



Little Scholars Child Care

Parent Handbook

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Welcome to Little Scholars Child Care

At Little Scholars, we are delighted to welcome you and your family to our community of curious minds and caring hearts. Our center is a place where children are encouraged to explore, discover, and grow in a safe, nurturing, and inclusive environment. We believe that every child is a capable learner, and we value the unique gifts each one brings to our program. Through play-based learning, meaningful relationships, and hands-on educational experiences, we aim to foster a lifelong love of learning and help each child reach their fullest potential. We look forward to partnering with you on this exciting journey, supporting your child's growth, and creating lasting memories together. Thank you for choosing Little Scholars — where every day is a new opportunity to learn, laugh, and shine!

The Little Scholars Child Care Center Team

Overview

Enclosed you will find valuable information that will answer many questions regarding the care of your child as well as our daily operations. The policies and procedures 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. If you have any questions or concerns about any information outlined in this handbook, please feel free to contact me.

Jennifer Bielby - Centre Director

Our Mission

Our mission is to nurture curious minds, compassionate hearts, and confident learners. We provide a high quality, safe, inclusive, and engaging environment where children are encouraged to explore, create, and grow at their own pace. Through play-based learning, scholastic experiences, positive and responsive relationships, and strong partnerships with families and our community, we aim to build a foundation for lifelong learning and success.

Our Vision

We aim to be a nurturing community where every child is seen, heard, and valued, which promotes confidence to explore the world around them. We strive to inspire a lifelong love of learning by fostering curiosity, creativity, and independence in a safe, supportive, and enriching environment.

Our Philosophy

We believe that every child is a capable, curious, and unique individual who thrives in an environment of love, respect, and discovery. Our philosophy is rooted in the understanding that early childhood is a vital stage in human development—one in which the foundations for lifelong learning, social connection, and emotional well-being are built. We are committed to providing a high quality, safe, nurturing, and stimulating environment where children can explore, create,

and grow at their own pace. Through play-based learning, educational exploration, and positive relationships, we foster each child's cognitive, social, emotional, language and physical development. Our educators act as facilitators of learning by encouraging curiosity, promoting independence, and celebrating the joy of discovery. We value diversity and inclusion, recognizing that children learn best when their identities, cultures, and family backgrounds are respected and reflected in the classroom. Partnerships with families is at the heart of our approach. We believe that strong communication and collaboration between parents and educators create the best outcomes for children. Together, we nurture not only little learners, but compassionate, confident, and resilient individuals who are ready to flourish as we inspire a lifelong love of learning.

Hours of Operation

Our hours of operation are Monday to Friday from 7:00 AM – 5:30 PM. We are closed on 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 Christmas Eve and New Years Eve, we close at 12:30 PM.

Inclement Weather/Closures

Little Scholars may close from time to time due to inclement weather and every effort will be made to provide educators and families with as much notice as possible. There will be a mass email sent out to inform families 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, we reserve 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)

Little Scholars has opted into the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) Program. As of January 1st 2025, our daily fees have been reduced to \$22. Fees are divided into base fees and non-base fees. Base fees are everything considered to be a mandatory charge to a parent for providing care, including everything a licensee is required to provide under the CCEYA such as daily fees. Non-base fees are fees charged for optional services or any fees where a parent fails to meet agreement terms such as fees for late pick up, late or bounced payment.

Programs

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 an educator to child ratio of 1:3 and 3:10. The daily fee for this program is \$22
Part time spots are not available for this age group

Our first Toddler program consists of 5 children aged 18 months to 30 months. This room has an educator to child ratio of 1:5. The daily fee for this program is \$22
Part time spots are not available for this age group.

Our second Toddler program consists of 10 children aged 18 months to 30 months. This room has an educator to child ratio of 1:5 and 2:10. The daily fee for this program is \$22
Part time spots are not available for this age group

Our third Toddler program consists of 15 children aged 18 months to 30 months. This room has an educator to child ratio of 1:5 and 3:15. The daily fee for this program is \$22
Part time spots are not available for this age group

Our first Preschool program consists of 24 children aged 30 months to 6 years old. This room has an educator to child ratio of 1:8 and 3:24. The daily fee for this program is \$22
Part time spots are not available for this age group

Our second Preschool program consists of 24 children aged 30 months to 6 years old. This room has an educator to child ratio of 1:8 and 3:24. The daily fee for this program is \$22
Part time spots are not available for this age group

Wait List

Our waitlist policy is transparent, fair, consistent and free of charge. To join our waitlist, families must register their child with OneList Waterloo Region. Once their application is received, the family will receive an automated email. This email will provide more information about our waitlist and center and will also inform the families of the following;

- There is a separate waitlist for each age group
- Having your child on our waitlist does not guarantee a space 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 space
- Priority is established by the date of the application submission
- Priority will also be given to children of educators, children who are due to graduate to a new program as well as children with siblings already enrolled

The Director and/or Supervisor is responsible for managing our waitlist by determining placement priority and offering available spaces. When a space becomes available, the first eligible family will be contacted. If the family does not accept the space that is currently available, they will keep their current position on our waitlist but will be bypassed and the space will go to the next eligible family. Once prioritized families have been placed, other children will be prioritized based on the chronology in which they were placed on our waitlist and our program availability.

Families on our waitlist will be notified via phone and email that a space has become available. They will have 48 hours to provide a response. Where a family has not responded within the given timeframe, the next family will be contacted and offered the space. If a family responds

after the given timeframe, they will be notified that they will keep their current position on our waitlist, but they will have to wait until another space becomes available to their family. A family will only be removed from our waitlist if they request it, share that they have obtained a space elsewhere, or if multiple attempts have been made to contact the family without a response.

Our waitlist will be maintained in a manner that protects the privacy and confidentiality of the children and families. Families can contact the center to ask about their child's place on our waitlist. The Director and/or Supervisor will let the family know their child's position and the estimated likelihood of their child being offered a space. Names of other children or families and/or their placement on our waitlist will not be shared. Families will also be made aware that their current number on our waitlist may change depending on families withdrawing or being removed from our waitlist, if priority individuals join our waitlist and if families on our waitlist change their requested age group and/or starting date.

Registration and Admission

Little Scholars requires that your child's registration package be completed in full prior to attendance. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure that information on the forms are completed with the most up-to-date information available. All information requested is a requirement in order to be in compliance with the Ministry of Education and for our general knowledge and any 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

Once the Director or Supervisor has confirmed a space for your child, a two-week deposit is due via e-transfer. Once enrolled, a monthly fee schedule will be available, and all payments must be made through Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). Banking information (saving or chequings) must be provided and a sign off submitted showing an understanding that if your payment bounces, a new invoice will be provided which will show your new balance due including a \$100 NSF non-base fee (non-sufficient funds). All fees will be collected from your accounts on the first of the month. If the first of the month falls on a weekend and/or holiday, funds will be taken out on the next business day. If EFT is unavailable with your bank or not inline with your personal preference, the only other method of payment is e-transfer. All e-transfers are due by the first of the month before 12:00 noon. If your monthly payment via e-transfer is received after the first of the month, a \$25 late penalty non-base fee will be added to your invoice each day. Please note that full monthly fees are due regardless of inclement weather or days your child is not in attendance due to illness or vacation. In addition, full fees apply for all holidays.

Refunds

If any overpayments are made via a parent, they will either be refunded the difference or it will be kept on record and go towards their next invoice. Similarly, if a parent is over charged, they will either be refunded the difference or it will be kept on record and go towards their next invoice.

Withdrawal

Families wishing to withdrawal care must provide the Director or Supervisor 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 in a previous payment, 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.

Minimum Length of Attendance

Little Scholars has a minimum attendance period of one month. Families must commit to at least one month of care before they are able to withdrawal without penalty. If you choose to withdrawal before the one month, all fees including the 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 the 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 child care fees will be issued annually via email on or before February 28

First Day

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

- Blanket and/or stuffy for rest time
- Labelled water bottle
- Bottle (Infants only - if applicable)
- Indoor and outdoor shoes
- Sunscreen (Seasonal)
- Diapers, pull ups, diaper cream and wipes (If applicable)
- At least two extra changes of clothes

During your child's transition, we ask that you drop them off and not linger. Give them a big hug and kiss goodbye and then leave. It may be difficult as they are in a new environment filled with new faces but rest assured that our educators will work diligently to help your child have the smoothest transition possible. We ask that you give us time and understand that ultimately your child will adjust and develop feelings of security and confidence within our centre.

Children's Belongings

We strongly recommend that you clearly label all your child's belongings such as their water bottle, blanket and/or stuffy, shoes, extra clothes, outdoor wear, 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.

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 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 heavily raining, children will go outside if it is lightly raining as well as after it has rained and the ground may be wet so we encourage parents to provide rain gear such as rain boots, splash pants and a rain jacket

Toys from Home

Unless requested by the educators for a classroom activity such as "show and share," or for a special theme day outlined on the calendar, children are not permitted to bring any toys from home to the centre.

Children with Medical Needs

We prioritize children's health and safety and if there is a child who has a medical condition, we take extra precautions. We require an individualized plan for each child with a medical condition. The plan must be created in consultation with the child's parents and any regulated health professional who is involved in the child's health care. This plan will assist educators in taking all the necessary steps to support the child's medical needs and ensure his/her inclusion in our program. The plan must include the following details;

- A description of any medical devices used by the child and any instructions related to its use
- 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 emergency
- A description of the procedures to be followed in the event of an allergic reaction or other medical emergency
- Any additional procedures to be followed when the child is part of an evacuation or participating in an off-site activity or field trip

Parents are requested to advise the Director and/or Supervisor if their child develops a medical condition or if there are any changes to their child's current individualized plan. The original plan will be kept in the child's file, while copies of the plan will be posted in the child's classroom on the parent board as well as placed in the child's classroom attendance binder. In addition, all educators, students and volunteers will review each individual plan annually or when changes occur to ensure that they are accurately prepared with all the necessary information to deal with any medical situation pertaining to the child.

Children's Individual Plan Policy

We will ensure that an up-to-date individualized support plan is in place for each child with special needs. The plan includes a description of how our center will support the child to function and participate in our programs in a meaningful and purposeful manner. There will also be a description of any support aids, adaptations or other modifications to the physical, social and learning environment that are required or suggested for the child. In addition, the plan will also include instructions relating to the use of the supports, aids or modified environment.

The plan is developed by our resource consultant in consultation with the parents, the child (if appropriate for the child's age), the Director and any educators who work daily with the child. The educators will not only be involved in helping to develop this plan but also will be responsible for its implementation. Their program and schedule must be accommodating to all individual plans and must also showcase that they are taking all necessary steps to support children with special needs so that they can participate to the maximum extent possible in our programs. When necessary, the plan will be updated and revised as the child's supports and/or needs may change over time.

Parent Communication and Involvement

We value the partnership between families and educators and believe that open communication and mutual respect are key to each child's success. Parents are encouraged to take an active role in our centre and regularly discuss what their child is experiencing with our program. As supported by our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among children, parents/guardians and educators, and foster the engagement of ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their child. Our educators are available to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction. In addition, we host annual parent/educator conferences where educators have the opportunity to discuss and showcase your child's development and progress through Look Sees and other 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 families to be involved within the centre as much as possible. They 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). They are also encouraged to attend our breakfasts, BBQ, hlday parities, etc.

***MyKidsDailyReports** - Once enrolled, you will be able to set up an account with our MyKidsDailyReports app in order to gain access to our daily reporting system (includes information about food and liquid intake, nap times, diaper changes and activities) calendars, newsletters and critical emergency information.

Monthly Calendars and Newsletters - Monthly calendars and newsletters will be sent out via DaycareWebWatch These will provide you with information on special dates, new events, statutory holiday closures, birthdays, etc.

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

Safe Arrival and Dismissal

This policy and the procedures within help support the safe arrival and dismissal of children. This policy provides families and educators with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for ensuring the safe arrival and dismissal of children.

Please note that drop off starts at 7:00am and we ask that your child is here by 9:30am at the latest for program. Pick up can be any time before 5:30pm. At drop off and pick up, please ensure that the educator in the classroom is aware of all arrivals and departures. Educators 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.

If your child is going to be absent, we must receive an email or phone call by 9:00am. If you leave a voicemail or send an email please provide the reason for their absence and if they are ill, please ensure that all symptoms are shared with the center to be logged in our daily written record.

Accepting a child into care

When accepting a child into care, educators in the room must:

- 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/guardian will be picking up, the educators must confirm that the person is listed on the child's emergency form. If the individual is not listed, educators must record the individual's legal full name and remind them that the individual will need to present photo identification at the time of pick up to verify their identity
- Document the change in pick-up procedure in the daily written record

Where a child has not arrived as expected

Where a child does not arrive as expected and the parent/guardian has not previously communicated their absence (such as being on vacation or off sick) or a change in drop-off time (i.e. left a voice message, sent an email or advised the closing educators at pick-up the day prior), the educators in the classroom must:

- Contact the child's parents/guardians no later than 10:00am. When attempting to make contact, both parents/guardians must be called at least once, and a message must be left if there is no answer. If the call is answered or returned, educators will confirm the child's absence or late arrival. Please note that the educators will use their discretion in calling parents based on the child's regular drop off time. (i.e. if a child is usually dropped off by 7:30am, we will not wait until 10:00am to reach out but adjust our calls to about an hour after their regular drop off time)
- If educators cannot reach the child's parents/guardians to confirm their absence or late arrival, educators will inform the Director and/or Supervisor and they will email the family. If the Director and/or Supervisor are still unable to get a hold of the family, next steps will be determined on a case-by-case basis in terms of the family's communicative history in terms of absences. (i.e. If they have a history of not being reachable or communicating absences versus a history of open communication and always informing the center of absences).

Once the child's absence or late arrival has been confirmed, educators will document the child's absence on the attendance record and any additional information about their absence or change in drop off in the daily written record.

Releasing a child from care

The educators who are supervising the child at the time of pick-up will only release the child to the child's parent/guardian or an individual that the parent/guardian has provided written or verbal authorization. Where the educators does not know the individual picking up the child, they must;

- Confirm with another educator (who knows the individual) that the individual picking up is the child's parent/guardian or authorized individual
- Where the above is not possible, ask the parent/guardian or authorized individual for photo identification and confirm the individual's information against the child's file or written authorization

Educators will only release children to the parent/guardian or other authorized individual. Under no circumstances will children be released from care unsupervised.

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

Where a parent/guardian has previously communicated with the educators a specific time or timeframe that their child is to be picked up and the child has not been picked up, the educators will;

- Contact the parent/guardian via telephone once the specified time has passed (approximately 30 minutes) and advise that the child is still in care and has not been picked up. If there is no answer, a message must be left to contact the centre. If the call hasn't been returned within a reasonable amount of time, the educators must try calling again and leave another message

- Where the individual picking up the child is an authorized individual and their contact information is available, the educators will proceed with contacting the individual to confirm pick-up as per the parent/guardian's instructions or leave a message to contact the centre
- If the educators have not heard back from the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was to pick up the child, the educators will inform the Director and/or Supervisor, wait until the program closes and then refer to procedures below "where a child has not been picked up and the center is closed."

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

- Where a parent/guardian or authorized individual who was supposed to pick up a child has not arrived by 5:30pm, educators will ensure that the child is given a snack and an activity, while they await their pick-up
- The educators will call 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 educators will contact the parent/guardian first and then proceed to contact the authorized individual responsible for pick-up if unable to reach the parent/guardian
- If the educators are unable to reach the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the child, the educators will begin calling the authorized emergency contacts listed on the child's emergency form
- Where the educators are unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized individual listed on the child's emergency form by 6:00pm the educators will proceed with contacting our local Family and Children's Services (CAS) and follow their direction with respect to next steps

Custody Arrangements

Regarding custody arrangements, documented proof of custody must be provided and will be retained in the child's file. If changes in custody occur, paperwork must be updated, signed and added to the child's file. Please note that we will adhere to the most recent documents unless new documentation is obtained.

Children's safety is our number one priority and as such any educator, Director or Supervisor 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 or drug use, criminal infringement, unauthorized pickup, etc.)

Late Fees

In the event where a parent/guardian is late picking up their child, a fee of \$1.00 per minute is charged to the family. Parents must sign our late pick-up form and payment must be made immediately to the Director or Supervisor. If unable to pay immediately, then the fee will be added onto their next monthly invoice. In addition, if the family has not contacted the centre by 6:00pm and educators have attempted to call parents, guardians and emergency contacts with no reply, the Children's Aid Society will be contacted.

Termination of Space

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 families.

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, a minimum of two weeks notice shall be given and the Director or Supervisor may assist in finding more suitable care.

Program Statement

Our program statement and pedagogy 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.

Through our program statement, we have 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 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: Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years resource.

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 compliant 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 regarding any medical conditions, exceptionalities, allergies, dietary

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 educators

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 educators, 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 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 educators 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. 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 all children are involved. 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 our stimulating learning experiences and ability to use the environment as another educator, children will thrive in both indoor and outdoor spaces as they investigate, imagine, critically think, create, problem solve 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 consider the individual needs of each child receiving care

Our schedules have 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, 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 on 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 educators 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 and take advantage of all opportunities to engage meaningfully with them 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 childcare is a shared responsibility between parents and educators 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 work 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 regarding their child. Sharing information and being a resource to families is essential, thus parents have access to multiple resources through our organization. We also network with parents by sharing and providing unobstructed access to their child's achievements through written observations, developmental records, creative art and written and photo documentations. Our on-going communication allows 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 educators

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. We work with volunteers and placement students from the community and provide learning opportunities and practical work experience. Volunteers and students enhance our programs through their unique talents as well as ability to provide more individual attention to the children. We also work closely with local community agencies and partners such as KWHabilitation and KidsAbility as we view the community as a valuable resource. Finally, we plan outings, in-house appearances and special learning opportunities 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 educators, specifically in relation to continuous professional learning

We see educators as knowledgeable, reflective, resourceful and rich in experience, thus we provide a fair hiring process in which all employees are respected, supported and treated fairly. We know that educators 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 all educators 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.

Nutrition

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 chef. 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 beef, pork, shellfish, and nut free and offers delicious substitutions that cater towards any allergy or restriction. We follow a four-week, rotational seasonal menu that are approved by a certified dietician. Menus for the current week and the following week will be posted outside the kitchen for reference.

A.M. Snack

Please note that AM snack will be served from 7:00am to 8:30am daily. Please note that snacks are just that, a snack, please ensure that your child has had a nutritious breakfast at home prior to arrival.

Special Requirements

- If a child is under 12 months, they will be fed in accordance with written instructions from parents. A copy of the instructions will be available in the child's classroom and the original will be stored in their file in the office
- All formula and/or breast milk supplied must be labelled with the child's name and will be stored accordingly
- If a child has a special dietary and/or feeding need, we will follow written arrangements made by parents. A copy of the instructions will be available in the child's classroom and the original will be stored in their file in the office
- 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.

Playground Safety

Outdoor play is an integral part of the daily schedule and plays an important role in the development of children's overall well-being. In order for children to thrive in outdoor play, it is crucial that there be sufficient toys and equipment for children to engage in active play and that educators engage as active participants in the play.

Little Scholars ensures that;

- There are enough play materials available that are appropriate for the children's age and learning and developmental needs during outdoor play
- The maximum capacity of the playground will not be exceeded at any time
- The playground rotation schedule is followed
- Educator to child ratios will be maintained at all times and reduced ratios will never be used
- Emergency backpacks are brought out for both AM and PM play. The backpacks contain the daily attendance, the daily written record, children's emergency information, allergy/restriction lists, individual plans and a first aid kit

Playground Inspections

- Prior to the children going outside, a playground check will be completed in both the morning and the afternoon
- The daily playground checks will include what checks were conducted, the initials of the educator who conducted it and any notes and/or comments about the playground
- If there is an issue and/or safety concern, the Director or Supervisor 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
- Daily, monthly and annual playground safety checklists are in accordance with the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) and are carried out by a designated educator 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 educators, Director and Supervisor'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 and water tables, under the close supervision of educators 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. All sunscreen must have an expiry date and all expiry dates will be checked frequently as no expired sunscreen will be applied. All sunscreen will be labelled and kept out of the children's reach. Educators will apply sunscreen in the morning and

afternoon before they go outdoors. However, if your child's classroom is already outside upon arrival, families are required to apply sunscreen to their child before they drop them off outside.

Sleep Supervision Policy

Children's sleep and rest play an integral part in a child's well-being and development. We follow all recommendations set out in the most current version of the Health Canada's document entitled, "Joint Statement on Safe Sleep: Preventing Sudden Infant Deaths in Canada."

Little Scholars will ensure that;

- All children will be provided with the opportunity to sleep or engage in quiet activities based on their needs
- Children under 12 months of age will be provided time to sleep based on their individual schedules provided in their registration package and will be assigned to a crib labelled with their name
- Only light, breathable blankets or sleep sacs will be used for infants
- Children 18 months or older but younger than six years old will be provided time to sleep for a period of no more than two hours each day (12:00pm-2:00pm) and will be assigned to a cot labelled with their name
- Where children are sleeping in a separate sleep room or area, their names will be listed on the whiteboard so that educators can immediately identify which children are present in the room or area
- Educators will be present in each room during sleep time and reduced ratios will always be met

Placement of Children for Sleep

- Children under 12 months of age will be placed in their assigned cribs for sleep
- All children who are younger than 12 months of age will be placed on their backs to sleep in accordance with the recommendations set out in the "Joint Statement on Safe Sleep", unless other instructions are provided in writing by the child's physician. It is important to note that once infants are able to roll from their back to their stomach or sides, it is not necessary to reposition them onto their backs
- Children between 12 and 18 months of age will be placed in their assigned cribs or cots for sleep
- Children over 18 months of age who sleep will be placed on individual cots for sleep

Consultation with Parents

- Educators will consult with parents about their child's sleeping arrangements at the time of enrolment and at any other appropriate time (i.e. when a child transitions to a new program or room, or at the parent's request)
- Written documentation will be kept in each child's file to reflect the sleep patterns identified by their parent, and updates to the documentation will be made whenever changes are communicated
- Parents will be advised by educators of any significant changes in their child's behaviours during sleep and/or sleeping patterns

- Educators will document their observations of changes in a child's sleep behaviours in the daily written record and daily sleep check
- Any changes in sleep behaviours will result in adjustments being made to the child's supervision during sleep time, where appropriate, based on consultation with the child's parent
- If your child requires a shorter nap or no nap, they must have a written request from the family

Direct Visual Checks

- Direct visual checks of each sleeping child who is in our Infant and Toddler age group will be conducted to look for indicators of distress or unusual behaviours
- Direct visual checks for Infants and Toddlers will be completed and documented at least every 30 minutes
- Direct visual checks are not required for Preschool children or children engaging in quiet activities, but these children will be supervised at all times
- Educators will ensure that all sleep areas have adequate lighting available to conduct the direct visual checks of sleeping children

Off-Site Activities

Little Scholars occasionally conducts off site activities for Preschoolers. Families will be given ample notice and will have to complete a permission form before their child can participate. 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 attends, however if you do not want your child to participate, you will need to find alternative care for that day. For safety reasons, we do not provide off-site activities for Infants and Toddlers. All programs participate in community walks and activities and events that are brought to site.

Health & Infectious Diseases

This policy outlines the measures taken to stop the spread of germs and keep illness from infecting everyone. Educators and families must abide by our regulations as they are in the best interest of themselves, their children, other children and their parents, educators and their families.

General

- Prior to a child's admittance, the medical sections in the registration package must be completed and a copy of the child's up-to-date immunization records are required. 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. 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
- 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 they are well enough to participate in all activities. If your child is already present but not well enough to participate in all aspects of the program, they will be sent home.

- If a child is unable to attend for any health-related reason, parents are required to contact the center via phone or email before 9:00AM to inform us of the absence. If you leave a voicemail or send an email please provide all symptoms so that they can be logged in our daily written record
- Upon arrival at the center, educators will initiate a brief daily health check of each child while the parent is still present, to ensure that every child is healthy enough to participate in all aspects of the program, including outdoor play

Sickness/Absence

- Parents must pay the regular daily fee for any absence due to illness or any other medical reason the child may be away
- If a child is away for more than five consecutive days because of illness, a physicians' letter may be required for verification and re-admittance
- If a child is away for more than one month, the family will be given the option to withdrawal and be re-admitted when a space becomes available or to continue to pay full fees to hold the spot
- For extended convalescence, a space may be reserved if the parent is willing to pay full fee during the absence

Re-admittance after Illness

- Temperature (fever – 38C or above) - at least 24 hours fever free with no fever reducing medication such as Tylenol or Advil
- Vomiting diarrhea and nausea - at least 48 hours symptom free
- Infectious diseases (measles, mumps, meningitis, pertussis [whooping cough], scarlet fever, chicken pox) - with a physician's note stating that the child is no longer contagious and can return to care
- Influenza/Flu - at least 24 hours fever free with no fever reducing medication (i.e. Tylenol or Advil) and at least 48 hours free from gastrointestinal symptoms (i.e. vomiting and diarrhea)
- Pinkeye (conjunctivitis) - at least 24 hours after starting antibiotics
- Strep Throat - at least 24 hours after starting antibiotics
- Impetigo - at least 24 hours after starting antibiotics. If a child still has dry lesions upon admission, all scabs must be properly covered
- Ringworm – at least 24 hours after starting antibiotics
- Croup – at least 24 hours after starting antibiotics (if applicable) or at least 24 hours of symptom (cough) improvement and at least 24 hours fever free with no fever reducing medication (i.e. Tylenol or Advil)
- Fifth Disease (slapped cheek) - no exclusion as once the rash appears, the child is no longer contagious
- Roseola - at least 24 hours of starting antibiotics (if applicable) or at least 24 hours fever free with no fever reducing medication (i.e. Tylenol or Advil)

- Hand Foot and Mouth Disease (HFM) - at least 24 hours fever free with no fever reducing medication (i.e. Tylenol or Advil). They must have no new blisters within the last 24 hours and all existing blisters have dried and are scabbed over
 - Pinworm - at least 24 hours after starting antibiotics
 - Pediculosis (head lice) - a child will not be re-admitted until they have received treatment.
- They also need to provide written verification by a physician or professional who has confirmed that there are no longer any live eggs or nits present

Emergencies and Illness

If a child becomes ill during the day, educators will notify the Director and/or Supervisor and the child's parent and/or guardian and will request that the child be picked up. It is imperative that parents return missed phone calls as soon as possible. If the child is exhibiting any skin irritation or rashes and/or any symptoms of illness that could be a transmittable illness, a diagnosis from a medical professional will be required to determine their return to care. Please note that any siblings of the sick child must also be picked up and neither can attend until a diagnosis is provided. If a sibling is diagnosed with something that is not contagious like an ear infection then siblings can attend once a diagnosis has been provided. If a sibling is diagnosed with something contagious, then that child and any sibling must not attend while anyone in the household is symptomatic.

In the case of a serious emergency, the following measures will be taken;

- Educators will call 911 and inform the Director and/or Supervisor
- The child will be taken to the nearest hospital
- The Director or Supervisor will notify the parents, who will be asked to join the child, Director or Supervisor and educator at the hospital

Medication Policy

The purpose of this policy and the procedures outlined within is to provide clear direction for families and educators to follow for administering medication to children and for appropriate record-keeping.

Where the term medication is used in this policy, the term refers to any product with a drug identification number (DIN). For the purpose of this policy, medications fall into the following two categories:

- Prescription, intended for acute, symptomatic treatment
- Over-the-counter, intended for acute, symptomatic treatment

Note: The following items are not considered medication for the purposes of this policy, except where the item is a drug, as defined in the *Drug and Pharmacies Regulation Act*, prescribed for a child by a health professional:

1. Sunscreen
2. Moisturizing skin lotion
3. Lip balm
4. Insect Repellent

5. Hand sanitizer
6. Diaper cream

These over-the-counter products may only be administered in accordance with the following rules:

- Must have written authorization by a parent. This can be in the form of a “blanket authorization” in their registration package. It does not require a medication administration form
- If a parent does not provide written authorization for the use of these items, this will be communicated to the educators
- Must be stored in accordance with the instructions for storage on the label and the container or package must be clearly labelled with the child’s name and the name of the item
- A container or package does not need to be labelled with a child’s name where items are shared (if appropriate), such as hand sanitizer located at entrances and exits
- Must be administered to a child only from the original container or package and in accordance with any instructions on the label and any instructions provided by the parent of the child

Parental Authorization to Administer Medication

- Whenever possible, parents will be encouraged to administer medications to their children at home if this can be done without affecting the child’s treatment schedule
- Prescription and over-the-counter medications for acute, symptomatic treatment will only be administered to a child where a parent of the child has given written authorization to do so by completing a medication administration form. A medication administration form must be accompanied by a doctor’s note for over-the-counter medications
- The authorization must include set times the medication is to be given and the amount to be administered
- Where a medication is to be administered to a child on an “as needed” basis and there is no specific schedule or time of the day for administration, the medication must be accompanied with a doctor’s note outlining signs and symptoms for administering the medication and the appropriate dosage. In addition, the medication administration form must clearly indicate the situations under which the medication is to be given as outlined in the doctor’s note, including observable symptoms
- Prescription/over-the-counter skin products (With a DIN) that need to be administered for acute or symptomatic treatment will only be administered to a child where a parent of the child has given written authorization to do so by completing the medication administration form and when over-the-counter, providing an accompanying doctors note

Medication Requirements

All medications to be administered to children must meet the following requirements:

- All medications must be stored in their original containers as supplied by a pharmacist and/or their original package. Medications that have been removed from their original package or transferred into a different container will not be accepted or administered to children

All medication containers must be clearly labelled with:

- The child’s full name
- The name of the medication

- The dosage of the medication
- Instructions for storage
- Instructions for administration
- The date of purchase of the medication for prescription medications
- The expiry date of the medication

*The information provided on the medication administration form must match with all the requirements listed above

Where information is missing on a medication label and/or the written authorization does not match the label on the labelled container, Little Scholars will not accept or administer the medication until the label and/or written authorization accurately contains all the required information.

Over-the-counter epinephrine purchased for a specific child can be administered to a child with an individualized plan and emergency procedures for an anaphylactic allergy as long as it is accompanied by a doctor's note and is clearly labeled with the child's name, the name of the medication, the dosage, the date of expiration and the instructions for storage and administration.

Medication Handling and Storage

- All medications will be always kept inaccessible to children in a locked container or area
- All emergency medications will be brought onto the playground, evacuations, field trips and off-site activities
- All medications for children will be stored in accordance with the instructions for storage on the label and any medication requiring refrigeration will be stored in the refrigerator in a locked container
- Where medications are past their expiry date, they will be returned to the parent of the child and this will be documented on the medication administration form
- Any medications remaining after the treatment period will be returned to a parent of the child and this will be documented on the medication administration form

Medication Administration

- Medications will be administered according to the instructions on the label and only with written parental authorization
- Designated person(s) in charge of medications will deal with all medications to reduce the potential for errors, whether on or off the premises. Where the person(s) is absent, they will delegate this responsibility to another individual. The name of the individual who administers the medication will be recorded on the medication administration form and in their daily written record
- A medication will only be administered from its original container as supplied by a pharmacist or its original package, and where the container is clearly labelled as outlined under the Medication Requirements section of this policy
- A medication will only be administered using the appropriate dispenser (e.g. syringe, measuring spoon/cup, etc.)

Anaphylactic Policy

Anaphylaxis is a serious allergic reaction that can be life-threatening. It requires avoidance strategies and immediate response in the event of an emergency. These policies and procedures are intended to help meet the needs and save the lives of children with severe allergies and provide relevant and important information on anaphylaxis to parents, educators, students, volunteers and visitors.

Individualized Plans and Emergency Procedures for Children with Anaphylactic Allergies

- Before a child attends or upon discovering that a child has an anaphylactic allergy, an individualized plan and emergency procedures will be developed for each child with anaphylaxis in consultation and collaboration with the child's parent, and any regulated health professional who is involved in the child's care that the parent believes should be included in the consultation
- All individualized plans and emergency procedures will include a description of symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction that are specific to the child and the procedures to be followed in the event of an allergic reaction or other medical emergency based on the severity of the child's symptoms
- The individualized plan and emergency procedures for each child will include information for those who are in direct contact with the child on a regular basis about the type of allergy, monitoring and avoidance strategies and appropriate treatment
- All individualized plans and emergency procedures will be always made readily accessible to all educators, students and volunteers and will be kept in the classroom attendance binder and posted on the parent information board
- All individualized plans and emergency procedures will be reviewed with a parent of the child quarterly to ensure the information is current and up to date
- Every child's epinephrine auto-injector is carried by an educator in a fanny pack whenever the child is outside of the classroom. When in the classroom, the fanny pack is hung in a designated spot out of the children's reach

Strategies to Reduce the Risk of Exposure to Causative Agents

The following strategies to reduce the risk of exposure to anaphylactic causative agents must be followed by educators, students and volunteers.

- Do not serve foods where its ingredients are not known
- In cases where a child has food allergies and the meals and snacks provided cannot meet the child's needs, ask the child's parent to supply snacks/meals for their child. All written instructions for diet provided by a parent will be implemented
- Where food is provided from home for children, ensure that appropriate supervision of children is maintained so that food is not shared or exchanged
- Encourage parents who serve foods containing allergens at home to ensure their child has been rid of the allergens prior to arriving (i.e. by thoroughly washing hands, brushing teeth, etc.)
- Do not use craft/sensory materials and toys that have known allergens on the labels
- Share information about anaphylaxis, strategies to reduce the risk of exposure to known allergens and treatment with all families enrolled

- Make sure each child's individual plan and emergency procedure are kept-up-to-date and that all educators, students, and volunteers are trained on the plans
- Refer to the allergy list and ensure that it is up-to-date
- Update educators, students, and volunteers when changes to a child's allergies, signs and symptoms, and treatment occur and review all updates to individualized plans and emergency procedures
- Update families when new allergies arise or changes to allergies occur while maintaining the confidentiality of children

Communication Plan for the Dissemination of Information

The following is our communication plan for sharing information on life-threatening and anaphylactic allergies with educators, students, volunteers and families.

- Parents will be encouraged not to bring foods that contain ingredients to which children may be allergic
- A list of all children's allergies including food and other causative agents will be posted in all cooking and serving areas, in each play activity room, and made available in any other area where children may be present
- Each child with an anaphylactic allergy will have an individualized plan and emergency procedures that detail signs and symptoms specific to the child describing how to identify that they are having an allergic reaction and what to do if they experience a reaction
- Each child's individualized plan and emergency procedures will be made available and accessible wherever the child may be present while receiving care
- The chef, individuals who collect groceries and/or other food handling educators, where applicable, will be informed of all allergies and food restrictions, including those of children, educators, students and volunteers. An updated list of allergies will be provided to the chef as soon as new allergies are identified. The Director and/or Supervisor will communicate with the chef about which foods are not to be used in food preparation and will work together to provide food substitutions
- Little Scholars will communicate with the Ministry of Education by reporting serious occurrences where an anaphylactic reaction occurs in accordance with the established serious occurrence policy and procedures

Individual Plan and Emergency Procedure

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

- Recent picture of child
- Description of the child's allergy
- Signs and symptoms of their child's anaphylactic reaction
- Procedures to be followed in the event of a reaction
- Parent consent for administering allergy medication and sharing/posting emergency plan
- Emergency contact information
- Dosage, expiry and location of Epi-Pen
- Where medications will need to be administered to a child in response to an anaphylactic reaction, the medication administration policy will be followed including the completion of a medication administration form

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

Rules for Parents Who Send Food with their Child

- Ensure that parents label food with the child's full name and if applicable, the date the food arrived at the center
- Parents must advise Little Scholars of all ingredients in food supplied by the parent

Training

- The Director and/or Supervisor will ensure that all educators, students and volunteers receive training from a parent of a child with anaphylaxis on the procedures to follow in the event of a child having an anaphylactic reaction, including how to recognize the signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis and administer emergency allergy medication
- Where only the Director and/or Supervisor has been trained by a parent, the Director and/or Supervisor will ensure training is provided to all other educators, students and volunteers
- Training will be repeated annually and any time there are changes to any child's individualized plan and emergency procedures

Procedures to be followed in the circumstance described below:

A child exhibits an anaphylactic reaction to an allergen

The educator who becomes aware of the child's anaphylactic reaction must immediately:

- Implement the child's individualized plan and emergency procedures
- Contact emergency services and the parent/guardian of the child, or have another person do so where possible
- Ensure that where an epinephrine auto-injector has been used, it is properly discarded (i.e. given to emergency services, or in accordance with the medication administration policy).

Once the child's condition has stabilized or the child has been taken to hospital, educators must:

- Follow our serious occurrence policies and procedures
- Document the incident in the daily written record

Accident Reporting Policy

Our policy will be followed for minor accidents (i.e. scrapes, bumps, bruises, etc.) that take place both indoors and outdoors, anytime a child is in our care.

For minor accidents, educators will

1. Provide first aid to the injured child
2. Complete an accident report for the injury which will include: the child's name, educators name, date and time of accident, location of accident, description of accident, nature of injury and educator's response and first aid administered

3. Notify the parents, if the child's injury involves the head (i.e. bump, cut, etc.). If the injury is elsewhere on the body (i.e. scraped knee, etc.) parents will be informed at pick up
4. Show parents the area of injury, provide them with the accident report and have them sign
5. Give the accident report to the Director or Supervisor to review. Once signed off by the Director or Supervisor a copy will be provided to the parent and the original report will be stored in the child's file

For any major to severe accidents, we will follow our Serious Occurrence Policy.

Serious Occurrences

The purpose of this policy and the procedures within is to provide clear instructions for educators to follow for how to identify, respond to and report a serious occurrence. It ensures that there is a plan to deal with any serious incidents that may affect the health, safety and well-being of children and those working directly with children, and that these serious incidents are addressed by the centre and reported to the Ministry of Education for review.

Under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, serious occurrences are defined as:

1. the death of a child who received child care at a child care centre,
2. abuse, neglect or an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child while receiving child care at a child care centre,
3. a life-threatening injury to or a life-threatening illness of a child who receives child care at a child care centre,
4. an incident where a child who is receiving child care at a child care centre goes missing or is temporarily unsupervised, or
5. 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 child care at the child care centre.

Reporting a Serious Occurrence

- Educators will notify the Director and Supervisor of a serious occurrence as soon as they become aware of the incident
- All serious occurrences will be reported to the Ministry of Education in the Child Care Licensing System (CCLS) within 24 hours of the Director and Supervisor becoming aware of the occurrence
- Serious occurrences reported to the Ministry of Education will be documented in the daily written record

Posting a Serious Occurrence Summary (Notification Form)

- Within 24 hours of becoming aware of a serious occurrence, the Director or Supervisor will complete a Serious Occurrence Notification Form in CCLS
- The form will provide a summary of the serious occurrence and of any action taken

- The summary will not include identifying information (i.e. names and ages of children, educators, or program rooms) and will contain gender-neutral language (i.e. they, a child, etc.)
- The summary will be posted in a place that is visible and accessible to parents for a minimum of 10 business days, regardless of the serious occurrence type and the status of any related investigation
- Where a serious occurrence is updated or revised, the summary should also be updated to reflect this change
- All serious occurrence summaries will be retained for 3 years from the date they are created or last updated, whichever date is most recent

Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a Child

- If any person, including a person who performs professional duties with respect to children, has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has suffered, or is at risk to suffer, physical or emotional harm or sexual exploitation or molestation inflicted by the person having charge of the child, the person will report the suspicion directly to a children’s aid society (CAS)
- Suspected abuse or neglect that will be reported includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse and/or neglect
- Where a parent expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact their local CAS directly. The person who becomes aware of these concerns is also required to report the concerns to the local CAS and to inform the Director and Supervisor

Fire/Safety Evacuation Procedures

We have put a variety of preventive measures in place to aim for uncomplicated evacuations during a fire emergency. These measures include annual inspections, 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 Plan, which the educators and children practice monthly. Our Fire Safety Plan has been approved by the local fire chief and an approved copy is kept by the front entrance. In addition, floor plans showing “you are here” are posted in a conspicuous place in each classroom and show the route to the nearest fire/emergency exit. Lastly, a written record is kept of all fire drills, monthly tests of the fire alarm system and 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 the location to pick up your child via email. If there is no timely response, you will be contacted by phone. There will also be a follow up in regard to information about re-opening and resuming normal operations if applicable.

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

Building Security and Cameras

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 educators and families will need to have a key fob to enter the building as all exterior doors are locked at all times. The fobs are programmed to only work during our specific operational hours. There are multiple cameras around the exterior of the building, in each playground and in each classroom that provides a live feed to the Directors office. Finally, the front door is glass so that we are able to see visitors' identity before allowing them access. We ask that families ensure that the door is fully closed upon leaving the center and that parents never hold the door open for anyone they don't know.

No Smoking Policy

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. Any person who refuses to comply with the Smoke-Free Ontario Act cannot remain at the centre.

Supervision of Volunteers and Students

Little Scholars welcomes both placement students and volunteers into our programs. We believe it is valuable to gain experience in a high quality environment. Students and volunteers also play an important role in supporting educators in the daily operations of our programs. This policy will provide supervising educators, students and volunteers with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

Little Scholars will ensure that students and volunteers:

- Have read and signed off on all policies and procedures before they start their placement
- Are always supervised by an employee of Little Scholars
- Are never permitted to be alone with any child or group of children
- Are not counted in educators to child ratios

Staff Requirements and Qualifications

Before employment, all staff must provide a vulnerable sector police record check, a Standard First Aid and CPR Level C training certificate, up-to-date immunization records, including a tuberculosis skin test and a Pre-employment health form. Our chef must provide a valid food handlers certificate in addition to the aforementioned requirements.

Our Infant and Toddler programs have at least one educator who is a Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECE) while our Preschool programs have at least two RECEs. All educators have experience working within the field. In addition, all educators are required to review and sign

off on all policies and procedures including all individual plans before employment, annually and/or whenever changes occur.

We value our high-quality programs and the professional development of all our educators. We understand that when educators begin employment, they all have varying levels of knowledge, skills and experience. Regardless, they must understand what is required and expected of them and take advantage of opportunities to acquire new information and continue to improve their skills set, knowledge and practices. Through our training and professional development, our goal is to communicate with our community that we are current in our knowledge, skills and practice and that we are an organization that values on-going professional learning.

Parent Issues and Concerns Policy

The parent issues and concerns 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.

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

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our centre and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing with our program. As supported by our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among children, parents/guardians and staff, and foster the engagement of 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.

Little Scholars will ensure that;

- All issues and concerns raised by parents are taken seriously by the Director and/or Supervisor and will be addressed
- 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 all parties involved
- Issues or concerns can be brought forward verbally or in writing and responses and outcomes will also be provided verbally or in writing
- An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within 5 business days and the level of detail provided in the response to the parent/guardian will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved
- 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).

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 or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the Director and/or Supervisor.

Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a Child

Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children is required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. If a parent expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact our local Family and Children's Services (CAS). 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/guardians should raise the issue or concern to their child's educator directly or to the Director and/or Supervisor.

General, Centre or operations Related (i.e. fees, hours of operation, staff, waiting lists, menus, etc.): Parents/guardians should raise the issue or concern to the Director and/or Supervisor

Staff, duty parents, Supervisor and/or Director-Related: Parents/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 and/or Supervisor as soon as the individual become aware of the situation.

Student and/or Volunteer Related: Parents/guardians should raise the issue or concern to the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student or to the Director and/or Supervisor. 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 and/or Supervisor as soon the individual become aware of the situation.

For all the above issues and concerns the following steps will be adhered to by the staff, Director and/or Supervisor 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
- 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 Director and/or Supervisor.

Issues and 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 and concerns may also be reported to other relevant regulatory bodies where appropriate.

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 647-668-1556

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

Monitoring Compliance and Contravention

This policy sets out the process that will be followed to monitor the implementation of our program statement, policies, procedures and individualized plans. The policy sets out how compliance and contraventions (non-compliance) with the program statement policies, procedures and individualized plans listed below will be monitored, recorded and addressed.

Policy and Procedures for Monitoring Compliance and Contraventions

Little Scholars will monitor each educator, student and volunteer to assess whether our program statement, policies, procedures and individualized plans are being implemented. Monitoring and observations will be conducted at least semi annually through various means. Monitoring will be conducted at different times of the day (i.e. morning, afternoon, periods of arrival/departure, rest periods, meal times, outdoor play periods, transitions, etc.) to observe that our program statement, policies, procedures and individualized plans are being implemented as required for different parts of the program and daily routines.

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 of a child that would humiliate shame or frighten the child or undermine his or herself 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

Dealing with Contraventions of Policies, Procedures or Individualized Plans:

- Little Scholars will make every effort to clarify expectations and encourage educators, students and volunteers to raise their questions and concerns about implementing our program statement, policies, procedures and individual plans on an ongoing basis to support clarity, learning, development and ongoing compliance
- Where an educator, student or volunteer is observed to be non-compliant, they will be subject to disciplinary or corrective action taking into consideration the nature and severity of the incident and the individual's history of previous non-compliances

Where an observed non-compliance meets the criteria for a reportable serious occurrence (i.e. an allegation of abuse or neglect), the serious occurrence policy and procedures will be followed. Where appropriate, the Director and or Supervisor will follow up with the family of a child in accordance with our policies and procedures on parent issues and concerns.