



# Little Scholars Child Care

## Parent Handbook

**Reviewed: October 2023**

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## **Introduction**

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Dear Parents / Guardians,

Welcome to Little Scholars Child Care. Enclosed you will find valuable information that will answer many of your questions regarding the care of your child and/or children as well as the daily operations within our Centre. The policies and procedures stated in this handbook are subject to change and when such revisions are made, an updated version of this handbook will be made available to you. Before you start reading, I would like to thank you for your interest in Little Scholars Child Care and if you have any further questions or concerns about any information outlined in this manual, please feel free to contact me.

Jennifer Bielby  
Centre Director

## **Our Mission**

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Our mission is to provide high quality care for all children through the means of support from dedicated staff, individualized instruction and stimulating curriculum that balances play and academics, all which will aid in facilitating practices and skills invaluable for lifelong success.

## **Our Vision**

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Our vision is to be recognized as an educational establishment known for our outstanding performance in high quality care by providing an enriching environment that offers diverse learning opportunities through both academics and play.

## **Our Philosophy**

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Little Scholars Child Care is committed to providing high quality care for every child. We believe that through our hybrid environment filled with supportive staff, stimulating curriculum and affirmative experiences, every child will be given the tools to reach their full potential. We aim to provide a safe, inclusive and nurturing atmosphere where we support each child by facilitating the development of self-esteem and feelings of empowerment as each child will learn to be confident, independent, and autonomous. Through our unique programming and supportive partnerships with families, staff and our community, we aspire to attain a bright future for each and every child.

## **Hours of Operation**

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Our hours are Monday to Friday from 7:00 AM - 6:00 PM. Little Scholars will be closed on all statutory holidays and two additional holidays including: New Year's Day, Family Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Civic Holiday, Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and Boxing Day. On both Christmas Eve and New Years Eve the center will close at 12:30 PM.

## **Inclement Weather/Closures**

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Little Scholars may close from time to time due to inclement weather and every effort will be made to provide you with as much notice as possible. There will be a recorded message on our answering machine indicating that we are closed and notices will be posted on our social media sites. Please note that if the school board is closed, we will be closed as

well. However, Little Scholars reserves the right to deem conditions unsafe to operate if we feel necessary, regardless of the operations of the school board. In addition, we do not provide make up days or discounts for any missed time or closures, therefore regular monthly fees are applicable.

## **Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Program (CWELCC)**

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Little Scholars Child Care has opted into the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) Program. As of January 1<sup>st</sup> 2023, our fees have been reduced by 52.75%. \*Reduced fees as of January 1<sup>st</sup> 2023 are reflected in **Programs** Section below.

Fees are divided into base fees and non-base fees. Please note that only base fees will show the 52.75% reduction.

Base fee means: Everything considered to be mandatory charge to a parent for providing child care, including everything a licensee is required to provide under the CCEYA such as daily fees, registration fees and key fob purchases.

Non-base fee means: fees charged for optional services or any fees where a parent fails to meet agreement terms such as fees for late pick up, fees for late payment or bounced payments.

## **Programs**

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Little Scholars offers Infant, Toddler and Preschool programs.

Our Infant program consists of 10 children aged 6 months to 18 months old. This room has a teacher/child ratio of 3:10  
The base fee for this program are: \$34.49 per day for full time care  
Part Time spots are not available for this age group

Our first Toddler programs consists of 15 children aged 18 months to 30 months. This room also has a teacher/child ratio of 1:5  
The base fee for this program are: \$28.82 per day for full time care OR \$31.19 per day for part-time care. Part-time spots available are Monday, Wednesday and Friday OR Tuesday and Thursday.

Our second Toddler program consists of 5 children aged 18 months to 30 months. This room has a teacher/child ratio of 1:5  
The base fee for this program are: \$28.82 per day for full time care OR \$31.19 per day for part-time care. Part-time spots available are Monday, Wednesday and Friday OR Tuesday and Thursday.

Our third Toddler program consists of 10 children aged 18 months to 30 months. This room has a teacher/child ratio of 1:5  
The base fee for this program are: \$28.82 per day for full time care OR \$31.19 per day for part-time care. Part-time spots available are Monday, Wednesday and Friday OR Tuesday and Thursday.

Our first Preschool program consists of 24 children aged 30 months to 6 years old. This room has a teacher/child ratio of 1:8  
The base fee for this program are: \$25.04 per day for full time care OR \$27.41 per day for part-time care. Part-time spots available are Monday, Wednesday and Friday OR Tuesday and Thursday.

Our second Preschool program consists of 24 children aged 30 months to 6 years old. This room has a teacher/child ratio of 1:8  
The base fee for this program are: \$25.04 per day for full time care OR \$27.41 per day for part-time care. Part-time spots available are Monday, Wednesday and Friday OR Tuesday and Thursday.

## Registration

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Little Scholars requires that your child's registration package is completed in full prior to submitting it to the Director. It is your responsibility to ensure that information on the forms are completed and updated as needed for your child's file. All information is required on the forms as per the Ministry of Education requirements and for emergency purposes.

### ***Immunization***

Before your child's first day, up-to-date immunization records must be provided. According to the requirements of the local medical officer of health, all children must be immunized, unless the parents have chosen not to immunize their child on the grounds that the immunization conflicts with the parent's religion or conscience or a legal qualified medical practitioner gives medical reasons as to why the child should not be immunized. In this case, a completed and authorized Statement of Conscience or Religious Belief or a Statement of Medical Exemption form must be submitted and stored in the child's file

### ***Fees/Payment***

There is a one-time non-refundable registration base fee of \$56.70 per family (Includes the reduction of 52.75%). Once the Director has confirmed a space for your child(ren), the \$56.70 registration fee and a two-week deposit are due by cheque or e-transfer. Once enrolled, a monthly fee schedule will be available and post-dated cheques for the year will be required. Cheques will be deposited on the 1<sup>st</sup> of every month. If unable to deposit your cheque, a new invoice will be provided which will show your fees due including a \$25 NSF non-base fee (non-sufficient funds) and a \$25 late payment non-base fee. If paying via e-transfer, the monthly fee must be paid in full before noon on the 1<sup>st</sup> of every month. If your payment (cheque or e-transfer is received after 12 noon on the 1<sup>st</sup> a \$25 late penalty non-base fee will be added to your invoice. Please note that fees are due regardless of inclement weather or days your child is not in attendance due to illness and includes time off for vacation. In addition, full fees apply for all statutory holidays. \*\*\*Please note pre-authorized debit will be coming available later in 2023 as another means of payment.\*\*\*

### ***Minimum Length of Attendance***

Little Scholars has a minimum attendance period of one month. You must commit to at least one month of care before you are able to withdrawal without penalty. If you choose to withdrawal before the one month, all fees including your deposit will be withheld.

### ***Key Fobs***

In order to enter the building each family will need a key fob. Each key fob requires a \$20.00 base fee deposit and as long as you return the fob upon withdrawal you will be refunded your key fob deposit. \*Please refer to the Building Security and Camera section for more information

### ***Fee Increases***

Parents will receive at least 30 days' notice of fee increases if they occur

### ***Receipts***

Tax receipts for your child's fees will be issued annually by February 28

## Admission

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### ***First Day***

Please bring the following items for your child's first day;

- Blanket and/or stuffy for rest time
- Labelled water bottle

- Indoor and outdoor shoes
- Sunscreen (Seasonal)
- Diapers, pull ups, diaper cream and wipes (If applicable)
- At least two extra changes of clothes
- Completed registration package, copy of immunization record or exception notice and pre-authorized debit form or void cheque (If not submitted prior)

On your child's first day, we ask that you drop your child off and give them a hug and a kiss goodbye as you leave. It may be difficult as they are in a new environment filled with new faces but rest assured that our staff will work diligently to assist your child in a smooth transition. We ask that you give us time and understand that your child will adjust and develop feelings of security and confidence within our centre.

## **Pick Up and Drop Off**

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At drop off and pick up, please ensure that staff are aware that your child has arrived and/or that your child is leaving. Staff must also be informed of any pertinent information (i.e. vacation time, alternative pick up or drop off arrangements, circumstances that might affect the child's day such as, injuries, little to no sleep, no breakfast, etc.) upon arrival to program.

### ***Escort/Emergency Contacts***

Other than to you, children will only be released to individuals authorized on the emergency and/or escort contacts filled out at registration. Any additional emergency add-ons must be provided to the Director before the date of pick up and/or drop off. All legal names must be recorded on the form as these individuals must provide photo identification. Children's safety is our number one priority and as such the Director has the authority to deny pick up for any reason if they feel the child's life will be endangered in any way (i.e. alcohol and drug use, criminal infringement, unauthorized pickup/drop off, etc).

### ***Custody Arrangements***

If you have sole custody of your child(ren) you must provide documented proof of custody to be retained in your child's file. If changes in custody occur, paperwork must be updated and signed by both parents and added to the child's file. Note that we will adhere to the most recent documents unless new documentation is obtained.

## **Late Fees**

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In the event where you are late picking up your child(ren), you must sign off on our late pick up form and a non-base fee of \$1.00 per minute will be charged to you. Payment must be made immediately to the Director, who will ensure the staff members who stayed late receive their payment. If unable to pay immediately, then you must provide payment to the Director within one week. In addition, if you have not made contact with the centre by 7:00 PM and staff have attempted to call both parents and all emergency contacts with no answer, Children's Aid Society will be contacted.

## **Wait List**

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Little Scholars has a wait list policy that is transparent, fair, consistent and free of charge. To join our waitlist, you have two options. One option is to contact the center directly via email, phone or in person to provide all the necessary information. Another option is to register with OneList Waterloo Region and as soon as your application to Little Scholars' wait list is received and a space becomes available for your child, you will be contacted.

When joining our wait list, you will be informed of the following;

- There is a separate wait list for each age group
- Having your child on our wait list does not guarantee a spot on the desired date of enrolment

- There is no specified length of time that your child must be on the list to be offered a spot
- Priority is established by the date of the tour/registration/application submission
- Priority will be given to children with siblings already enrolled

When a spot becomes available, the first eligible family on the waitlist will be contacted. If the parents do not accept the spot that is currently available, they will be moved to the end of the wait list and the spot will go to the next eligible family. Once a child is registered in one of our programs, it eventually becomes possible to accommodate more specific needs (i.e. switching from part-time to full time).

You can contact the Director to ask about your child's place on the wait list. Within 48 hours, the Director will let you know what number your child is on the wait list. The Director will also inform you that this number may change depending on families withdrawing from the wait list, if priority individuals (i.e. siblings) join the wait list and if families on the wait list change their requested starting date. If you request a physical copy of our wait list, we will provide a redacted list (i.e. personal information will be blacked out to maintain the privacy and confidentiality of others) of the month you have requested care.

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## **Withdrawal**

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Families wishing to withdrawal care must provide the Director with our withdrawal notice form at least two weeks before the date of withdrawal. If a two week notice is received, the two week deposit paid upon enrolment will cover the child's last two weeks of care. If the parent has already paid for their child's last two weeks, the deposit will be refunded in full. If notice is not given or if notice is received less than two weeks' before the last day of care, the deposit in full will be kept by Little Scholars.

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## **Termination of Space**

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Little Scholars recognizes that our center may not be fitting for all children. Many supports are put into place to create a successful experience for all children. However, in specific cases where we feel that all avenues have been exhausted and we are unable to meet the needs of your child, it may be necessary to terminate their space. A decision to terminate care will be made in consultation with parents.

In addition, failure to comply with our policies and procedures, including fees and payment, may also result in termination of your child's care.

If, for any reason, Little Scholars makes the decision to terminate your care, two weeks notice shall be given and the Director may assist in finding more suitable care.

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## **Parent Communication and Involvement**

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We host annual parent/educator conferences where staff will have the opportunity to discuss and showcase your child's development and progress through Nippissing Developmental tools, artwork and other pieces of documentation. These interviews also provide you with uninterrupted time to discuss any concerns as well as be involved with setting goals for your child's future successes. We also encourage you to be involved within the centre. You are welcome to volunteer on outings, bring in class materials or visit classrooms to provide an educational experience. (All volunteers and educational experiences must be pre-approved by the Director).

***\*DaycareWebWatch and MyKidsDailyReports*** - Once enrolled, you will be able to set up an account with our DaycareWebWatch app in order to gain access to our live video feed. This app does not only deliver video feed but also sends daily reports (includes information about food and liquid intake, nap times, diaper changes and

activities) sharable pictures, newsletters and critical emergency information. Once your account is approved and active, you can log in at any time from your desktop or mobile device to see a live stream of the room and to access all information.

**Monthly Calendars and Newsletters** - Monthly calendars and newsletters will be uploaded onto DaycareWebWatch accordingly. These forms of communication will provide you with information on special dates, new events, statutory holiday closures, birthdays, etc.

**Social Media** - We will be using Facebook and Instagram as other forms of communication. Please note that your child can only participate in our social media pages if we receive the signed permission form. This is also an outlet that we will use to share resources, materials and other pertinent information with you.

**Birthday Celebrations** - If your child is celebrating a birthday and you wish to bring in a treat for your child's birthday celebration, you may do so, however, we kindly ask that the treat be either a fruit platter or cupcakes made in a nut free facility and labelled nut free. If you are unable to provide a treat, the staff will make a cake with your child and his/her peers to celebrate.

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## Off-Site Activities

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Little Scholars occasionally conducts off site activities for Preschoolers. You will be given ample notice and will have to complete a permission form before your child(ren) can participate in the activity. The permission form will include the destination, method of transportation, date, time of departure and return, requirement of appropriate clothing/ necessities such as sunscreen, hat, snow pants etc. It is not mandatory that your child(ren) attend, however if you do not want your child(ren) to participate, you must find alternative care for that day. For safety reasons, we do not provide off-site activities for Infants and Toddlers. Infants are taken on community walks while the Toddlers will have activities and events brought to them on-site.

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## Children's Belongings

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We recommend that you clearly label all your child's belongings such as their water bottle, blanket and/or stuffy, shoes, extra clothes, etc. with their first and last name or initials. In addition, you are responsible for providing sunscreen, diapers, wipes and creams that are also labelled. Please bring in all items pre-labelled and leave them in your child's classroom cubby.

### **Extra Clothes**

We require you to bring clothing attire appropriate for each season, including at least two pairs of extra clothing to stay at the center. Please bring the following items for each season;

- Winter - please bring: Snow pants, Waterproof Winter jacket with a hood, hat that covers child's ears, neck warmer, waterproof gloves or mittens, and Winter boots.
- Summer - please bring: A wide brimmed sun hat, shorts, t-shirt and sunscreen. We strongly advise against Crocks or Flip Flops due to the tripping hazards they present. We encourage children to have a pair of running shoes and/or one pair of sandals with back support for outdoor play.
- Rainy Days: Although we do not go outside while it is raining, children will go outside after it has rained and the ground may be wet so we encourage parents to provide rain gear such as rain boots and a rain jacket.

### **Toys from Home**

Unless requested by the staff for a classroom activity such as "show and share," children are not permitted to bring any toys from home to the centre.



## Nutrition

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Little Scholars offers healthy meals and snacks that go above and beyond the recommendations of the Canadian Food Guide. Everything is prepared on-site by our fully qualified, food handler certified staff. Our organic menu provides the children an opportunity to have a diverse experience with a variety of healthy options, including fruits and vegetables, whole grains and non-gmo or processed foods. The menu is pork and nut free and offers delicious substitutions that cater towards any allergies or restrictions. We follow four-week, rotational seasonal menus that are approved by a certified dietician. Menus for the current week and the following week will be posted outside the kitchen for reference and any substitutions will be recorded on the menus and retained in file for a minimum of 30 days. Copies are available upon request.

### *A.M. Snack*

Please note that AM snack will be served from 7:00 AM to 8:30 AM daily so if your child is dropped off later, please ensure they have had a nutritious breakfast before arrival.

### *Special Requirements*

- If your child is under 12 months, they will be fed in accordance with written instructions from you. A copy of the instructions will be in your child's classroom and the original will be stored in their file.
- All formula, breast milk and milk containers supplied by you must be labelled with your child's name and will be stored accordingly.
- If your child has a special dietary and/or feeding need, we will follow written arrangements made by you. A copy of the instructions will be available in your child's classroom and the original will be stored in their file.
- Please note that no outside food is allowed to be brought into the center
- If any special dietary food or drink is required there must be a note/email provided from parents to the center explaining the necessity. The food and drink must also be nut-free and will be labeled with child's name and stored accordingly.

## Sleep Supervision Policy

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We follow all recommendations set out in the most current version of the Joint Statement on Safe Sleep which states that children, up to their first birthday be placed on their backs for sleep. However, it is important to note that once infants are able to roll from their back to their stomachs or sides, we will not reposition them onto their backs. The requirement for an infant sleep position may be waived only if a physician recommends an alternative in writing which will be stored in the child's file. Furthermore, other than a firm mattress and a fitted sheet, there will not be any extra items such as pillows, duvets, blankets and bumper pads in the crib. If you request the use of a blanket, only a thin blanket of breathable fabric or a sleep sack should be used.

We also ensure that

- Staff will be present in each room during sleep time and reduced ratios will always be met
- All children enrolled are assigned to an individual cot or crib labelled with their name
- Staff will perform visual checks every 30 minutes of each sleeping child and look for indicators of distress or unusual behaviour such as change in skin colour, change in breathing and signs of overheating and act as required (Please note that visual checks are not completed in our Preschool programs).

### ***Sleeping Arrangements***

You will be consulted in respect to your child's sleeping arrangements at the time of enrollment and/or at any other appropriate time such as the observance of any significant changes in your child's sleeping pattern or behaviour during sleep and any adjustments that need to be made to sleep time must be made. Please note;

- For Infants, we will follow the sleep schedule that you outlined in your child's registration
- For Toddler, our sleep time will not exceed two hours in length
- For Preschool, if your child requires a shorter nap period or no nap, they must have written permission from you or their physician that will be stored in their file. All staff will be informed of the request and will ensure that it is followed.

## **Playground Safety**

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The playground safety policy will be reviewed at least annually by the licensee to ensure that it is current. This policy will be reviewed by staff, students and volunteers before beginning their employment or placement, at least annually after the first review and after any changes are made. A record of review will be signed by each person who conducted or participated in the review and will be retained in a secure location for three years.

### ***Little Scholars ensures that;***

- Our playground rotation schedule will be followed at all times to prevent exceeding the playground capacity
- Teacher/child ratios will be met at all times during outdoor play
- For washroom needs, staff will take children inside in small groups, while ensuring ratios and appropriate supervision are met in the playground
- Staff are strategically stationed around the playground and away from each other so that all children can be easily observed
- Staff are interacting with children and simultaneously scanning the playground for any potential problems
- Staff reinforce playground safety rules with children
- Staff stay within easy reach of younger children at all times
- Emergency backpacks are brought out for both a.m. and p.m. outdoor play. The backpacks will contain the daily attendance, children's emergency information, allergy lists and individual plans, first aid equipment and walkie talkie.

### ***Playground Inspections***

- Prior to the children going outside, the designated staff will complete a daily playground check both in the morning and the afternoon
- The daily playground checks will include the time that the check was conducted, the initials of the staff who conducted it and any notes and/or comments about the playground (i.e. dead tree branches removed). All playground checks will be stored in the playground binder.
- If there is an issue and/or safety concern, the Director must be informed and will record the information in the repair log section of the playground binder. If necessary, the Ministry of Education will be contacted to inform them of the repair and to obtain approval, if required.
- Once necessary approval has been granted, repairs that are needed will be forwarded on to maintenance. The Director will follow up to ensure that any issues are dealt with immediate and appropriate action
- Daily, monthly and annual playground safety checklists are in accordance with the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) and are carried out by a designated staff and stored in the playground binder.

### ***Temperature***

During the Winter and Summer months our outdoor time may be affected due to extreme cold alerts and heat advisories. We will follow all recommendations issued by Environment Canada as well as the staff and Director's

discretion regarding the length of time outside through the observation of wind gusts, sunshine, shade and how the children are coping.

### ***Waterplay***

Little Scholars agrees with the Ministry's best practices for water safety which encourages the use of on-premise splash pads, sprinklers, hoses or water tables, under the close supervision of adults at all times. However, the use of 'kiddie'/wading pools will be prohibited to maintain a safe environment for the children.

### ***Sunscreen***

Sunscreen must be provided by parents. Expiry dates will be checked monthly and each bottle of sunscreen will be labelled and kept in each child's cubby. Staff will apply sunscreen in the morning and afternoon before the children go outdoors.

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## **Building Security and Cameras**

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We want to ensure the safety of all children while in our care and have a variety of measures in place to do so. All employees and families will need to have a key fob to enter the building. The fobs will be programmed to work during our specific operational hours. In addition, all exterior doors are locked at all times and the playground can only be accessed through inside our building. There are multiple cameras around the exterior of the building as well as in the playground. Each classroom has cameras that provide a live feed to the Directors office which can also be viewed by parents (\*For more information on our live feed refer to the top of page 7). Finally, the front door is glass so that we are able to see visitors' identity before allowing them access.

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## **No Smoking Policy**

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According to the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, smoking or holding lit tobacco is prohibited at all times in a day nursery, including washrooms, playgrounds and parking lots, whether children are present or not. "No Smoking" signs will be posted throughout the centre, including entrances, washrooms, playgrounds, and classrooms. Any person who refuses to comply with the Smoke-Free Ontario Act cannot remain at the centre.

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## **Health & Infectious Diseases**

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If your child is ill or not well enough to attend the program, participate in all daily activities, routines, transitions and outdoor play, then your child should remain at home and not return to the program until he/she is well enough to participate in all activities. Please note, if your child is unable to come to the center for any health-related reason, you are required to contact the center before 9:00AM to inform staff of the absence.

### ***Extended Sick Leave***

- If your child is away for more than three consecutive days because of illness a physician's letter may be required for verification and re-admittance
- If your child is away for more than a month, you will be given the option to continue payment to hold your spot or to withdraw him/her and be re-admitted when a space becomes available
- For extended convalescence, a space may be reserved if you are willing to pay full fee during the absence

### ***Re-admittance after Illness***

- Temperature – after at least 24 hours symptom free and at least 24 hours with no fever reducing medication (i.e. Tylenol or Advil)

- Vomiting diarrhea and nausea – after at least 48 hours symptom free
- Infectious diseases (measles, mumps, meningitis, pertussis (whooping cough), scarlet fever, fifth disease (slapped cheek), chicken pox) as advised by a physician’s note
- Influenza – after at least five days after symptoms began
- Pinkeye (conjunctivitis) - after at least 24 hours of treatment and a signed physician’s note
- Strep Throat – after at least 24 hours after starting antibiotics and a signed physician’s note
- Impetigo - after at least 24 hours of starting antibiotics and a signed physician’s note. If a child still has dry lesions upon admission, all scabs must be properly covered
- Ringworm – after at least 24 hours after starting treatment and a signed physician’s note
- Roseola - after at least 24 hours of starting treatment and a signed physician’s note
- Hand Foot and Mouth - after all of the blisters have dried and the fever has subsided and a signed physician’s note
- Pinworm – after at least 24 hours after starting treatments and a signed physician’s note
- Pediculosis (head lice) - a child will not be re-admitted until after treatment and must be accompanied by written verification by a physician or professional who has provided the treatment indicating that there are no longer an live eggs or nits present

### ***Emergencies and Illnesses***

- If your child becomes ill during the day, staff will notify you and ask that you pick up your child as soon as possible. It is imperative that you return any phone calls and/or messages at your earliest convenience.
- In the case of a serious emergency, the following measures will be taken (According to the signed Medical Treatment Authorization form)
  - Staff will call 911 and inform the Director
  - The child will be taken to the nearest hospital
  - Director will notify the parents, who will be asked to join the child and Director at the hospital

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## **Medication**

In order to administer any medication to your child, you must fill out our medication administration form. Prescribed medication must be in the original container with your child’s name, time, dosage, name of medication and doctor’s name clearly labelled. For over the counter medication (non-prescription) such as cough medicines, etc, they must be accompanied by a physician’s note.

Little Scholars will not administer;

- Medication that does not have a completed medication administration form
- Over the counter medication without a physician’s note
- Medication that has been prescribed to another family member
- Expired medication. Any outdated medication will be returned to the parents

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## **Anaphylactic Policy**

The anaphylactic policy will be reviewed at least annually by the licensee to ensure that it is current. This policy will be reviewed by staff, students and volunteers before beginning their employment or placement, at least annually after the first review and after any changes are made. A record of review will be signed by each person who conducted or participated in the review and will be retained in a secure location for three years.

Children's health and safety are prioritized at Little Scholars and for that reason, any child with anaphylactic allergies must have an individualized plan. The plan must be created in consultation with parents and any regulated health professional who is involved in your child's health care (i.e. pediatrician, family physician).

***Strategies to Reduce the Risk of Exposure to Causative Agents;***

- Reinforce the rule that there is no outside food allowed in the centre. The only exception is formula, breast milk or milk alternatives (i.e Rice milk). If any of those three exceptions are brought, they must be: labelled with child's name, labelled with the date brought to centre, in the original container with a list of ingredients and expiry date and free of any nut products.
- Emphasize that we are a nut free facility
- Remove any anaphylactic causative agents found on the premises immediately
- Keep our cook up-to-date with all allergies to ensure that appropriate alternatives will be provided

***Communication Plan for the Dissemination of Information***

- An allergy/food restriction list will be posted in each classroom, kitchen and office (List will be revised on a monthly basis or more frequently when necessary)
- A copy of the allergy/food restriction list is included in all attendance binders for access during transitions, outdoor play and/or field trips
- Allergy pamphlets will be available to parents as a resource
- Parents with children who have anaphylaxis will provide an individual plan for their child prior to enrolment and all staff, students and volunteers will be trained accordingly
- Individual plans will be stored in each child's file and copies will be located in each attendance binder and will also be posted in each classroom, kitchen and office
- If any special dietary food or drink is required there must be a note/email provided from parents to the center explaining the necessity. The food and drink must also be nut-free and will be labeled with child's name and stored accordingly.

***Individual Plan and Emergency Procedure***

Prior to enrolment, parents who have a child with anaphylaxis will meet with the Director to provide and review their child's individual plan and emergency procedures. This plan will include but is not limited to:

- Recent picture of child
- Description of the child's allergy
- Signs and symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction
- Procedures to be followed in the event of a reaction
- Staff roles and responsibilities
- Parent consent for administering allergy medication and sharing/posting emergency plan
- Emergency contact information
- Location of Epi-Pen and back-up Epi Pen
- Physician's Signature (indicated that the plan was developed collaboratively by the child's physician and parents)
- Physician's note to carry own Epi-Pen, if applicable

Parents are required to advise the Director if their child develops an allergy, requires medication and/or any changes need to be made to their child's individual plan.

***Emergency Protocol***

In case of an emergency;

- One staff will stay with the child at all times (Director must be informed)
- Staff will follow the emergency procedures outlined in the child's individual plan (i.e. Administer epinephrine at first sign of reaction)

- Call 911 and have the child transported to the hospital even if the symptoms have subsided as they may return
- The Director will call the child's parents/guardians and will advise them to meet us at the hospital
- Administered Epi-Pen must be brought to the hospital and be handed off to a hospital employee or to the child's parent for disposal
- The staff who accompanied the child to the hospital and/or Director must stay with the child until the parents/guardians arrive

### ***Training***

We will use the “train the trainer” approach meaning a parent/guardian of each child with anaphylaxis will train the Director, who will then train all staff/students/volunteers at time of employment or placement and then annually thereafter or when any changes are made. A training log will be kept. The log will include all training dates, trainer names and staff/student/volunteer signatures and will be kept on file in a secure location. Although, volunteers and students will not be permitted to administer medication, they still require training to be prepared for extreme circumstances (i.e. staff member if unconscious). Training will include recognizing the signs and symptoms, the procedures to follow in the event that the child has an anaphylactic reaction and process for administering the medication.

## **Children with Medical Needs**

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We prioritize children's health and safety and if there is a child who has a medical condition, we take extra precautions. We require you to develop an individualized plan that must be created in consultation with both parents and any regulated health professional who is involved in your child's health care (i.e. pediatrician, family physician). This plan will assist staff in taking all the necessary steps to support your child's medical needs and ensure his/her inclusion in our program.

The plan must include the following details;

- Steps to be followed to reduce the risk of your child being exposed to any causative agents or situations that may exacerbate a medical condition or cause an allergic reaction or other medical emergency
- A description of any medical devices used by your child and any instructions related to its use
- A description of the procedures to be followed in the event of an allergic reaction or other medical emergency
- A description of the supports that will be made available to your child while in care
- Any additional procedures to be followed when your child is part of an evacuation or participating in an off-site activity

You are required to advise the Director if your child develops a medical condition or there are any changes to your child's current individualized plan. The original plan will be kept in your child's file, while copies of the plan will be posted in each room as well as placed in each attendance binder. In addition, all staff, students and volunteers will review each individual plan annually or when changes occur to ensure that staff are accurately prepared with all the necessary information to deal with any medical situation pertaining to your child.

## **Fire/Safety Evacuation Procedures**

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Little Scholars has put a variety of preventive measures in place to aim for uncomplicated evacuations during a fire emergency. These measures include: annual inspections from the fire department, emergency exits that are clearly labelled and easily accessible, fire extinguishers that are serviced regularly and kept up-to-date, fully stocked first aid kits along with an established Fire Safety and Emergency Procedure Plan, which the staff and children practice monthly. Our Fire Safety/Evacuation Procedure has been approved by the local fire chief and copies are posted in a conspicuous place in each room of the center. In addition, a written record is kept of all fire drills, tests of the fire alarm system and tests of fire protection equipment and each record is kept for at least three years from the date of the drill or test.

For all other emergencies we will follow our emergency management policy and procedures. If an emergency occurs, you will be notified of the emergency situation, evacuation (if necessary) and location to pick up your child(ren) via our emergency message system on MyKidsDialyReports. If there is no timely response you will be contacted by phone and/or email. There will also be a follow up in regards to information about re-opening and resuming normal operations if applicable.

**Emergency Location:** Granite Landing Retirement Residence at 30 Light Drive, Cambridge

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## Serious Occurrences

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The following are identified as a serious occurrence and must be reported to the Ministry of Education:

- The death of a child who receives care at a child care centre, whether it occurs on or off the premises
- Abuse, neglect or an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child while receiving care at a child care centre
- A life-threatening injury to or a life-threatening illness of a child who receives care at a child care centre
- An incident where a child who is receiving care at a child care centre goes missing or is temporarily unsupervised
- An unplanned disruption of the normal operations of a child care centre that poses a risk to the health, safety or well-being of children receiving care at a child care centre

Once an incident is identified as a serious occurrence, Little Scholars will follow these procedures:

- Call 911 if necessary, depending on the incident
- Provide medical attention and inform the Director
- The Director will contact you
- A staff member will remain with your child until you arrive at the scene or hospital
- The Director will conduct a preliminary inquiry, interviewing all witnesses at the site of the incident and get a signed and dated statement from each. All individuals involved will be kept at the site until their involvement is no longer needed
- The Director will follow up with the family
- A serious occurrence report will be submitted to the Ministry of Education via our program advisor using the online child care licensing system (CCLS).
- The Director will complete a serious occurrence notification form which will be posted in a conspicuous place within 24 hours for a minimum of 10 business days, including any allegation of abuse or neglect.

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## Supervision of Volunteers and Students

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Through our strong connection to our community, we may have student placement and/or volunteer opportunities available for community members from time to time. To ensure the safety of your child(ren) we will ensure that each individual has all the necessary paperwork and requirements needed to be involved in our Centre. In addition, Little Scholars will ensure that:

- All volunteers and students will be under the direction and supervision of Little Scholars staff at all times
- No child(ren) will ever be left alone with a volunteer or student
- At no time will a volunteer or student be counted in staff-child ratios
- No child(ren) will be supervised by any person less than 18 years of age
- No child(ren) will be supervised by someone who is not an employee of Little Scholars
- All volunteers and students must read and sign off on all policies and procedures

## Staff Requirements and Qualifications

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Before employment, all staff must provide a vulnerable sector police record check, a Standard First Aid and CPR training certificate, up-to-date immunization records, including a tuberculosis skin test and a medical form completed by their physician. Our cook must provide a valid food handlers certificate in addition to the aforementioned requirements.

Each classroom has at least two teaching staff that are Registered Early Childhood Educators. All staff members have experience working within the field. In addition, all staff are required to review and sign off on all policies and procedures including all individual plans before employment, annually and/or whenever changes occur. Finally, we strongly encourage and offer professional development opportunities for all staff members.

## Program Statement

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Through this program statement, Little Scholars has provided a written commitment to our families and educators outlining what we are striving to achieve through our programs. This statement clearly informs families, educators and others of our goals and what measurable and observable approaches are put in place to achieve these goals. Our program statement reflects the Ministry Policy Statement on Program and Pedagogy, utilizing it as a guide for our practice. Our statement is also structured around the foundations of belonging, well-being, engagement and expression as it is consistent with the How Does Learning Happen document.

The following program goals and approaches reflect our belief that all children are competent, capable, curious and rich in potential while educators are play partners, architects of the play space, planners, recorders and communicators.

***Goal: to promote the health, safety, nutrition and overall well-being of each child in our care;***

First and foremost, we ensure that the physical property and learning environments are incessantly in compliance with all health and safety standards, building codes, by laws pursuant to the planning act, fire protection and prevention act and the safe drinking water act. Our daily practices and procedures take measures to protect children's health, safety, nutrition and overall well-being. We do this by providing a clean and secure environment, nutritional menus based on the Canadian Food Guide, access to clean drinking water throughout the day, spaces free of any environmental uses that may cause undue stress to the child, limited transitions and unnecessary disruptions to their day. In addition, educators will follow all instructions and familiarize themselves with the information provided in regards to any medical conditions, exceptionalities, allergies, food restrictions, medication requirements and parental preferences in respect to diet, exercise and rest time.

***Goal: to support positive and responsive interactions among children, parents and staff;***

We strive to provide an open and positive setting that is welcoming to everyone. It is our duty to be responsive to parents and their children by providing them with a learning environment where they feel safe, acknowledged, included and respected. We take pride in modeling positive values such as empathy, trust, honesty, responsibility, inclusion, respect and love which are key in building and maintaining positive relationships. For children, these feelings of acceptance gained through caring relationships and connections will help them develop a sense of belonging among and between peers, adults and the world around them. In terms of parents, our positive responsiveness allows us to work collaboratively as a team to support each child. We strive to have a sense of community and to work in unison with parents to assist their children in reaching their full potential. For staff, we model supportive and responsible behaviours for children and parents through daily interactions with each other which not only provide our families with hands-on experience but also allow for a positive and responsive environment for all employees.



***Goal: to encourage children to interact and communicate in positive ways  
and to support their ability to self-regulate;***

We as educators, use our position to help children develop socially and emotionally by teaching them how to identify their feelings, communicate them effectively, self-regulate and have positive interactions with peers and adults. We provide learning environments that are focused on encouraging self-expression, communication and an ability to self-regulate. We do this by assisting children in recognizing and labelling their feelings and then, through our support, children work through their feelings by identifying the source of the emotion and expressing that feeling in appropriate ways. We use a variety of strategies to attain positive experiences such as re-directing, explaining logical and natural consequences, setting appropriate limits and boundaries and implementing clear and appropriate expectations. We are also constantly looking for patterns or trends and then taking that information to plan and prepare the environment for positive interactions, communication and self-regulating behaviour. In addition, being a collaborative center, we have access to extra support through resource consultants who not only provide opportunities to role model and equip staff with strategies but who also model for children on how to manage their emotions effectively in a social environment.

***Goal; to foster children's exploration through play and inquiry opportunities;***

Our programs provide both an academic learning approach and a play based learning approach to create the best environment for children to learn and grow. We believe that every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with their body, mind and senses. We, as educators must help each child realize their full potential by indulging in their capabilities and curiosities. Therefore, our emergent program provides an environment that engages children in active, creative and meaningful exploration, play and inquiry. In order to build on their strengths and abilities, our physical set-up meets a child's need to be independent and self-reliant by ensuring all materials are accessible and allowing free choice of materials within limits. We encourage each child to choose and pursue activities of their own interest, giving them the opportunity to be creative and innovate as they learn. We also embrace children's natural curiosity as they try new things and explore new ideas. We aim to have the children direct their own learning and provide support when necessary to make their exploration meaningful and relevant in their lives. To ensure that children have access to a wide variety of learning experiences, we have toys and other learning materials on rotation so that we can always provide stimulating materials that offer new learning opportunities as well as truly reflect the interests and needs of the children.

***Goal: to provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences***

We follow the Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT) principles that require educators to be play partners, architects of the play space, planners, recorders and communicators. Thus, our educators provide enriched curriculum and an appropriate environment to interact with and support children throughout their day. Our educators do not direct children's play but take more of a back seat approach. This allows the children to have a voice in decision making and a choice as they take ownership over their learning and self-initiated play. We know that inquiry based play provides foundations for further leaning and development. Therefore our educators provide an environment that combines stimulating play opportunities and authentic learning experiences by ensuring that the resources available both indoor and outdoor allow for learning through exploration, investigation, critical thinking and problem solving. Our programs are developed to coincide with the interests of the children and our educators respond to their interests by supporting them in their learning and expanding their interests through providing new materials, posing questions and offering new challenges and ideas.

***Goal; to create and maintain positive learning environments and experiences  
in which every child's development is supported;***

Our inclusive programming is consistent with viewing each child as an individual as it allows children to learn in a way that is most appropriate to them. We understand that each child is unique and their development differs in pace and that factors such as family, community and life experiences influence their overall progress. Therefore, we integrate all areas of development into our programs in an all-inclusive way as we acknowledge that some children need more support than others in certain areas. Our programs offer a variety of age appropriate, planned

and spontaneous activities as well as small group learning so that no child is overlooked. These high quality interactions support the children by allowing them to accomplish each task at their own pace and to facilitate individual learning which encourages confidence and self-esteem. This positive teaching environment provides opportunities for a collaborative culture of trust and appropriate risk taking that improves the overall development of each child. Through such stimulating learning experiences and using the environment as a third teacher, children will thrive in both indoor and outdoor spaces which will invite them to investigate, imagine, think, create, solve problems and make meaning from their experiences, all which will aid in each child's social, emotional, cognitive, physical and language development.

***Goal: to 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 each child receiving care;***

Our schedules allow for a balance of structure and flexibility which allows us to be mindful of each child's needs and any parental direction. Our program has designated times for each child to experience indoor activities, two hours of outdoor play (weather permitting), and quiet time to sleep and rest. However, based on the child's individual schedule and parental requests we can make adjustments to meet all children's needs. To take each child's needs into account, we provide comprehensive programming that fosters development in all domains. We plan a variety of daily activities that are focused around language, literacy, numeracy, music and movement, science, sensory, nature, technology, blocks, construction, creative art and fine and gross motor skills. Our outdoor play space is available as an extension of our classrooms and staff bring or encourage children to bring indoor materials outside to enrich and extend their learning and development. For children with special needs, we work closely with their parents and our community partners to make sure that the appropriate supports and resources are in place to ensure optimal success for each child.

***Goal: to pursue on-going communication with parents about our program and their children's experiences, learning and overall development;***

We highly value daily communication with parents as we take advantage of all opportunities to engage meaningfully with parents throughout the day. We see families as experts who know their child better than anyone else and are the first and most powerful influence on learning and development. We believe that child care is a shared responsibility between parents and staff and encouraging families to get involved in our center is something that we are consistently working towards. We aim to create a team that consists of parents and educators who are working collaboratively to support each child's learning, development and overall success through setting and working to obtain common goals. Having a positive rapport with parents assures them that their child is in good hands as well as promotes honest communication in regards to their child. Sharing information is essential, thus parents have access to multiple resources including, but not limited to, ELECT, How Does Learning Happen and Think, Feel, Act. We also network with parents through sharing and providing unobstructed access to their child's achievements through written observations, Nippising developmental records, creative art and written and photo documentations. Our on-going communication allow parents to be actively involved in their child's experiences, learning and development which is integral to their child's success.

***Goal: to involve local community partners to assist in supporting our children, families and staff;***

We recognize that families are the primary caregivers, however, we also understand how important the role of community partners play in supporting children and their families. First off, we work with volunteers and placement students from the community as we provide learning opportunities and practical work experience. Volunteers and students also enhance our programs through their unique talents as well as ability to provide more individual attention to the children. We will also work closely with local community agencies and partners as we view the community as a valuable resource. We will plan outings, in-house appearances and special learning opportunities off-site to further engage the community in our programs. By working with our community, we are enriching our atmosphere of collaboration so that the children can see an active network of adults working together for their benefit.

***Goal: to support staff, specifically in relation to continuous professional learning;***

We see educators as knowledgeable, reflective, resourceful and rich in experience, thus we provide a non-discriminatory hiring process in which all employees are respected, supported and treated fairly. We know that staff enter employment with varying levels of knowledge, skill and experience and because we value high quality programs and the professional development of our educators, we require each staff to make a commitment to continuous professional development. Their participation in trainings and workshops will provide them with opportunities to acquire new information, upgrade and continue to improve their skills, knowledge and approaches. We will fully support and assist them in furthering their professional development as we offer in-house trainings and information on other trainings and workshops available in our community. Through such workshops, trainings and collaborative efforts, our goal is to communicate to our community that we are current in our knowledge, skills and practice and that we highly value ongoing professional learning.

***Goal: to document and review the impact of the strategies set out on our goals;***

Our program statement will be reviewed frequently to ensure that we are meeting our goals of valuing children's overall well-being, providing exceptional learning experiences, involving meaningful adults in children's lives, reflecting and monitoring individual development, co-programming with children, maintaining an open and on-going dialogue with families, participating in continuous professional learning and promoting positive and responsive relationships.

All staff, students and volunteers must adhere to our program statement and will review and sign off on it prior to working with the children and annually thereafter or upon any changes made to our program statement.

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## **Monitoring Compliance and Contravention**

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Staff, students and volunteers will be monitored on an on-going basis to ensure compliance and to record and address contraventions of any policies, procedures and individualized plans. The Director will monitor all staff, students and volunteers through daily observations of each classroom, documentation reviews, on-going conversation and parent and/or staff advisement.

***Measures used to Deal with Contravention***

Any reports involving a breach of prohibited practices (below) and our program statement are taken seriously and will be dealt with by the Director. Individuals who violate any prohibited practice and our program statement are subject to disciplinary or corrective action reflective of the severity and number of prior contraventions which can be up to and including termination of employment, volunteer opportunities or student placement

***Prohibited Practices***

Our program statement sets out approaches that support positive interactions, therefore, the following prohibited practices are not permitted;

- Corporal punishment of the child
- Physically restraint of a child, such as confining a child to a certain space or device for the purpose 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 it used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent
- Locking the exits for the purpose of confining a child, or confining the child in an seas or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and it requires are part of the emergency policies and procedures
- Using harsh, humiliating or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence o a child that would humiliate shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth.
- Depriving a child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding, etc
- Inflicting bodily harm on children including making them eat or drink against their will

## Parent Issues and Concerns Policy

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All issues and concerns raised by you are taken seriously by Little Scholars. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties and as quickly as possible. Investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial and respectful to parties involved. Issues or concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally or in writing upon request. An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to you within 5 business day(s). The level of detail provided in the response will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved. In addition, the individual who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

### ***Confidentiality***

Every issue or concern will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents, children, staff, students and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (i.e. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or the Children's Aid Society).

### ***Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a child***

If there is a concern that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) directly. Individuals who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to CAS as per the "Duty to Report" requirement under the Child and Family Services Act.

### ***Procedures***

The following procedures will be followed according to the nature of the issue or concern;

*Program/Room Related* (I.e. schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.): Parents and/or Guardians should raise the issue or concern to the classroom staff directly or to the Director.

*General, Centre or operations Related* (I.e. child care fees, hours of operation, staff, waiting lists, menus, etc.): Parents and/or Guardians should raise the issue or concern to the Director.

*Staff, duty parents and/or Director-Related*: Parents and/or Guardians should raise the issue or concern to the individual directly or to the Director. Please note that 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 Director as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.

*Student and/or Volunteer Related*: Parents and/or Guardians should raise the issue or concern to the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student or to the Director. Please note that 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 Director as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.

For all the above issues/concerns the following steps will be adhered to by the staff and the Director in response to the issue or concern:

- Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised
- If requested, arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within 5 business days.
- 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
- Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter
- Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within 5 business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Reasons for any delays must be documented in writing.
- Provide a resolution or outcome to the parents/guardians who raised the issue/concern

### ***Escalation of Issues or Concerns***

Where parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may escalate the issue or concern verbally or in writing to the centre Director. Where appropriate, issues or concerns may be reported to other relevant regulatory bodies listed below.

#### **Contacts:**

Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care Help Desk: 1-877-510-5333

Region of Waterloo Region Health Department: 1-519-575-4400

Ministry of Labour: 416-326-7160 or toll free 1-800-531-5551

Centre Director/Jennifer Bielby (519) 624-2273

Local Fire Department: 1-519-621-6001 or for emergencies 911

Region of Waterloo Police Service Headquarters: 1-519-653-7700 or for emergencies 911

Region of Waterloo Children's Aid Society: 1-519-576-0540

Family & Children's Services of the Waterloo Region: 1-519-623-6970

College of Early Childhood Educators: 416-961-8558 or toll free 1-888-961-8558

Ontario College of Teachers: 416-961-8800 or toll free 1-888-534-2222