff will do our best to limit the spread of lice by putting a hat on the child's head. We ask that parents and families also do their due diligence to limit the spread of lice, by treating a suspected or confirmed case of head lice.

Immunizations

WDCC is required to maintain up-to-date immunizations records for all children attending our program. We require parents or guardians to provide proof of up-to-date immunizations upon enrolment. If your child has a change or update in their immunizations, please provide them as soon as possible. For parents or guardians who choose to not have their child immunized, the Ministry of Education provides the following exemption forms that must be submitted to the program upon enrolment:

- For medical exemptions, a legally qualified medical professional is required to fill out the "Statement of Medical Exemption Form" and parents are to submit it upon enrolments,
- For religious or philosophical exemptions, parents are required to have a notary fill out the "Statement of Conscience or Religious Belief's Form" and provide proof of completing the City of Toronto's mandatory education program.

Routine Illnesses and Communicable Diseases

The goal of our centre is to keep all children healthy. Our educators put forth their best efforts to ensure the centre is kept clean, and all illnesses are recorded. However, illnesses can still occur in the childcare centre, or at home. If an outbreak occurs at the centre, WDCC will work with Hamilton Public Health for appropriate management and reporting. The centre will also follow any appropriate policies and take all necessary precautions, including protocols around exclusion, reporting illness, enhanced handwashing procedures, and enhanced cleaning and disinfecting measures.

At WDCC, a daily health check is performed for each child upon arrival. The health check is recorded on the daily attendance sheet and is aimed at monitoring symptoms of illness in children. WDCC follows Hamilton Public Health, and the Ministry of Education's guidelines on illness and exclusion policy. A child who has experienced any of the following symptoms in the **preceding 24 hours** will not be admitted into the program. If a child experiences any of the following symptoms while in attendance at the childcare centre, WDCC educators will contact parents, or authorized pick-up designates, to take the child home. The child cannot return until they are symptom free for at least 48 hours, and longer in some cases.

- Diarrhea (two or more instances, or a change from normal),
- Fever, with a combination of other symptoms,
- Vomiting,
- Eye discharge (yellow, green fluid),
- Severe cough,
- Sore throat,
- Yellowish skin or eyes,
- Weeping lesions,
- Unusual rashes,
- Irritability, continuous crying,
- Requires more attendance than can be provided,
- Unable to participate in regular, daily activities.

Before arriving at our program, if you or your child has illness symptoms or has tested positive for COVID-19, you should use the Ontario government COVID-19 Self Assessment [https://www.ontario.ca/self-assessment/]to determine general guidelines.

In all cases the decisions of our staff or Executive Director to exceed these guidelines in individual cases will take precedence.

Children who become ill while at the centre will be separated from the other children with a staff member, while waiting to be picked up from the centre. This is done to help limit the spread of illness to other children and staff. Frequent hand washing, toy disinfecting and other precautions will be done regularly to prevent illness.

If your child has been excluded from the childcare centre for any of the following illnesses, their return day will be as follows:

- Chicken Pox – until seen by a doctor to determine (children are contagious before spots),
- Diarrhea – until symptom free for 48 hours,
- Vomiting – until symptom free for 48 hours,
- Head lice – until completely lice and nit free,
- Impetigo – until symptom free for 24 hours,
- Measles – until 4 days after rash appeared,
- Pink Eye – until 1 full day of antibiotic treatment (if bacterial) or until doctor approves (if viral),
- Pinworms / Ringworm – until 24 hours after treatment and showering,
- Pneumonia – until seen by a physician and well enough to participate in regular activities,
- Rubella – until 7 days after onset of rash,
- Strep Throat – until 24 hours after antibiotics have been given
- Any other illness/virus – exclusion period will be individually determined by the Executive Director, who will make the decision based on information available from Hamilton Public Health, the World Health Organization, and support and guidance from the Board of Directors.

Reporting Absences or Late Arrivals

If your child is going to be absent from the program, or will arrive after 9:00am, we ask that you call the Centre or your school program as soon as you know they will be absent/late, and no later than 9:00am for morning arrivals. At 9:00am, our educators make safe arrival phone calls to ensure any children who are absent from the program are safe. For afternoon Before and After School arrivals, we do also request a call to your program with message left. If a child is unexpectedly absent, we initiate a check with the school administration first to determine if the child's whereabouts are known, then attempt to call the parent/guardian to confirm before initiating further safety procedures. If your child is going to be absent because they are ill, please let our educators know the nature of your child's illness, including symptoms.

Major Illness or Accident

If your child should become seriously ill or injured while in attendance at WDCC, the staff will initiate appropriate first aid, contact 911 emergency, and then contact parents, or emergency contacts if parents are unreachable, to inform them of the situation. Whenever possible, a joint decision will be made regarding the medical treatment of the child. If the child is in immediate, emergent danger, our

staff will contact the appropriate emergency responders by calling 911 first. If parents and emergency contacts are unreachable, staff will seek appropriate medical advice and follow through as directed. This may include the child being transported via ambulance to the nearest hospital emergency room (ambulance fees may not be covered by parent's health plan, and parents may be billed).

Should a child be sent to the hospital via an ambulance, an educator will accompany the child in the ambulance. The remaining educators at the centre will continue to attempt to reach the child's parents or emergency contacts if they were unreachable. Parents will be directed to the hospital and should report there as soon as possible.

Note: parents are required to keep their contact information, and their emergency contact information, up to date always. Please inform staff immediately and email register@campwaterdown.com or use the appropriate Change Request Forms for any changes to contact or health information.

Minor Accident

Should your child have a minor accident or injury while in our program, such as a cut, a scrape, a bump or a bruise, our educators will treat your child with appropriate first aid, and lots of care. Additionally, the educator who initially helped your child will complete an Accident Report form. This form includes details about your child's injury. A parent signature will be required on the form. If you would like a copy of the accident report for your own needs, a photocopy can be provided for you. All original copies of accident reports are kept in your child's file.

Sleep and Rest Policy

WDCC has created their sleep and rest policy in accordance with Ontario Regulation 137/15 33.1. To provide a safe sleep environment for toddler and preschool children, and keep open communication with parents and families regarding children's sleep habits, the following procedure will be followed:

Procedure

1. Every licensee shall ensure that any child who is younger than 12 months of age, who receives child care in a childcare centre which they operate, is placed for sleep in a manner that is consistent with recommendations set out in the document entitled "Joint Statement on Safe Sleep: Preventing Sudden Infant Deaths in Canada", published by the Public Health Agency of Canada, as amended from time to time, unless the child's physician recommends otherwise in writing.
2. If childcare is provided for a child who regularly sleeps at a childcare centre which a licensee operates, the licensee shall ensure that:
    a. An employee regularly performs direct visual checks of each sleeping child, by being physically present beside the child, while the child is sleeping, and looks for indicators of distress or unusual behaviours.
    b. There is sufficient light in the sleeping area or room to conduct direct visual checks.
    c. There are written policies and procedures at the childcare with respect to sleep, and the policies and procedures follow Ontario Regulation 137/15.

3. Every licensee shall ensure that the childcare centre that has a separate area or room for sleeping, and there is a system in place to immediately identify which children are present in the area or room.

WDCC's internal policy on sleep and rest is created in accordance with the Ministry of Education and Ontario Regulation 137/5, and is as follows:

1. Staff are to use their best discretion if they observe a child who is distressed or is engaging in unusual behaviours. The following measures may be used:
    i. Repositioning the child.
    ii. Propping the bed up to help with breathing.
    iii. Removing or loosening excess clothing.
    iv. Seeking director for further guidance or direction.
2. Each room is equipped with under-shelf lighting, light from each bathroom enters the room, the ability to turn on and off different light switches to adjust the lighting in each room, and natural light that enters via the closed blinds.
3. In accordance with Ontario Regulation 137/15, each child is assigned their own cot, which is labeled with the child's name on all sides.
4. Parents or guardians will be consulted respecting their child's sleep arrangements at the time or their enrolment, and at any other appropriate times, such as when a child transitions between groups, or upon the request of parents or guardians.
5. The center will ensure that parents or guardians of children who are younger than 12 months of age are advised of the licensee's obligation to these children, under subsection 1 of Ontario Regulation 137/15 (Section 1 of this policy).
6. The centre will ensure that, upon enrolment, parents or guardians are advised of the centre's policy on sleep and rest time and will ensure the policy is included in the centre's parent handbook.
7. When staff observe any significant changes in a child's sleeping patterns or behaviours during sleep, these changes will be communicated to parents or guardians. These changes can be communicated through WDCC's communication app, HiMama, as well as verbally at pick-up, or over the phone when necessary. These changes will result in adjustments to the manner in which the child is supervised during sleep.
8. Visual sleep checks will be performed at least three times during the sleep cycle. Sleep checks will be documented for parents to check on WDCC's communication app, HiMama.
9. Each classroom will have a sleep schedule, which will inform staff of which children need to sleep, and how long children are permitted to sleep for (with signed, authorized documentation from parent or physician, which is kept in the child's file). Each classroom will also have a sleep map, which will indicate where beds are placed each day, and which child is on which bed, to immediately identify which children are present in the room and where they are located.

WDCC does not use any electronic monitoring devices for sleep time. Sleep and rest time may not exceed two hours in length each day, unless otherwise specified in writing by families.

Toileting and Diapering

WDCC has policies and procedures in place to ensure safe and clean measures are taken when toileting and diapering children. For details on these policies, please ask the director, or your child's

educator for further information. An assessment of needs, resources and supports is conducted for kindergarten and school age children that require toileting assistance and diapering during the pre-registration process.

All diapers, wipes, creams and powders are to be supplied by parents. Educators will inform parents when their children's supply is running low, and it will be the responsibility of the parent to ensure they have everything they require.

WDCC educators can also support you and your child through toilet training. Toilet training can be very exciting, but also very frustrating. Our educators will work with you to help your child achieve success when they are ready to begin toilet training. Toilet training is easier for our staff, and your child when:

- Lots of extra clothing is provided every day. This includes shirts, pants, socks, underwear and shoes,
- Children's clothing is easy for them to remove and put on independently,
- Lots of positive praise and rewards are given for trying and succeeding on the toilet.

WDCC staff discourage the use of Pull-Ups during toilet training and encourage the use of underwear as much as possible. We feel as though Pull-Ups are just as absorbent as diapers, and therefore do not allow children to experience the sensation of being wet. Underwear allows children to feel when they are wet and makes the transition from diapers to underwear more immediate.

CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOURAL GUIDANCE

WDCC follows behaviour guidelines, which are in accordance with the Child Care and Early Years Act. Full statements of these policies are available for parents to review at any time. All staff and volunteers at the centre will use positive child guidance techniques. All WDCC team members will use soft, supportive voices, model acceptable behaviour, and regular intervention in the form of praise, hugs, encouragement, and reminders. Limits of activities will be clearly outlined to the children, and repeated as necessary, along with positive re-direction. WDCC has established practices to protect children's safety. These will be reviewed with each staff member upon hiring and at each subsequent performance review.

The director shall perform random checks, no less than twice a year, to monitor the behaviour guidance practices of employees, volunteers and students who provide care at WDCC. These checks will also be performed on an ongoing basis, and the results of these checks will be incorporated into the annual performance reviews of all employees, volunteers, and students.

As stated under the "Right of Exclusion" section in the Parent Handbook, a child experiencing a pattern of ongoing difficulties in the centre, the procedure for parent meeting and referrals will be followed. Additionally, WDCC has created an Anti-Bullying and Inappropriate Behaviour Policy, which can be reviewed by parents upon request, or when deemed necessary by the director. The policy stipulates ways in which educators will address inappropriate behaviour, and ways in which educators can support children through these behaviours. It also outlines progressive steps that will be taken to address patterns of behaviours which are ongoing.

Full Day Camps Policy

At Camp Waterdown's full day camps for kindergarten and school age children, our priority is to provide a safe, welcoming, and fun environment where every child can thrive. We are committed to helping each camper succeed and to building a strong partnership with families and community supports.

Occasionally, we encounter behaviours that significantly disrupt the program or compromise the safety and well-being of others. In those rare situations, we will:

- **Contact parents/guardians** to discuss the incident and request that the child be picked up.
- **Require the child to remain home the following day**, giving everyone time to reflect and plan next steps.

Please know that an exclusion is always a last resort. Before reaching that point, our team works closely with families and, when helpful, our community partners to provide strategies and supports so children can be successful in the program.

However, if negative behaviours do not improve despite these efforts, it may indicate that our camp is not the best fit for your child/ren. In such cases, we will support families in exploring other camp opportunities that may better meet their child's needs and provide a setting where they can thrive.

WDCC's Policy for Behaviour Guidance:

Waterdown District Children's Centre will not permit, with respect to a child receiving childcare at a WDCC or Camp Waterdown program:

- Corporal punishment,
- Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a highchair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent,
- Locking the exits of the childcare centre or home childcare premises for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures,
- Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame, or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth,
- Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing, or bedding,
- Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will,
- Releasing the child to a person who is or appears impaired or caring for a child under the influence of substances.

Staff are expected to adhere with the philosophy of the centre and ensure they are fully coherent when caring for children. Staff represent the organization and are expected to provide a positive representation within the community (both on and off site). Disciplinary actions will be taken with staff who do not comply with the policies of the centre. Other prohibited practices are:

- Placing a child in a room on their own,
- Using food or drinks as a punishment or threat at lunch or snack,
- Denying children access to liquids,
- Reprimanding a child for failing to use the toilet or failing to fall asleep at rest time.

Any adult who observes the mistreatment of any child must contact the director immediately. This is a legal responsibility. The director will observe staff behaviour guidance practices on a quarterly basis. A written record of the observations will be kept on file.

EMERGENCY POLICIES

Emergency Situations Safety Policies

In the event of an emergency, including lockdowns, hold and secures, security threats, and evacuations, WDCC has written policies that guide our actions. These policies include procedures for safe evacuations, including evacuation locations, protocols for informing emergency personnel and following direction, closing, and locking doors and windows, not permitting anyone to enter or exit the building and other emergency-specific protocols aimed at keeping all children safe. For a full breakdown of all our emergency situations policies and procedures, please inquire with your child's educator, or the director.

Fire Safety/ Evacuation Procedures

At WDCC, fire drills shall be conducted at least once per month. Records shall be maintained for a minimum of 12 months. The fire drill/fire safety and evacuation policy and procedure are as follows:

Upon hearing the fire alarm signal staff and children are to:

1. Immediately stop all activities and gather at the classroom/gym door.
2. Exit out of the building through the Designated Exit A to the assembly point furthest in the grounds (Minimum 50 feet from the building).
3. If designated Exit A is not available, they will exit through the alternate Exit B to the adjacent school yard.
4. Staff and children remain at the assembly point until directed by Fire Emergency personnel that it is safe to re-enter the building.

Staff Responsibilities:

- Adhere to the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board Approved Fire Safety Plan,
- Know the nearest Exit and alternate Exit from the site,
- Participate in training regarding the fire evacuation procedure,
- Participate in the monthly fire drills facilitated by the childcare Supervisor,
- Remain calm and direct children to the nearest Exit or alternate Exit as required,
- Ensure the children have vacated the building. Check the washrooms for children attending the centre,
- Retrieve the attendance binder(s) and emergency contact files,
- Close the windows, and doors,
- Take attendance of all staff and children present at the assembly point,
- Ensure that 911 has been called and informed of the situation,
- Immediately advise the responding Fire Emergency personnel if occupants are missing,
- Record the date, time of day, time to complete the evacuation, and comments about the drill into the Fire Evacuation Log

Emergency Shelters

- WDCC Centre Daycare Shelter: Guy Brown Elementary School,
- Allan A. Greenleaf (WDHS) Shelter: Guy Brown Elementary School,
- Guy Brown Shelter: Daycare Centre (215 Parkside Dr),
- Mary Hopkins Shelter: Daycare Centre (215 Parkside Dr).

Closures

Snow Closures

WDCC will be closed for inclement weather conditions if the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board closes. In these cases, the outgoing telephone message at WDCC will be changed to correspond with the closure. Parents are responsible for listening to the appropriate radio stations or news outlets for an announcement from HWDSB, or can call the centre for information. We attempt, where possible, to send parents closure announcements by email, HiMamma (where applicable), and post on our Web Site.

Emergency Closures

In the event that the centre is unable to safely accommodate children upon opening (i.e. flood, fire, vandalism, etc.,), the following procedure will occur:

- If the closure is for three days or less, parents will be required to pay their fees,
- If the closure will be for an extended period of time, parents will not be required to pay,
- All attempts will be made to relocate the childcare site.

Early Closures

Under extreme circumstances (i.e. severe snow storm, loss of heat or hydro, etc.,), the director may decide to close the centre early. If this occurs, parents will be contacted by phone, and arrangements must be made for pick up. There will be no reduction in fee.

In the case of an emergency evacuation, children will be evacuated to the emergency evacuation location and parents will be contacted immediately upon safe arrival at the location. Upon safe arrival at the location, parents will be contacted by telephone and arrangements will be made for pick up.

GENERAL POLICIES

Anaphylactic Allergy and Emergency Medical Plan

The following is WDCC's policy for Anaphylactic Allergy and Emergency Medical Plan:

If a child is enrolled with an existing medical condition including anaphylactic reactions or develops one after enrollment, an emergency medical plan shall be put into place. The elements of this plan shall be the following:

- Staff, students, and volunteers will be trained by the parents on procedures to be followed in the event of the child having an anaphylactic reaction, or medical emergency, including how to recognize the signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis/medical conditions and medication administration. The components of training are emergency procedures that include the requisite information, signs, symptoms and response to an anaphylactic/emergency reaction and demonstration of how to administer an epinephrine auto-injector, also known by their trademark as EpiPen and Twinject,
- At minimum, the child's parent or physician should be given the opportunity to demonstrate the use of the auto-injector, if necessary, to the staff working with their child's group,
- Staff, as part of their first aid renewal, shall be trained on the administration of an epinephrine auto-injector,
- Staff, students, and volunteers will sign off that they have reviewed the Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan for a specific child and have received training as indicated in the administration of the Epinephrine auto-injector upon initiation of the plan and annually thereafter,
- An emergency medical plan will be developed, signed by the parent and family physician and posted in the centre for all staff to use in the case of an emergency. This indicates that the parent has agreed to the method of training received to the staff,
- The centre will come up with strategies to reduce the risk of exposure to anaphylactic causative agents for the child affected,
- A communication plan for the dissemination of information on life-threatening allergies, including anaphylactic allergies will be provided to all staff, students, volunteers and when applicable, parents,
- We will develop an individualized plan for each child with medical needs. The individualized plan shall be developed in consultation with a parent of the child and with any regulated health professional who is involved in the child's health care and who, in the parent's opinion, should be included in the consultation,
- The plan shall include, (a) steps to be followed to reduce the risk of the child being exposed to any causative agents or situations that may exacerbate a medical condition or cause an allergic reaction or other medical emergencies; (b) a description of any medical devices used by the child and any instructions related to its use; (c) a description of the procedures to be followed in the event of an allergic reaction or other medical emergency; (d) a description of the supports that will be made available to the child in the childcare centre (e) any additional procedures to be followed when a child with a medical condition is part of an evacuation or participating in an off-site field trip.
- In order to facilitate our preparedness for creating, training and following such plans, the parent / guardian must provide the necessary documentation and medical plan forms upon enrolment or upon request without delay, and prior to attendance.

Playground Safety

The following is WDCC's policy for playground safety:

The Waterdown District Children's Centre will establish practices to protect children's safety in the outdoor playground. Use of school playgrounds, their maintenance and safety is assumed by the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board for our use.

Procedure

The staffing schedule ensures that adequate staff to child ratios allow staff to adequately supervise children in the playground. All educators are to sign off on this policy. All new equipment and renovations, repairs or replacements will be installed at the Centre to meet the CSA Standards. The following procedures must be followed:

1. A playground safety log is maintained.
2. A playground injury report form is completed for any injury to a child while on the playground.
3. Daily and monthly playground inspections are completed. The supervisor completes annual inspections.
4. Action plans will be noted in the written inspection reports.
5. The supervisor (or designate) is responsible for the logging of the daily, monthly, and seasonal inspections and reports, injury log, and annual inspection as seen below.
6. Staff members will review this policy before employment begins and annually thereafter. The written record of the review will be signed by the program staff and the supervisor and maintained on file for at least three years.
7. When a childcare centre is in a school and serves children 4 years and older, the centre will be considered as part of the school, and outdoor play space standards and requirements that apply to the school will also apply to the childcare centre
8. A comprehensive maintenance program has been developed and adopted at the Waterdown District Children's Centre.

All daily inspections of the Centre playground will be performed with the checklist listed below. Any comments and findings will be noted on the playground inspection calendar along with the inspector's signature. These items will be looked for everyday:

- Playground inspected for debris, glass, etc.,
- Playground inspected for any signs of vandalism,
- Strings and ropes of any kind and removing them,
- Asphalt and pathways are clear of any snow or ice,
- Check for any drainage problems,
- Check fencing (perimeter and separating),
- Check for any problem insect inhabitation.

Sanitary Practices

The following is WDCC's policy for sanitary practices:

Daily routines will include regular hand washing and sanitary clean-up and implementation of universal precaution guidelines with respect to bodily fluids. Sanitary procedures and universal precaution guidelines will be posted in food preparation and bathroom areas. Weekly and monthly

schedules and practices for regular equipment and toy cleaning should be posted and a written, signed, and dated record of implementation should be kept. Any policies and procedures posted in the centre will reflect directions provided by the local public health unit. WDCC has a designated space for medical supplies, cleaning supplies, equipment, and other hazardous substances. This designated space will be clearly labelled, out of reach of children, and secure.

Procedure

These are minimum recommendations and apply to normal operating conditions. During an outbreak of a communicable disease, extra cleaning and disinfecting will be necessary.

1. Toys
    - Small toys that go into mouth are cleaned daily with disinfectant and left to air dry,
    - Hard plastic toys can go into the dishwasher and cloth toys into the washing machine,
    - Large toys will be cleaned weekly with disinfectant and left to air dry,
    - Dress up clothes laundered weekly, dry on hottest setting,
    - Hats/headwear for dramatic play will be cleaned after each play session (wipe or launder).

2. Sleep Related Items
    - Bedding and linens laundered weekly. Change linens daily if crib or bed used by multiple children,
    - Crib or cot mattresses disinfected weekly and left to air dry.

3. Play Areas and Surfaces
    - Dining tabletops wiped down and disinfected before and after meal times, and after child activities,
    - Floors (tiles, vinyl) cleaned daily in infant and toddler room, and eating areas. Floors cleaned weekly with soap and water in other rooms, twice a week,
    - Floors (carpets) steam cleaned twice a year, and small rugs vacuumed or laundered twice a week.

4. Toileting Items
    - Toilet bowels cleaned with toilet bowl cleaner weekly,
    - Toilet seats and rims cleaned daily with disinfectant and left to air dry,
    - Toilet-flushing handle, doorknobs, counters, and faucets disinfected daily and left to air dry,
    - Potty chair disinfected and left to air dry after each use,
    - Diaper change surface disinfected and wiped dry after each use.

5. Sensory Play Water Play Tables
    - Children must wash their hands before and after using a water play table,
    - Children with an infection of any kind, or who have open sores or wounds, cannot participate in water play,
    - Discontinue water play table use during an outbreak of illness,
    - Discard water after every use or every couple of hours whichever is shorter,
    - Tables and toys must be washed, rinsed, and disinfected after each play session,
    - Only non-absorbent toys should be used for water play,

- Ensure water play tables are protected or covered if rooms are shared with other groups,
- Drain, clean, and disinfect tables at the end of the day.

6. Sandboxes Indoor:
    - Use sand that is pre-packaged, sealed, and labelled "play sand",
    - All pets and food must be kept away from the sandbox,
    - Wet play sand should be allowed to air dry overnight,
    - Sandbox toys should be constructed of a material that is easy to clean, rustproof and non-breakable,
    - Clean and disinfect the sandbox toys after each use,
    - Sand is to be replaced monthly, or as often as required.

7. Outdoor:
    - Sandbox must be covered when not in use to prevent access by animals,
    - Rake sandbox daily,
    - Sand is to be replaced seasonally, or as often as required,
    - Rice, pasta, confetti, and other sensory items must be discarded after 4-5 uses,
    - Cereal is not an acceptable sensory play item,
    - Clean and disinfect the basin when the sensory material is changed.

Sleep Supervision

Please see the previous "Sleep and Rest Time Policy" for further details.

Police Record Checks/Vulnerable Sector Checks

The following is WDCC's policy on police and vulnerable sector checks:

All new staff, volunteers, and students (under 19 are not applicable), will obtain a Criminal Reference Check/Vulnerable Sector Screening. All existing staff of Waterdown District Children's Centre will be required to receive ongoing Vulnerable Sector Screening every 5 years and will sign an annual declaration for offences under the *Criminal Code* of Canada, if any, during the period specified in the declaration.

<u>Procedure</u>

1. The employee will initiate the process of obtaining a vulnerable sector/criminal reference check with their local police department.
2. **Positive Reference Checks** - A positive reference check on a perspective employee, student, or volunteer does not necessarily preclude employment. In the case of a positive check, the Board of Directors will evaluate the nature of the circumstance surrounding the charges and convictions and will make an informed decision before offering or denying a position at the centre.
3. **Costs of Criminal Check** - The costs of obtaining a criminal reference check is determined by the local police. Where there is a cost for obtaining a criminal check, the successful applicant or volunteer is responsible for the cost.

The vulnerable sector screening will be held by WDCC in a secure and safe way, protecting the privacy of all staff. On an annual basis after staff will sign off on a Declaration of Conduct indicating any findings or proceedings in the past year if applicable.

Staff, students (over 18), and volunteers will obtain a criminal reference check, including a vulnerable sector check, shall be satisfied only if the criminal reference check is:

- conducted by a police force,
- prepared no earlier than six months before the day it is obtained by the licensee.

4. The centre has a duty to obtain an initial reference check, and the centre shall obtain a vulnerable sector check from every employee, before the person begins their employment and from every volunteer or student who is on an educational placement with the licensee, before the person begins interacting with children at the childcare centre.
5. The centre may accept a copy of a vulnerable sector check instead of the original document, except:
    - if more than six months but less than five years have passed since the day the vulnerable sector check was performed, the volunteer or student must also provide an offence declaration that addresses the period since that day; and
    - the centre may not accept a copy of a vulnerable sector check if five or more years have passed since the day it was performed and, in this case, the volunteer or student must provide a new vulnerable sector check or copy.
6. <u>Exceptions:</u>

    The centre may permit a person who has not provided a vulnerable sector check to start their employment or volunteer position or otherwise start interacting with children if:

    - the centre requires the person to apply to obtain a vulnerable sector check as soon as reasonably possible,
    - the length of time required to obtain a vulnerable sector check justifies it, and,
    - the centre puts additional measures in place to protect children who interact with the person until the vulnerable sector check is obtained.
7. No person is required to provide or obtain a vulnerable sector check or offence declaration in respect of a person who is under 18 years old. If a person turns 18 years old while in a position where he or she interacts with children receiving care at the centre, the centre shall obtain from the person, within one month after the person turns 18 years old, a statement that discloses every previous finding of guilt of the person under the *Youth Criminal Justice Act of* Canada, if the person received an adult sentence. If a person turns 19 years old while in a position where he or she interacts with children at the childcare centre, the centre shall require the person to apply to obtain a vulnerable sector check within one month after the person turns 19 years old.
8. The centre shall obtain, in respect of any person who provides childcare or other services to a child who receives childcare at the childcare centre, other than a person under the age of 18:
    a. an offence declaration from the person; or
    b. an attestation from the person's employer or from the person or entity who retained the person's services that,
        i. the employer, person or entity has obtained and reviewed a vulnerable sector check from that person,

ii. the vulnerable sector check was performed within the last five years, and

iii. the vulnerable sector check did not list any convictions for any offences under the *Criminal Code of* Canada listed in subparagraph 1 (ii) of subsection 9 (1) of the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*. O. Reg. 126/16, s. 39.

c. The centre shall obtain the offence declaration or attestation described in subsection (1) in respect of a person:

i. before the person begins interacting with children at the childcare centre; and

ii. every year thereafter, no later than 15 days after the anniversary date of the most recent offence declaration or attestation if the person continues to provide such childcare or other services (signed within 15 days of expiry date).

9. When a new reference check or offence declaration is needed, the centre shall obtain from each person from whom it has previously obtained a vulnerable sector check,

a. a new vulnerable sector check, on or before every fifth anniversary after the date of the most recent vulnerable sector check; and

b. a new offence declaration, in every calendar year except a year in which a vulnerable sector check is obtained.

10. Each offence declaration shall address the period since the most recent offence declaration or vulnerable sector check and must be obtained by the licensee no later than 15 days after the anniversary date of the most recent offence declaration or vulnerable sector check.
11. Any person from whom the centre is required to obtain a vulnerable sector check is required to provide the licensee with an offence declaration, as soon as reasonably possible, any time he or she is convicted of an offence under the *Criminal Code of* Canada.

<u>Break in Employment or Other Relationship</u>

If the centre's relationship with a person in respect of whom it has previously obtained a vulnerable sector check terminates and then subsequently resumes, the licensee shall obtain a new vulnerable sector check or offence declaration as follows:

1. If the relationship was terminated for six or more months, the licensee shall obtain a new vulnerable sector check from the person before the relationship resumes.
2. If the relationship was terminated for less than six months and, but for the termination, the person would have provided a vulnerable sector check or offence declaration during the period of termination, the licensee shall obtain from the person such vulnerable sector check or offence declaration before the relationship resumes. The only exception will be if there is a conflict with other legislation.
3. When an employee takes a leave of absence where there is no termination (e.g. maternity leave) or when a person returns from a break in employment, these employees are required to obtain and submit a vulnerable sector check or offence declaration if they would have provided a vulnerable sector check or offence declaration during the period of their leave

Supervision of Volunteers and Students

The following is WDCC's policy on the supervision of students and volunteers:

All students and volunteers are expected to review all policies and procedures at WDCC upon starting their placement and should always follow policies while completing their placement. Students and volunteers will sign off that they have read and understand all policies, and this will be kept in their personnel files.

Procedure

- Students and volunteers are required to sign the appropriate forms stating they have read and will comply with all policies and procedures upon the commencement of placement and annual thereafter,
- Students and volunteers are required to provide their up-to-date immunization record, and a recent health assessment from their doctor or health care provider,
- Students and volunteers are never to be left alone with the children either in the classroom or on the playground. No child is supervised by a person under 18,
- Student and volunteers are to submit a vulnerable sector screen upon commencement. Exceptions can be made for volunteers/students under the age of 18,
- Students and volunteers will be assigned to a staff mentor to guide them and supervise their placement. Staff will follow any placement criteria set out by a student's school curriculum. Staff should model professional behaviours to the students and volunteers and should guide them with appropriate techniques. However, staff should not compromise the quality of the program or time with the children to help a student/volunteer,
- Any staff concerns with students/volunteers should be brought to the supervisor's attention. Insurance policies of the child-care centre including WSIB will include students.

Attendance and Accountability

The following is WDCC's policy on attendance and accountability:

Policy

The Waterdown District Children's Centre will be flexible in accommodating family needs and requests for arrival and departure so long as it meets the Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy and Procedures below. Staff will ensure that a child's attendance is accounted for throughout the day and steps taken in case of an undocumented absence or child goes missing.

Procedure

- The Centre ELCC programs operate from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm (7:30 am to 5:30 pm starting September 2024), hours at our kindergarten and school age programs will vary according to location and are posted,
- Parents/guardians are required to inform an educator when dropping off or picking up a child and a child may not be dropped off without supervision,
- A staff member is to sign in the time children arrive into care, speak with the parent/guardian and carry out a daily health check immediately,
- If someone other than a parent/guardian is to pick up a child, this must be noted on the child's registration form or the centre must be notified at drop off/pick up and further provide an authorization in writing. Identification will be requested from all new adults picking up children,

- Attendance of the group will be taken at ALL transitions that require groups to leave the program area for a significant time to the next program area. This will include but is not limited to exiting and/or from classrooms, gymnasium, outdoor play, field trips, excursions, walks. The attendance form will include a minimum of 4 times during the day,
- If there is a sporadic trip not listed on the schedule: Parents/guardians will be given specific notice of field trips, indicating mode of transportation, date, time, and location at least 24 hours before the trip. Communication must be always clear with parents,
- Parents are to inform WDCC educators if their child will be away from program,
- Educators will perform safe arrival phone call checks at 9:00am each day to all families whose children are absent from program without explanation.

Missing Child: If a child is not accounted for at the end of day, the following takes place: Staff will re-check the attendance to see if the child was present that day. If the child was away or picked up earlier, the child will be marked as absent from our program. If the staff cannot confirm the child's whereabouts, childcare staff will call the parents/guardians. If the parent confirms the child is in their care, the child is marked absent. If the parent cannot confirm the child's whereabouts staff will conduct a sweep of the school to locate child. If the parent does not answer the phone, staff will call emergency contact numbers. If the child is still not located, emergency services will be contacted.

Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy and Procedures

Name of Child Care Centre: Waterdown District Children's Centre (WDCC)

Date Policy and Procedures Established: July 2018

Date Policy and Procedures Updated: April 28, 2026

Purpose

This policy and the procedures within help support the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care.

This policy will provide staff, students and volunteers with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for ensuring the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care, including what steps are to be taken when a child does not arrive at the child care centre as expected, as well as steps to follow to ensure the safe dismissal of children.

This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for policies and procedures regarding the safe arrival and dismissal of children in care.

Policy

General

- WDCC will ensure that any child receiving child care at the child care centre is only released to the child's parent/guardian or an individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization the child care centre may release the child to.
- A parent/guardian may request that a child who is 9 years old or older be released from child care without supervision. Parents/Guardians must provide written and signed authorization and instructions for the release of the child including the time of dismissal.
- Where a parent/guardian provides written instructions for the release of their child from care without supervision, the parent/guardian is aware that the child care centre is no longer responsible for that child upon their dismissal.
- Where a child does not arrive in care as expected or is not picked up as expected, staff must follow the safe arrival and dismissal procedures set out as follows.

Procedures

Accepting a child into care

When accepting a child into care at the time of drop-off, program staff in the room must:

- greet the parent/guardian and child.
- ask the parent/guardian how the child's evening/morning has been and if there are any changes to the child's pick-up procedure (i.e., someone other than the parent/guardian picking up). Where the parent/guardian has indicated that someone other than the child's parent/guardians will be picking up, the staff must confirm that the person is listed on the list of authorized people to pick up the child or where the individual is not listed, ask the parent/guardian to provide authorization for pick-up in writing (e.g., note or email).
- document the change in pick-up procedure in the daily written record.
- sign the child in on the classroom attendance record.

Where a child has not arrived in care as expected

Where a child does not arrive at the child care centre and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off, the staff in the classroom must:

- When the child has not arrived by 9 am (or an alternate time if requested by the parent in writing) the staff will contact the family to inquire about the child's attendance for the day initially via phone, then text, email, or other current communication tools. In the case of before school, time of phone calls will be determined by bell time. After school, educators will due upon school dismissal.
- If there is no confirmation from the family by 9:30 (9:00 in the event of extreme weather)(or alternate time if requested by family in writing), the staff member will notify program supervisor. These contacts will be noted on the daily journal/attendance sheet. Time for before/after school will be determined by bell times.
- Program supervisor will call all parental numbers available. If there is no contact, emergency numbers provided by the family will be called.
- If no parental contact has been made after all attempts, the Executive Director will be informed to determine next steps.
- Police and/or Children's Aid may be contacted when the centre and the home cannot reasonably account for the failure of a child to arrive at the centre and the safety of a child may be at risk.
- Once the child's absence has been confirmed, program staff shall document the child's absence on the attendance record and any additional information about the child's absence in the daily written record.
- Due to the time consuming process if a parent does not inform the program in an acceptable time period, parental/caregiver's failure to inform the program of the

child's safety when not attending the program may result in care no longer being provided and the child will be removed from the program.

Releasing a child from care

The staff who is supervising the child at the time of pick-up shall only release the child to the child's parent/guardian or individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization that the child care may release the child to. Where the staff does not know the individual picking up the child (i.e., parent/guardian or authorized individual),

- confirm with another staff member that the individual picking up is the child's parent/guardian/authorized individual.
- where the above is not possible, ask the parent/guardian/authorized individual for photo identification and confirm the individual's information against the parent/guardian/authorized individual's name on the child's file or written authorization.

Where a child has not been picked up as expected (before centre closes)

Where a parent/guardian has previously communicated with the staff a specific time or timeframe that their child is to be picked up from care and the child has not been picked up within one hour of this time the program staff shall contact the parent/guardian by phone, text message or other communication tools currently in use and advise that the child is still in care and has not been picked up.

- Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian, staff must leave a message for the parent. Where the individual picking up the child is an authorized individual and their contact information is available, the staff shall proceed with contacting the individual to confirm pick-up as per the parent/guardian's instructions or leave a voice message to contact the centre.
- Where the staff has not heard back from the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was to pick up the child the staff shall contact all emergency numbers and then wait until the program closes and then refer to procedures under "where a child has not been picked up and program closed.

Where a child has not been picked up and the centre is closed

1. Where a parent/guardian or authorized individual who was supposed to pick up a child from care and has not arrived by program closing time, staff shall ensure that the child is given a snack and activity, while they await their pick-up.
2. One staff shall stay with the child, while a second staff proceeds with calling the parent/guardian to advise that the child is still in care and inquire their pick-up time. In the case where the person picking up the child is an authorized individual, the staff shall contact the parent/guardian first and then proceed to contact the authorized individual responsible for pick-up if unable to reach the parent/guardian].

3. If the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the child, the staff shall contact authorized individuals on the child's file.
4. Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized individual listed on the child's file (e.g., the emergency contacts) by half an hour after closing, the staff shall proceed with contacting the Executive Director (or designate) who will give staff direction about making connection with the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) 905-522-1121 Staff shall follow the CAS's direction with respect to next steps.

Dismissing a child from care without supervision procedures.

Where a parent/guardian has provided written authorization for their child to be released from care without supervision, one staff in the program must be responsible for dismissing the child from care. Prior to dismissing the child from care, the staff shall review the written instructions for release provided by the parent/guardian and release the child at the time set out in the instructions. The staff shall document the time of departure from care and as well as their initials on the attendance record.

Children not attending our program for a predetermined schedule

Where a parent/guardian has provided written notice (e.g., email, written communication, or through an approved communication platform) that a child will not attend the program on a predetermined schedule, educators will record the child as absent and will not initiate the Safe Arrival procedures for that absence. Examples of this will be children on vacation and children whose attendance will vary from 5 days a week.

The written notice must clearly indicate the specific date(s) and/or period the child will be absent. This information will be documented on the attendance record, and a copy of the written notice will be maintained in the group binder for reference by all staff as required.

This includes children walking home from school with permission and taking the bus. In these situations, a communication must also be sent to the school to ensure they are aware as well.

If a child does not arrive as expected and there is no prior written notice on file, Safe Arrival procedures will be followed in accordance with the program's policy.

If a child is expected to return following a predetermined absence and does not arrive, and no additional communication has been received, Safe Arrival procedures will be enacted.

All staff are responsible for reviewing attendance records and any noted absences at the start of each shift to ensure accurate implementation of this policy.

Staff Training and Development

The following is WDCC's policy on staff training and development:

The centre shall ensure that there is an annual staff training and development plan created annually by both staff and their immediate supervisor. Staff and supervisors will address both areas of strengths and needs to create a plan for the following year.

Staff will be encouraged to seek opportunities to acquire new information to upgrade and improve their skills and knowledge of the field. Staff will be provided with different educational resources provided online, in the community, and through institutional programs. RECE's will be asked to complete the mandatory CPL modules for continuous learning.

In the case there are non-RECE's, a mentorship will be placed with a senior staff to help and guide non-RECE's to further their approach in the field.

The centre shall ensure that every employee working at a childcare centre has a valid certification in standard first aid, including infant and child CPR, issued by a training agency recognized by the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board or otherwise approved by the Director. If the person has a disability that prevents them from obtaining the certification, they are not required to obtain it.

Staff in childcare centres who must be first aid certified may have a three-month time period to obtain their certification as long as:

- At least one first aid certified employee is available to always respond in an emergency whether the licensed age group is on or offsite,
- The staff obtains the certification as soon as reasonable possible and,
- The length of time is justified.

Social Media and Communication Policy

The following is WDCC's policy on social media and communication:

The purpose of this policy limiting the use of cell phones and other communication devices, including all forms of social media, is to protect you as an employee and the confidentiality of the program. In addition, we always wish to represent our organization as professional; and thus, always need to conduct ourselves accordingly.

Cell Phone/Communication Device Use

The care and safety of the children are of the utmost importance; as a result, cellphones/communication devices shall not be used by staff for personal reasons while at work. It is important that the children always receive full attention of the staff and students and volunteers while in attendance at the centre. Staff and students will keep personal cellphones/devices in a separate area while in the classrooms and/or out on the playground. Cell phones are not to be kept but stored in a work provided locker or locked in your vehicle. The centre owned cell phone must be used for field trips, walks and evacuation drills. During an evacuation or fire drill the centre owned cell phone will be taken with the group. *Exceptions will be made for program supervisors and in cases of personal emergencies only as permitted by the Supervisor.*

Social Media

The posting of confidential and identifying information about the children, parents, or staff at the centre on social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter/X, etc.,) is strictly prohibited by all of staff, parent/guardian, and children. The posting of non-confidential information (promotional materials and the like) shall be restricted to official channels of communication such as the WDCC website or Facebook page, etc. unless prior written approval from the Director has been obtained.

Parents/Guardians, children, families, staff and volunteer may not post images, videos, disputes, or negative commentary about the Centre on social media without first requesting permission from the Executive Director or following the conflict resolution procedures contained herein and may be held liable for any damages caused by doing so.

Photographs

As with the use of social media, the publication of photos from the centre, whether online or otherwise, is generally prohibited without prior approval from the Executive Director. Staff may take pictures (with the centre owned camera) of the activities in their classrooms to share with the families of the children in our care, as appropriate (to document a child's progress, etc.,). Some families have chosen to restrict photograph permissions, and it is expected that all employees will abide by those wishes. These restrictions will be noted in the child's file and staff will be made aware of such cases.

No Smoking Policy

WDCC is a smoke and vape free facility. No parents, staff, volunteers, or students will smoke or vape on the premises of the program. This includes anywhere inside the childcare centre, and anywhere on the day care or school properties. All staff, parents, volunteers, and students will be notified on this

expectation upon admission or employment. Smoke and Vape Free Facility signs will be posted at all entrances into the facility.

Prohibited Practices

WDCC has established practices to protect children's safety, which are reviewed with each staff member upon hiring and at each subsequent annual performance review. When an allegation of maltreatment by a staff/student/volunteer, the centre supervisor and Board of Directors will do everything possible to protect the children and the staff during what will be a difficult time. Prohibited practices include but are not limited to:

- Corporal punishment, including but not limited to, hitting, spanking, pushing, shaking, pinching, biting, grabbing, slapping,
- Restrains of child in reference to WDCC's Behavior Guidance Policy,
- Deliberate use of harsh or degrading measures on the child that would humiliate the child or undermine his or her self-respect, including sarcasm, taunting, teasing, degradation, threats, or use of derogatory language,
- Depriving the child of basic needs including food, shelter, clothing or bedding,
- Locking the exits of the childcare centre for the purpose of confining the child,
- Using a locked or lockable room or structure to confine the child if he or she has been separated from other children.

<u>Procedure</u>

1. Ongoing supervision by site supervisors will be provided to all staff to ensure any prohibited practices will be addressed immediately.
2. When a staff/student/volunteer has been accused of child maltreatment, they will be immediately removed from the program pending investigation.
3. It will be determined by the supervisor and the Board of Director's if the staff member will be sent home with pay, or given other duties at the Centre that removes them from the program.
4. The staff/student/volunteer will be supported during this difficult situation.
5. The serious occurrence procedure will be put into place, with appropriate contact made with Ministry and further direction will come from them.
6. The police will be contacted if it is deemed necessary.
7. A press release will be prepared and given out if necessary.
8. A letter to the families will be prepared and given out if necessary.
9. A report will be made to the College of Early Childhood Educators if appropriate.
10. Possible disciplinary action will be put into place including possible dismissal of staff/student/volunteer.

Serious Occurrence Policy

The following is WDCC's policy on Serious Occurrence Reporting:

The following must be reported under the Serious Occurrence Procedure:

- The death of a child while in attendance at the centre,
- Any serious injury to the child while at the centre,
- Abuse of the child by a staff member or any other person while the child is at the centre,
- Child missing,

- Disaster including fire,
- Complaints-operational or safety including adverse water quality,
- Complaints,
- Any use of a physical restraint of a residence.

Procedure

1. Provide any immediate medical attention.
2. Report to the Director (if not at the centre call on cell phone, number to be posted in the office). If the Director is on vacation, designate will be assigned and given cell phone).
3. Director will:
    - Contact the parents,
    - Ensure all persons having knowledge of the occurrence remain at the site,
    - Contact the Board of Directors,
    - Report the Serious Occurrence using the online Ministry Portal,
    - Assist staff in documentation of occurrence.
4. The Director shall write and sign the Serious Occurrence Notification Report (NR) while referring to the staff's report and display for parents for 10 business days.
5. Following the submission of the NR to the Ministry and with 24 hours of becoming aware of an occurrence to when the operator deems the occurrence to be serious as set out under the MCSS/MCYS 2009 Serious Occurrence Reporting Procedures, the operator will complete a Serious Occurrence Notification Form to communicate information to parents about serious occurrences that have occurred keeping in mind the protection of personal information and privacy. The exception is in the case of allegations of abuse or unverified complaints, which will be posted at the completion of follow up or investigation. The Notification form will be posted at the main entrance next to the Licensing Summary Chart. (See Appendix D).
6. The Notification Form will be updated as the operator takes additional actions or investigations are completed.
7. The Notification Form will be posted for a minimum of 10 business days following the last update.
8. The Notification Form will be kept for a minimum of 2 years form the date of the occurrence and make the forms available for current and prospective parents, licensing and municipal children's services staff upon request.

PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Family Communication Policy

The following is WDCC's policy on family communication:

The Waterdown District Children's Centre encourages regular opportunities to communicate with families about their children's activities and development, the organization of the centre, and current decisions about the operation of the centre.

Procedures

1. Staff members will organize daily programs to maximize opportunities for daily verbal communication with parents.
2. Parents/guardians are encouraged to telephone the centre during the day for information about children's well-being and activities.
3. If possible, staff members will e-mail parents/guardians during the day to communicate about their child's newly acquired developmental skills.
4. Parents/guardians are encouraged to visit the centre during the day.
5. Staff will complete written daily charts for each child that indicate information about routines (sleep, food, toileting) and activities when necessary.
6. If a parent has any concerns they are encouraged to speak with the teachers, supervisor, or Executive Director at any time. If a meeting is required, they may phone and set up a time to meet with the supervisor.
7. If a meeting occurs and issues still are not resolved, the Executive Director will contact the President of the Board of Directors to set up a meeting with the parent. The Ministry Program Advisor will be contacted to consult on the next steps. Discretion will be used as to appropriate acceptable timelines. All complaints will take no longer than one week to begin discussions.
8. Parents / Guardians and Staff are prohibited from posting their concerns, complaints or any private communications publicly or on social media while enrolled in the program and without first completing all steps of the Family Communication Policy.
9. The supervisor will prepare a short newsletter distributed to ELCC families that includes information about programs, business to be discussed at upcoming board meetings, related community events and activities, and government policies that affect the centre.

Appropriate Language and Behaviour

Parents and guardians must use appropriate language and behaviour while on our property. Foul language, inappropriate or intimidating behaviour of any kind is not permitted on WDCC grounds, or in communications with staff. If you have an issue or concern that you would like to express, please ensure you follow these guidelines, as well as our Parent Concerns Policy, found later in this handbook. You should immediately bring any serious concerns to the program director for review.

Parent Issues and Concerns

The following is WDCC's policy for parent issues and concerns:

The purpose of this policy is to provide a transparent process for parents/guardians, the childcare licensee, and staff to use when parents/guardians bring forward issues/concerns.

Definitions

- *Licensee*: The individual or agency licensed by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of each childcare centre it operates (i.e. the operator),
- *Staff*: Individual employed by the licensee (e.g. program room staff).

Policy

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our childcare centre and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing within our program. As supported by our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, childcare providers and staff, and foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children. Our staff are available to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction.

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by WDCC and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties as quickly as possible.

Issues/concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally, or in writing upon request. The level of detail provided to the parent/guardian will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved. These communications will be considered private and confidential between the parties.

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within one business day(s). The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

Investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial, and respectful to parties involved.

Confidentiality

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially, and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff, students and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities, or Children's Aid Society). Similarly parents/guardians will respect and protect the privacy of staff students and volunteers and refrain from posting concerns or active complaints to social media.

Conduct

Our centre maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication, and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated from any party. If at any point a parent/guardian, provider, or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused, or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the supervisor and/or licensee.

Procedure for Raising Concerns or Issues

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
Program Room Related e.g. schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.	Raise the issue or concern to: the classroom staff directly or the supervisor or licensee.	1. Address the issue/concern: • at the time it is raised or • arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within 3 business days. 2. Document the issues/concerns in detail. Documentation should include: • the date and time the issue/concern was received, • the name of the person who received the issue/concern, • the name of the person reporting the issue/concern, • the details of the issue/concern, • any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral. 3. Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter. 4. Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within [insert number] business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing. 5. Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.
General, Centre or Operations Related e.g. child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.	Raise the issue or concern to: the supervisor or licensee.	
Staff, Duty parent, Supervisor, and/or Licensee -Related	Raise the issue or concern to: the individual directly or the supervisor or licensee. All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, duty parents, etc. that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.	
Student, Volunteer Related	Raise the issue or concern to: the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student or the supervisor and/or licensee. All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.	

Escalation of Parent Issues

Where parents or guardians are unsatisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may escalate the issue or concern verbally, or in writing, to the Board of Directors of WDCC. Issues or concerns related to compliance with requirements set out in the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* and Ontario Regulation 137/15, should be reported to the Ministry of Education's Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch. Issues or concerns may also be reported to other relevant regulatory bodies (e.g. public health units, police department, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour, fire department, College of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario College of Teachers, College of Social Workers, etc.,) where appropriate.

Contact Information:

Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care Help Desk: 1-877-510-5333 OR childcare_ontario@ontario.ca

Lisa Evans, President of WDCC's Board of Directors: board@wdcc.ca

Ontario Regulation 137/15

The following is the link to Ontario Regulation 137/15, *Child Care and Early Years Act*, which sets guidelines for the operation and licensing of child care.

https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/r15137?search=child%2Bcare%2Band%2Bearly%2Byears

APPENDIX A: PROGRAM STATEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

Regulatory Provision	Goal	Approach (both observable and measurable)
The program statement shall describe the goals that guide the licensee's program for children at a child care centre it operates, and the approaches that will be implemented in the program to, (a) promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children. {(O. Reg. 137/15, ss. 46(3)(a))}	***GOAL A*** ***Every child is developing a sense of self, health, and well-being.*** Children have a sense of self and health and well-being when they: • are physically active and confident in their growing abilities, • are increasingly aware of and able to make healthy choices to meet their basic needs (e.g., for food, sleep, physical activity, self-care), • experience a sense of competence, autonomy, and agency as they participate at their own pace throughout daily experiences and interactions, • are developing a strong sense of self and the ability to value their own unique identity.	***Program expectation:*** *Early childhood programs nurture children's healthy development and support their growing sense of self.* Educators can create contexts to support children's health and well-being by: • providing healthy meals and snacks and establishing positive eating environments that are responsive to children's cues of hunger and fullness, • providing regular daily opportunities (responsive to individual capabilities) for children to be physically active and explore the world around them with their bodies, minds, and senses, • limiting activities where children are sedentary for an extended period of time, • creating safe and stimulating outdoor spaces for intentional active play that is individualized and adapted as needed to support children's varied abilities, offering challenges that are within each child's ability to master, • reaching out to all families, including those who may be experiencing stressful and challenging circumstances, and helping them to make connections to formal supports (e.g., community agencies) and informal supports (e.g., connections with other families and/or their own support networks), • participating in professional learning and connecting with community partners to ensure the program fosters social and emotional well-being and resilience for children and families.
The program statement shall describe the goals that guide the licensee's program for children at a child care centre it operates, and the approaches that will be implemented in the program to, (b) support positive and responsive	**GOAL B** ***Every Child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind, and sense*** • experience a sense of competence, autonomy, and agency as they participate at their own pace throughout daily experiences and interactions, • are increasingly able to identify, monitor, and manage stress levels and engage in strategies for self- regulation (e.g., of emotions, attention, and behaviour), • are increasingly able to take initiative, tackle challenges with enthusiasm and persistence, and cope with and adapt to	***Program expectation:*** *Early childhood programs provide environments and experiences to engage children in active, creative, and meaningful exploration, play, and inquiry.* • facilitating children's efforts to take reasonable risks, test their limits, and gain increasing competence and a sense of mastery through active play and social interactions, • recognizing and supporting children's developing and varied self-regulation abilities in all domains (biological, emotional, communicative, cognitive, social), • designing environments that are attuned to children's varied sensitivities, arousal states, and need for maintaining a calm, focused, and alert state, • reaching out to all families, including those who may be experiencing stressful and challenging circumstances, and helping them to make connections to formal supports

interactions among the children, parents, child care providers and staff {(O. Reg. 137/15, ss. 46(3)(b))}	changes, frustrations, and the unexpected in everyday living, • are increasingly able to recognize, value, and respect the unique identity and perspectives of others.	(e.g., community agencies) and informal supports (e.g., connections with other families and/or their own support networks), • participating in professional learning and connecting with community partners to ensure the program fosters social and emotional well-being and resilience for children and families.
The program statement shall describe the goals that guide the licensee's program for children at a child care centre it operates, and the approaches that will be implemented in the program to, (c) encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate. {(O. Reg. 137/15, ss. 46(3)(c))}	**GOAL C** ***Every child is an active and engaged learner who explorers the world with body, mind, and senses:*** • are increasingly aware of and able to make healthy choices to meet their basic needs (e.g., for food, sleep, physical activity, self-care), • experience a sense of competence, autonomy, and agency as they participate at their own pace throughout daily experiences and interactions, • are increasingly able to identify, monitor, and manage stress levels and engage in strategies for self- regulation (e.g., of emotions, attention, and behaviour), • are increasingly able to take initiative, tackle challenges with enthusiasm and persistence, and cope with and adapt to changes, frustrations, and the unexpected in everyday living, • are increasingly able to recognize, value, and respect the unique identity and perspectives of others.	***Program expectation:*** *Early childhood programs provide environments and experiences to engage children in active, creative, and meaningful exploration, play, and inquiry.* • facilitating children's efforts to take reasonable risks, test their limits, and gain increasing competence and a sense of mastery through active play and social interactions, • recognizing and supporting children's developing and varied self-regulation abilities in all domains (biological, emotional, communicative, cognitive, social), • designing environments that are attuned to children's varied sensitivities, arousal states, and need for maintaining a calm, focused, and alert state, • reaching out to all families, including those who may be experiencing stressful and challenging circumstances, and helping them to make connections to formal supports (e.g., community agencies) and informal supports (e.g., connections with other families and/or their own support networks), • participating in professional learning and connecting with community partners to ensure the program fosters social and emotional well-being and resilience for children and families.
The program statement shall describe the goals that guide the licensee's program for children at a child care centre it operates, and the approaches that will be implemented in the program to, (d) foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry. {(O.	**GOAL D** ***Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind, and senses.*** Children are engaged learners when they: • express joy and wonder in their encounters with the environment, the natural world, and other people, • focus attention, manipulate, investigate, observe, question, test theories, solve problems, create, and represent ideas and their understanding of the world around them through play in divergent and increasingly complex ways, • engage with others to negotiate, collaborate, create, and communicate	***Program expectation:*** *Early childhood programs provide environments and experiences to engage children in active, creative, and meaningful exploration, play, and inquiry.* Educators can create contexts that engage children by: • designing indoor and outdoor environments and experiences that spark curiosity, invite investigation, and provide challenges that are responsive to individual capabilities to help children extend the boundaries of their learning, • connecting with families and communities and inviting their participation to ensure that environments and experiences reflect and are relevant to children's everyday lives, • providing a wide variety of interesting objects and open-ended materials for children to explore with their senses, manipulate, and investigate,

Reg. 137/15, ss. 46(3)(d))}	feelings, ideas, experiences, and knowledge, • through their play, explore materials that support an increasing awareness and understanding of concepts associated with literacy and numeracy, • participate to the best of their abilities in an inclusive learning environment.	• planning daily routines (the flow of the day) with limited interruptions and transitions to maintain a sense of calm and simplicity for infants and toddlers, and providing ample opportunities through large blocks of time for older children to engage in sustained, complex play and inquiry, • participating with children as a co- investigator, co-learner, and co-planner rather than as director or "keeper of knowledge" and "keeper of the plans" in a way that is separate and apart from the children, • continuously questioning and testing their own theories and strategies and seeking new ideas to facilitate children's exploration and understanding of the world around them in meaningful ways, • working with families and community partners to ensure that environments, • and experiences provide equal learning experiences for all children by making flexible program adaptations and providing special equipment and/or adaptive devices (as recommended by a regulated health professional), • ensuring that the spaces and experiences provided promote play and inquiry that will help children discover and develop an increasing awareness and understanding of key concepts, including those associated with literacy and numeracy development.
The program statement shall describe the goals that guide the licensee's program for children at a child care centre it operates, and the approaches that will be implemented in the program to, (f) plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported. {(O. Reg. 137/15, ss. 46(3)(f))}	**GOAL E** ***Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind, and senses.*** Children are engaged learners when they: • express joy and wonder in their encounters with the environment, the natural world, and other people, • focus attention, manipulate, investigate, observe, question, test theories, solve problems, create, and represent ideas and their understanding of the world around them through play in divergent and increasingly complex ways, • engage with others to negotiate, collaborate, create, and communicate feelings, ideas, experiences, and knowledge, • through their play, explore materials that support an increasing awareness and understanding of concepts associated with literacy and numeracy, • participate to the best of their abilities in an inclusive learning environment.	***Program expectation:*** *Early childhood programs provide environments and experiences to engage children in active, creative, and meaningful exploration, play, and inquiry.* Educators can create contexts that engage children by: • Providing a wide variety of interesting objects and open-ended materials for children to explore with their senses, manipulate, and investigate, • Staff will use a reflective practice to direct their learning, • Behaviour management policies will be reviewed upon employment and annually.
The program statement shall describe the goals	**GOAL F**	***Program expectation:*** *Early childhood programs provide environments and experiences to engage children in active, creative, and meaningful exploration, play, and inquiry.*

that guide the licensee's program for children at a child care centre it operates, and the approaches that will be implemented in the program to, (e) provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences. {(O. Reg. 137/15, ss. 46(3)(e))}	***Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind, and senses.*** Children are engaged learners when they: • express joy and wonder in their encounters with the environment, the natural world, and other people, • focus attention, manipulate, investigate, observe, question, test theories, solve problems, create, and represent ideas and their understanding of the world around them through play in divergent and increasingly complex ways, • engage with others to negotiate, collaborate, create, and communicate feelings, ideas, experiences, and knowledge, • through their play, explore materials that support an increasing awareness and understanding of concepts associated with literacy and numeracy, • participate to the best of their abilities in an inclusive learning environment.	• Educators will create environments and experiences that support active engagement and meaningful exploration by focusing on the questions and theories children investigate through their play. This may involve moving away from traditional, adult-chosen themes towards what children are engaged and interested in as a starting point for planning, • Educators also need to make decisions about the types of interests that have potential for rich and complex play. This could mean focusing less on the objects that interest children and more on what children are doing with the objects, • Educators will use a reflective process on a regular basis based on observations of children's play to guide the opportunities for learning.
The program statement shall describe the goals that guide the licensee's program for children at a child care centre it operates, and the approaches that will be implemented in the program to, (f) plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported. {(O. Reg. 137/15, ss. 46(3)(f))}	**GOAL G** ***Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind, and senses.*** Children are engaged learners when they: • express joy and wonder in their encounters with the environment, the natural world, and other people, • focus attention, manipulate, investigate, observe, question, test theories, solve problems, create, and represent ideas and their understanding of the world around them through play in divergent and increasingly complex ways, • engage with others to negotiate, collaborate, create, and communicate feelings, ideas, experiences, and knowledge, • through their play, explore materials that support an increasing awareness and understanding of concepts associated with literacy and numeracy, • participate to the best of their abilities in an inclusive learning environment.	***Program expectation:*** *Early childhood programs provide environments and experiences to engage children in active, creative, and meaningful exploration, play, and inquiry.* Educators can create contexts that engage children by: • Providing a wide variety of interesting objects and open-ended materials for children to explore with their senses, manipulate, and investigate, • Behaviour management policies will be reviewed upon employment and annually.

The program statement shall describe the goals that guide the licensee's program for children at a child care centre it operates, and the approaches that will be implemented in the program to, (g) incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, into the day, and give consideration to the individual needs of the children receiving child care. {(O. Reg. 137/15, ss. 46(3)(g))}	**GOAL H** ***Every child is developing a sense of self, health, and well-being.*** Respecting and finding ways to support each child's varied physiological and biological rhythms and needs for active play, rest, and quiet time.	***Program expectation:*** *Early childhood programs nurture children's healthy development and support their growing sense of self.* • creating safe and stimulating outdoor spaces for intentional active play that is individualized and adapted as needed to support children's varied abilities, offering challenges that are within each child's ability to master; • The program schedule will be flexible to meet the individual needs of children and families • Educators will regularly reflect on learning opportunities both indoors and outdoors
The program statement shall describe the goals that guide the licensee's program for children at a child care centre it operates, and the approaches that will be implemented in the program to, (h) foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children. {(O. Reg. 137/15, ss. 46(3)(h))}	**GOAL I** ***Every child has a sense of belonging when he or she is connected to others and contributes to their world.*** Children will make smooth transitions between home and early years settings.	***Program expectation:*** *Early childhood programs cultivate authentic, caring relationships and connections to create a sense of belonging among and between children, adults, and the world around them.* • Capitalize on opportunities for one-to-one interactions during daily routines (e.g., *for infants and toddlers*: diaper changing, dressing to go outdoors, and feeding/meal times are ideal opportunities for making connections and building relationships with families), • Discover the unique characteristics and gifts of each child by talking with his or her family, observing, and documenting (e.g., in addition to what the children are interested in, notice what brings them joy and how they relate to others and to the environment around them; to support inclusion, consider each child's capabilities rather than focusing solely on his or her needs and deficiencies), • Engage families with an annual parent survey to assist is goal setting for the organization, • Regular parent newsletters, • Parent representation on the Board of Directors.

The program statement shall describe the goals that guide the licensee's program for children at a child care centre it operates, and the approaches that will be implemented in the program to, (i) involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and staff. {(O. Reg. 137/15, ss. 46(3)(i))}	**GOAL J** ***Every child has a sense of belonging when he or she is connected to others and contributes to their world.***	***Program expectation:*** *Early childhood programs cultivate authentic, caring relationships and connections to create a sense of belonging among and between children, adults, and the world around them.* The centre will continually connect with local community partners that will support children and their families. This will be but not limited to ECISS, Community Living, The City of Hamilton, Early Years Centres, Chedoke McMaster and local schools. • The centre shall ensure that there is an annual staff training a development plan created annually by both staff and their immediate supervisor. Staff and supervisor will address both areas of strength and need and create a plan for the following year, • The Centre shall ensure that every employee working at a child care has a valid certification in standard first aid, including infant and child CPR, issued by a training agency recognized by the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board or otherwise approved by a director. If the person has a disability that prevents them from obtaining the certification, they are not required to obtain.
The program statement shall describe the goals that guide the licensee's program for children at a child care centre it operates, and the approaches that will be implemented in the program to, (k) document and review the impact of the strategies set out in clauses (a) to (j) on the children and their families. {(O. Reg. 137/15, ss. 46(3)(k))}	**GOAL K** ***Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind, and senses.***	***Program expectation:*** *Early childhood programs provide environments and experiences to engage children in active, creative, and meaningful exploration, play, and inquiry.* • The program will engage in an annual review of the program statement, • Parent survey, • Staff annual survey, • Ongoing reflective practice.

APPENDIX B: PROGRAM STATEMENTS GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL	GUIDELINES
To support *physical development by encouraging gross and fine motor play,* a balance between active and quiet activities, and sensory exploration and discrimination, by providing nutritious meals and snacks, and by ensuring safe and hygienic practices. The following guidelines will be used:	• Children follow their own individual schedules for eating and sleeping, • Children have morning and afternoon snacks and a midday meal, • Additional snacks are available at the end of each day, • Menus reflect a variety of nutritious meals and snacks that are liked by most of the children most of the time, • Hygienic routines are followed during diaper change and toileting routines, • Diaper change and bathroom areas are orderly and well planned, • Children always have access to the bathroom, • Shelves and cabinets in program and care routine areas are labeled inside and out for quick reference, • Each child has a cubby to store outdoor clothing and a bin for extra clothing, • Naptime is scheduled each day for children. No child is forced to stay on her/his bed or cot if she/he is not sleeping and does not want to rest, • Each child has a designated cot with a blanket from home, • Individual charts are used to record daily routines for all children, • Space has built-in opportunities for sensory and motor experiences for mobile and non-mobile children, • Equipment is readily available and sturdy to encourage a variety of motor skills, • The outdoor space provides regular opportunities for active play, • The environment is richly textured with opportunities for tactile exploration to stimulate sensory awareness.
To *support emotional development by encouraging caring and responsive* relationships, providing opportunities for independence and autonomy, and attention to individual needs, the following guidelines will be used:	• Photos and graphics illustrate schedules to help children understand the daily schedule, • Staff members explain what is happening next and what the expectations are, • Staff members show warmth through voice tone, posture and physical contact, • Children seem happy most of the time.
To ensure *support for social development by encouraging on-going verbal* communication, promoting opportunities for sharing and co-operating, guiding children's behaviour through example and positive redirection, and promoting self-regulation skills, the following guidelines will be used:	• Design of play areas provides opportunities for a variety of large group, small group and individual activities, • There is adequate child-sized furniture for program activity (chairs, tables, shelving, etc.), • Mirrors are placed so that children can see themselves, • Staff members are directly engaged with the children most of the time, • Staff members respond and attend to sounds and words, expanding and elaborating when appropriate, • Staff members encourage positive social interactions at lunch and snack times, • Staff members respond quickly to cries and calls for help, • Staff members redirect children to a new activity when behaviour becomes difficult, • Staff members explain clearly what they want when giving directions, often kneeling to the child's level, • Staff members engage in many one-one conversations with children, • Children and parents/guardians, or other family members are greeted upon arrival, • Staff and parents/guardians, or other family members talk daily to share information and use daily information charts, • Daily opportunities for children to take responsibilities for their surroundings, • Staff members often refer one child's questions or problems to another child,

	• Staff members encourage children to complete tasks, • Staff members keep limits clear and simple and are consistent in following through, • Staff members sit with children in small groups that encourage conversation during meals and snacks, • Staff members help children through disputes using negotiating and problem-solving skills.
To *create an anti-bias setting by promoting an appreciation of each child's own culture and the culture* of others and by demonstrating the same expectations for boys and girls, the following guidelines will be used:	• Walls are decorated at the children's level with clear pictures, photos, and wall coverings that reflect a variety of ages, racial, and ethnic groups in a positive manner, • Activities and materials available to children are free from racial stereotypes and depict children of various ethnicities in a positive setting, • Multicultural activities that celebrate diverse daily culture are ongoing and integrated into the program.
To *support each child's creative development by providing opportunities for creative self-expression and exploration* the following guidelines will be used:	• Daily opportunities for all children to explore the environment, choose play materials and move about freely, • Play areas are organized to encourage manipulation and construction and creative expression. • Free-form children's artwork is displayed, • Creative expression materials (clay, paint, markers, glue and collage materials) are readily available for exploration and manipulation, • Staff members talk with children about ideas related to their play and help with resources to enhance the play.
To *ensure support for cognitive development by stimulating language skills and promoting conceptual and problem-solving abilities,* the following guidelines will be used	• Spatial arrangements define activity areas and care routines, • Children have access to a variety of toys on open shelves, • Materials that are used together are grouped together, • Staff members introduce children to play materials and activities that are likely to match emerging interests and skills, • Staff members meet regularly to plan activities, including dally care routines, to meet individual needs and learning opportunities, • Daily opportunities for short, small, adult-directed groups that focus on a specific concept or idea, • Staff members encourage children to identify problems, think about alternatives, and then choose the best alternative.
To encourage *emergent literacy and numeracy abilities,* the following guidelines will be used:	• Activities and materials that encourage symbolic play are available, • Staff members read frequently to children individually or in groups of two to three children, • Staff members plan activity sequences to promote emergent literacy (reading and writing) skills, • Staff members encourage and support families to use their first language.