

Sisters of Our Lady of Mother of Carmel



Parent Handbook

Mother of Carmel Childcare Centre

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Updated January 2, 2025

Our Vision And Values

School Age \$110.00 per week



Program Statement

Mother of Carmel Childcare is committed to providing quality programs that are guided by our organizational values of support, trust, safety, respect and professionalism, and that are consistent with Ministry of Education policies and pedagogy, as outlined in the following documents:



- ♣ How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy in the Early Years
- ♣ Think, Feel, Act: Lessons from Research About Young Children
- ♣ Think, Feel, Act: Empowering Children in the Middle Years

We view all children as competent, curious individuals who are rich in potential and capable of complex thinking.

**Each child is a unique person with their own interests, abilities, and dispositions, and deserves to feel accepted, understood, supported, and respected within our programs.*

We believe that we set the stage for our children's success when we foster the foundations of belonging, well-being, engagement and expression in our programs.

**Research tells us that children learn in relationship with their environment and with others, through interactions with the people around them, and through actively exploring the world with their bodies, minds, and senses. Children learn best when they are fully involved in experiences that are meaningful to them, support their own interests, and allow them to make connections between what they already know and what they are experiencing.*

We know children learn when they are able to effectively regulate their energy and emotions, and are willing to take risks and face challenges.

**Most importantly, we know that children learn through play whether it is lively and exuberant, or quiet and absorbing. Research is finding more and more of a connection between children's play that is freely chosen, joyful, active, and guided by their enthusiasm (rather than by outside goals) and the learning and social development that helps them succeed in life.*



With these principles in mind, we have defined a set of goals and approaches, in compliance with the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, that guide our daily practices. For further details, please refer to our Program Statement document attached to this handbook.

Our Educators

Mother of Carmel Childcare Centre is staffed by teams of dedicated educators with diverse backgrounds that reflect the communities we serve.

*Registered Early Childhood Educators (**RECEs**) are graduates of a college or University Early Childhood Education Program and are registered with the Ontario College of Early Childhood Educators, our professional, self-regulatory body. We value professional development. Training provides educators opportunities to learn new skills and access information on current issues. Our staff participate in a variety of opportunities, including regular training sessions, team and centre meetings, regional networking sessions, committees, workshops, and an agency conference. RECEs are also required to meet the continuous learning requirements of the Ontario College of Early Childhood Educators.*

Mother of Carmel Childcare staff are required to follow agency and Ministry legislated policies and procedures (e.g. public health, and fire regulations), and participate in an annual policy review. All centre staff hold a valid Standard First Aid Certificate with infant/child CPR-C and a clear Vulnerable Sector Criminal Reference Check. Results of Criminal Checks are always kept confidential.

Staff participate in mandatory workplace training including, but not limited to: The Workplace Health and Safety Act, WHMIS, Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities (AODA), and Food Handler Certification.

Volunteers and Students Mother of Carmel partner with various community colleges, universities, and secondary schools to provide opportunities for students to complete practical placements. Students make significant contributions to our programs and the experience they gain is invaluable to their studies. We are in compliance with the Ministry of Education requirements for supervision of children by staff, volunteers, and placement students. All students and volunteers and persons less than 18 years of age are supervised by an employee at all times and are therefore not permitted to be alone with any child.

For more detailed information about this policy, please consult with the centre supervisor. All students are required to provide confirmation of a clear vulnerable sector criminal reference check and medical assessment prior to commencing placement at the centre and to review and sign centre policies prior to the start of their placement.

Daily Program

Mother of Carmel Childcare supports playbased learning in which children have the opportunity to explore and interact with indoor/outdoor environments at their own pace, according to their own interests. These experiences provide the opportunity for active, creative, and meaningful exploration, which develops self-confidence. Self-directed play also fosters a sense of ownership in the process of learning and belonging in a child's learning group and environment.

Our approach to programming is rooted in the understanding that children's growth follows a developmental sequence that is universal, but through which each child proceeds at different rates and in unique ways. We use the Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT) and How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years (HDLH) documents to guide us in our approach to planning. Through careful observation, educators are able to identify the developing skills and interests of children in our care. Daily experiences are planned based on these observations, while opportunity for spontaneity is still provided. Daily activities are recorded and posted to provide insight into the day's experiences while classroom documentation is used to reflect upon learning.

Our Programs Provide Care For A Variety Of Ages:



Infants (0-18 months)

Ratio: 1 staff: 3 infants

We focus on providing a warm and loving atmosphere where low ratios allow educators to provide individualized care for each infant. Each child's distinct sleep, feeding, and play routines are respected, and staff work with families to ensure that routines are consistent with those at home. Infants are nurtured through a variety of sensory, language and movement experiences. There is time for independent exploration, group play and one to one interactions with educators. A positive experience with infant care is supported through frequent dialogue and daily written records of each infant's activities (e.g. sleep, food intake, and diaper routine), fostering effective communication between families and teachers.



Toddlers (18-30 months)

Ratio: 1 staff: 5 children

Toddlers are able and motivated to move and explore their environments. Our toddler programs provide children opportunities for safe, supervised play, while encouraging their exploration and desire to test the boundaries of their abilities. Educators offer children a variety of creative, sensory, language, music and motor experiences. As social skills develop, educators support toddlers with their emerging capacity for interactive and cooperative play in a warm, positive environment.

Preschool (2.5-4 years)

Ratio: 1 staff: 8 children

Educators offer a variety of activities and experiences based on the emerging skills and interests of children. Art, games, loose parts play, sensory play and cooking all foster emerging language, literacy, numeracy and science skills such as observing, inferring and predicting.

Dramatic play, music, movement and gross motor experiences also build language and social skills, and physical competency. Through careful planning of environments, children learn to explore, differentiate, make choices, and understand more complex concepts. Viewing children as competent and capable, we encourage the development of independence, resilience and self-help skills.





Kindergarten (4-6 years)

Ratio: 1 staff: 8 children

Our Junior/Senior Kindergarten full day program follows the ELECT and HDLH programs which support the Ministry of Education curriculum, to provide the same experience of the school day within a play-based environment. Planned experiences which promote the development of competency and self-esteem are offered. Children are encouraged to provide input into their day and are invited to make suggestions for planning and their environment.

School-Age Programs (6-12 years)

Ratio: 1 staff: 15 children

A diverse choice of activities are provided to school-age clients, including sports, arts, crafts, and games. A period of time is also offered for children who may choose to work on homework. The School-Age program implements elements of the ELECT and HDLH curriculums and principles.



Guiding Behaviour

Steps to Guiding Behaviour

Staff encourage safe, acceptable, and appropriate behaviour by:

- ***Helping*** children to develop positive relationships with each other by supporting their efforts to join play, by focusing attention on positive interactions with others, and by encouraging children to value one another's individuality.
- ***Supporting*** children in their efforts to respond to challenges and conflict by encouraging them to take an active role in problem solving and identifying alternative solutions.
- ***Responding*** sensitively to emotions, and encouraging children to identify and label feelings. Educators recognize that feelings of distress, fear and discomfort may take time to resolve, and they allow children the time and support required to recover from difficult feelings.
- ***Encouraging*** children to identify which activities and experiences help them to remain calm and focused, and what type of activities they need to limit to maintain self-regulation.
- ***Providing*** small group experiences and smooth transitions that minimize distractions and promote positive interactions.

Client Conduct

To promote a safe, comfortable, and inclusive atmosphere, each child and parent/guardian is at all times expected to:

- ***Be respectful*** of self, others, the environment (both indoor and outdoor), equipment, materials and property.
- ***Communicate*** through listening and speaking in ways that attempt to resolve conflict in a peaceful manner.

Abuse of any kind (e.g. verbal, physical, emotional etc.) is not tolerated.

Employee/Student/Volunteer Conduct

To promote a safe, comfortable, and inclusive atmosphere, each employee/student/volunteer of Mother of Carmel Childcare is at all times expected to:

- **Uphold** Mother of Carmel Childcare's core values: Safety, Respect, Trust, Professionalism, and Support.
- **Follow** approaches to child guidance that are outlined in the Program Statement.

All staff, students, and volunteers are mentored and monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure that these approaches, and their accompanying strategies, are implemented in a manner consistent with our core values. When issues or concerns arise, staff are provided with enhanced supports to help them develop the skills required to be successful.

We are in compliance with the Ministry of Education requirements for supervision of children by staff, volunteers, and placement students. All students and volunteers and persons less than 18 years of age are supervised by an employee at all times and are therefore not permitted to be alone with any child.

The following actions are prohibited:

- Corporal punishment of a child.
- Physical restraint of a child, such as confining a child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting themselves, or others, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent.
 - Locking the exits of the child care centre for the purpose of confining a child, or confining a child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures.
- Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame, frighten, or undermine the self-respect, dignity, or self-worth of a child.
- Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding.
- Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will. Communication with families, school personnel, and external resources is important to ensure that the developmental needs of all children are met. When indicated, and with written parental agreement, children requiring specialized interventions may be referred to community agencies and organizations for these services. Access to external resources may involve additional cost to parents.

Parent Engagement And Communication

Parents/guardians are encouraged to visit, participate in programs, and attend special events such as BBQs, family workshops and holiday celebrations. Parents/guardians are also encouraged to be involved in ways that reflect their interests and talents. (E.g. sharing recipes, reading stories, or leading a classroom activity). Ongoing communication between families and staff is essential, and happens through dialogue, electronic communication, newsletters, and notices posted in the centres.

Resolving Issues and Concerns

A positive partnership between parents/guardians and staff is important to each child's development. When families have a concern related to the care of their child and/or the operation of the program it becomes the individual and collective responsibility of those involved to take action. Below is a copy of our policy on resolving parent issues and concerns:

Mother of Carmel Childcare Centre

Parent Issues and Concerns Policy and Procedures

Updated: January 3, 2024

Purpose

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

Policy

General

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our child care 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 the children, parents/guardians, child care providers and staff, and foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children. Our staff are available to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction.

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously 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.

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

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within 48 hours or 2 business day(s). The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

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

Confidentiality

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff, students and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a 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, provider or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused or belittled,

they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the supervisor and/or licensee.

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/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact the [local Children's Aid Society](#) (CAS) directly. Persons 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

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
Program Room-Related Eg: schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.	Raise the issue or concern to - the classroom staff directly or - the supervisor or licensee.	- Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised or - arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within 48 hours or 2 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; and - any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.
General, Centre- or Operations-Related Eg: child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.	Raise the issue or concern to - the supervisor or licensee.	- the details of the issue/concern; and - any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.
Staff-, Duty parent-, Supervisor-, and/or Licensee-Related	Raise the issue or concern to - the individual directly or - the supervisor or licensee. All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, duty parents, etc. that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.	Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
Student- / Volunteer-Related	Raise the issue or concern to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student or <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the supervisor and/or licensee. - All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.	Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within [insert number] business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing. Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) 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 Sr. Elsie D'Cunha, the Director.

NUTRITION

A well-balanced and nutritious diet is essential for healthy growth and development. Our lunch and snack menus are developed in accordance with Ministry of Education requirements and Canada's Food Guide, and are approved by a certified nutritionist and is prepared on site by our own Chef. We focus on providing a variety of nutritious ingredients, including whole grains, legumes and fresh fruits and vegetables. Menus are on a four week rotation, and are posted at the entrance to the Centre. We provide alternate menu options for children with food allergies and dietary restrictions.

****We strive to maintain a nut-safe environment, and as a result we limit food from home in the centre. In rare cases, children with food allergies or other dietary restrictions that the centre cannot accommodate are required to bring their snacks/meals from home. All written instructions for diet provided by a parent/guardian are followed.**

All foods provided from home must:

- ♣ be labelled with the child's name
- ♣ not contain items that pose a threat to children with specific allergies
- ♣ come with readable ingredient labels (for processed or pre-packaged foods)

Centre staff will monitor meals and snacks from home to confirm they are nutritious and do not contain ingredients which pose a threat to children with specific allergies. Our staff check all lunches for unsafe products. All items that contain or may contain peanuts are returned home. Centre staff will contact parents if meals or snacks are forgotten or food provided is nutritionally inadequate. Where parents are unable to rectify concerns in a timely fashion, the centre will supply or supplement as needed. Please refer to the Healthy Packed Lunches information sheet accompanying this document, or on our website under Parent Resources. We promote healthy eating habits by encouraging children to identify their own needs, to make informed choices with food, and to take an active role in serving themselves.

Health And Wellness

Staff perform a daily visual check to ensure that children are well enough to participate in the program. If staff observe signs of illness that would prevent a child from full participation in the daily routine, the child will not be accepted into the program at that time. If a child becomes ill



during the day, the parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up their child. Children who have a communicable disease, or display symptoms of such, cannot be cared for in the centre. They may return when they are no longer communicable and are symptom-free for 24 hours. The regional Public Health services department determines the basis of when a child is excluded from a program due to illness and Mother of Carmel Childcare must comply.

In the event of an outbreak, the local public health requirements/guidelines will also be followed. Upon registration, families will receive a copy of Recommended Exclusion Guidelines for Common Communicable Illnesses. Parents/guardians are also asked to notify the centre supervisor whenever their child will be absent due to illness, appointments, or vacation.

Daily Outdoor Play

Ministry regulations stipulate that outdoor play is part of our daily routine. If a child is too ill to play outdoors due to an acute illness, they should remain at home until full participation is possible. Our programs will continue to participate in gross motor play in our gym during mildly or inclement weather (e.g. light rain, cold weather conditions). Parents/guardians should ensure the child comes ready to participate by providing clothing suitable for physical activity, the weather, and the season. A second set of clothes should be kept in a labelled bag at the centre. Clothing should encourage independent dressing. Please note that although we will do our best to avoid losses, the centre will not be responsible for lost clothing or articles. Our programs often go on neighborhood walks, visiting parks and natural outdoor areas (e.g. fields, ponds and trails). These outings provide children the opportunity to explore natural environments and challenge themselves through physical activity and experiences.

Rest and Sleep Times

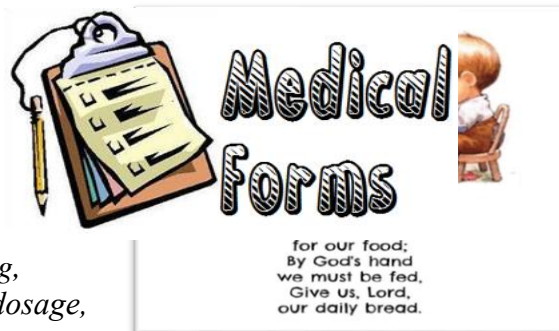
Sleep is important to each child's health and well-being, and is integral to physical, cognitive, and emotional development. Children vary in the amount of sleep that they need, however health experts agree upon general guidelines for sleep requirements. Good habits, including established nap and bedtime routines, help to ensure that young children get the amount of sleep required for optimal development. In accordance with CCEYA regulations, our centre has established daily routines which provide for sleep or rest needs of children, as determined in consultation with each child's family, and will implement supervision measures to ensure safety during sleep time routines.

Administration of Medication

The centre will administer prescription medications to children, in accordance with provincial legislation.

Families are required to:

- ♣ Provide centre with written medical authorization, including the dosage and times a drug is to be given. Please ask staff for medication form.
- ♣ Provide medication in the original container/packaging, clearly labeled with the child's name, name of the drug, dosage,



the date of purchase, and instructions for storage and administration. (Parents/guardians may ask the pharmacist to divide the dosage into two containers so one can be left at home and one left at the centre until the dosage is finished).

- ♣ *Directly hand any medication to a staff member. Medication is not to be left in a child's bag.*
- ♣ *Provide an accompanying doctor's note for non-prescription medications. Non-prescription medications will be administered according to the policies outlined for the administration of prescription medications. Staff will not administer expired medication.*

Individualized Anaphylaxis Plans

In accordance with CCEYA regulations, an Individualized Anaphylaxis Plan (IAP), is required at the time of enrollment for children who are at risk of an anaphylactic reaction. The IAP should be created with input from the child's parent (physician input is optional). Each plan must include child specific emergency procedures to be followed by staff in the event of an anaphylactic reaction. Any child who requires emergency medication (e.g. EpiPen) must have the appropriate medication present in the centre or they will not be allowed to participate in the program.

Individualized Medical Plans

In accordance with CCEYA regulations, development of an Individualized Medical Plan (IMP), with input from the child's physician (optional) and parent, is required at the time of enrollment for children who have special medical conditions. Each plan must include directions regarding medical devices and medications required to support the child, and specific emergency procedures to be followed by staff in the event of a medical reaction.

Emergency Medical Attention

Procedures In an emergency, staff will take any or all of the following actions:

- ♣ *Call an ambulance (911)*
- ♣ *Contact a parent or guardian*
- ♣ *Contact the emergency contacts*
- ♣ *Administer reasonable first aid measures*

General Operating Procedures

Full time care is provided five days per week. Monday to Friday

Our general hours of operation are from 7:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.

****We are open all year with an annual closing during the last two weeks in July***

*****Note** during these 2 weeks, no fees are charged.***

We will be closed for the following holidays:

<i>New Year's Day</i>	<i>Victoria Day</i>	<i>Thanksgiving Day</i>
<i>Family Day</i>	<i>Canada Day</i>	<i>Christmas Eve</i>
<i>Holy Thursday (early closing)</i>	<i>3rd & 4th wks of July</i>	<i>Christmas Day</i>
<i>Good Friday</i>	<i>Civic Holiday</i>	<i>Boxing Day</i>
<i>Easter Monday</i>	<i>Labour Day</i>	

Reminder signs will be posted at the front entrance 1 week before each holiday closure

Admissions and Orientation/Waitlist Policy

Families are accepted into the program on a first-come, first-served basis. Families may be added to a waitlist due to limited availability in a program. Prior to a child's start date, families are encouraged to attend an orientation session. Orientation is an opportunity to ease transition of the family into the program routine. There is no charge to be added to our waitlist. Our full Waitlist Policy follows:

Waiting List Policy and Procedures

Updated January 3, 2024

Purpose

This policy and the procedures within provide for waiting lists to be administered in a transparent manner. It supports the availability of information about the waiting list for prospective parents in a way that maintains the privacy and confidentiality of children.

The procedures provide steps that will be followed to place children on the waiting list, offer admission, and provide parents with information about their child's position on the waiting list.

This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for a child care centre that maintains a waiting list to have related policies and procedures.

Policy

General

- The Director will be responsible for managing the waiting list.
- The Director will receive parental requests to place children on a waiting list via in person meeting.
- Mother of Carmel Childcare Centre will strive to accommodate all requests for the registration of a child at the childcare centre.
- Where the maximum capacity of a program has been reached and spaces are unavailable for new children to be enrolled, the waiting list procedures set out below will be followed.
- There is a separate waiting list for each age group within the Centre.
- Being placed on the waiting list is not an application and does not guarantee the child's enrolment into a program.
- No fee will be charged to parents for placing a child on the waiting list.
- There are various circumstances that affect wait list times and access to programs:
 - a. **Priority is given to families with siblings already in the child care program**
 - b. **Ages of children in the younger age group and their readiness to progress to the next age group the parent/guardian may be waiting for**
 - c. **Ages of children in the current age group and space availability in the next grouping they are due to move into**

Procedures

Receiving a Request to Place a Child on the Waiting List

- Children will be accepted into the program on a first come first served basis when spots become available in the required age group.
- Priority is established by the date of the request to be put on the waitlist
- Siblings of children currently enrolled in our program will be given priority status.

When a space becomes available, the family at the top of the waitlist, **with a child of the required age**, will be contacted and invited to accept a child care spot. If the family accepts the offer we move to registration. If the family, for any reason, declines the spot then we will offer the spot to the next family on the list. Any family that declines a spot will remain on the list in the same sequence unless they request to be removed from the waiting list.

The Director will administer the wait list in a transparent manner using the criteria set above. The placement of your child on the waitlist is available to prospective families, however the Centre will still maintain the privacy and confidentiality of the children on the wait list. Should you have any questions about the position your child has on the waitlist, please contact the Centre for further details. The Supervisor will verbally confirm the position where a family is on the waitlist and will ensure families are aware that positions are determined based on the criteria set out above. These numbers can include numbers of each age grouping.

Offering an Available Space

1. Parents of children on the waiting list will be notified via phone and email communication that a space has become available in their requested program.
2. Parents will be provided a timeframe of 2 business days in which a response is required before the next child on the waiting list will be offered the space.
3. Where a parent has not responded within the given timeframe, the licensee or designate will contact the parent of the next child on the waiting list, within the prospective age group, to offer them the space.

Responding to Parents who inquire about their Child's Placement on the Waiting List

1. Sr. Elsie will be the contact person for parents who wish to inquire about the status of their child's place on the waiting list.
2. Sr. Elsie will respond to parent inquiries and provide the child's current position on the list and an estimated likelihood of the child being offered a space in the program.

Maintaining Privacy and Confidentiality

1. The waiting list will be maintained in a manner that protects the privacy and confidentiality of the children and families on the list and therefore only the child's position on the waiting list will be provided to parents.
2. Names of other children or families and/or their placement on the waiting list will not be shared with other individuals.

Information Updates Under the CCEYA

Families are required to provide the centre with the following information:

- *Home address and telephone numbers (including cell phone numbers)*
- *Business name, address, telephone number*
- *Addresses and telephone numbers of the people authorized as emergency contacts and/or to pick-up and drop-off children*
- *Name, addresses and telephone number of family physician*
- *Immunization status or any affidavit, or declaration.*
- *Custody arrangements and/or special circumstances*

To abide by a temporary or final custody order, separation agreement, or other domestic contract, a copy of the official document is required. It is the registering parent's responsibility to notify the supervisor of any changes to any agreement, in writing. Please ensure that all details are included. A parent should advise, in writing, of any developing concerns or circumstances associated with custody and access that may impact pick-up and drop-off routines.

Arrivals, Departures, and Release of Children

For the safety and protection of children, Mother of Carmel Childcare ensures strict procedures are followed regarding arrival and departure of children. Staff will ensure that parents/guardians deliver their children directly to a teacher, and notify staff when they are taking their children home.

Daily attendance records will be kept with each group at all times.

Families are required to notify the centre if someone other than a main contact person will be picking up their child. If the authorized person is unknown to staff on duty, the authorized person will be required to show photo identification. Children will not be permitted to leave the program unaccompanied by a parent or other authorized person (minimum 16 years of age).

We do not provide an extended hours service and ask that parents/guardians respect the staff and the hours of operation. If a child has not been picked up longer than one hour after the centre closes, and staff are unable to reach families or emergency contacts, we are required to notify the regional Children's Aid Society and local police department.

Payment Policies

- *Once space has been confirmed, a non-refundable family registration fee of \$50 is required.*
- *Fees are due each Monday morning in the form of cash or cheque*
- *All payments returned from the bank (i.e. NSF) will be subject to a processing fee of \$40.*
- *Fees will not be refunded for statutory holidays, school holidays, or any absent days due to vacation or illness. Professional activity days are to be paid in addition to the weekly rate for School Age children.*
- *A receipt of payment will be issued after year end for income tax purposes. Bank statements serve as interim receipts.*

Withdrawal Procedures

Families are required to provide two weeks written notice to the centre supervisor prior to withdrawal or making changes to child care arrangements. Families receiving fee assistance should comply with the terms and conditions stated in their regional subsidy agreements.

The process of termination for all children will include any or all of the following steps:

Documentation of incidents

- *Meeting with appropriate parties*
- *Consultation with outside agencies*
- *Referral to an outside agency*
- *Suspension*
- *Removal from the program*

Emergency Management Procedures

Mother of Carmel Childcare Centre has written policies and procedures regarding the management of emergency situations that outline:

- *Preparation for emergency management, including establishing appropriate gathering/evacuation sites and regularly conducting evacuation drills.*
- *Roles and responsibilities of centre staff during emergency situations.*
- *Guidelines for communication with parents/guardians, emergency personnel and external supports throughout an emergency. Parents/guardians will be notified electronically and/or by phone when a program has been evacuated due to an emergency event.*
- *Procedures to support children and staff who experienced distress during the emergency. For detailed information regarding emergency management procedures, please consult with the centre supervisor.*

Workplace Harassment, Bullying, and Violence

Mother of Carmel Childcare is in compliance with Bill 168 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act relating to violence and harassment in the workplace. For detailed information about the policies, please refer to the bulletin board in the centre where these policies and procedures are posted.

Serious Occurrence Notification Form Posting

Mother of Carmel Childcare follows Ministry of Education requirements to post a Serious Occurrence Notification Form at the entrance to child care centre where a serious occurrence has taken place. The Serious Occurrence Notification Form will be posted within the timelines of the Ministry requirements and will maintain the confidentiality of the parties involved. For detailed information about the policy, please consult with the centre supervisor.

***Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy* **Updated January 3, 2024**

Purpose

This policy and the procedures will help support the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care in our childcare and school age programs.

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

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

Policy

The safety of the children attending Mother of Carmel ChildCare is one of our top priorities. We need to work together with parents, guardians and teachers to ensure our children are safe. In response to increased public service announcements (PSA) regarding children being left in cars, a safe arrival strategy has been developed to ensure that no child is accidentally left in a locked car. Forgotten Baby Syndrome (FBS) refers to accidentally leaving a baby or young child in a locked car, often with tragic results. One of the prevention strategies, identified in research, is to ensure that childcare programs have a system in place to connect with parents should a child not arrive in care when expected. Strong communication is required in order to ensure all children are where they are supposed to be.

The safety and wellbeing of your children is a high priority for Mother of Carmel ChildCare. We are asking that parents call the centre in the event that their child will be absent.

Mother of Carmel will ensure that any child receiving care at the childcare centre is only released to the child's parent/guardian or an individual that the parent or guardian has provided written authorization the childcare centre may release the child to.

Mother of Carmel will only dismiss children into the care of their parent/guardian or another authorized individual. The centre will not release any children from care without supervision. Where a child does not arrive in care as expected or is not picked up as expected, staff must follow the safe arrival and dismissal procedures set out below.

Procedures

Accepting a child into care

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

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

Where a child has not arrived in care as expected for full day Child Care for Infant, Toddler & Preschool AND for full day programs on Non-Instructional Days for School Age children:

Where a child does not arrive at the child care centre and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off (e.g., left a voice message or advised the closing staff at pick-up), the program staff in the classroom must:

- *Inform the Supervisor/on site Designate and they must commence contacting the child's parent/guardian no later than **10:00 a.m.** Program staff shall call the child's parent/guardian using the contact information provided by parents. Program staff will try all contact numbers. Etc. And ensure that a message is left for the parent.*

- *If the program staff has not received a response within 15 minutes from either parent/guardian, they will continue to contact parent/guardian while contacting the emergency/authorized contacts on the list. If no response is received, indicating the child is safe, the program staff will send an email. Program staff will contact emergency/authorized pick up contacts for assistance in contacting the parent/guardian or to confirm absence.*
- *If no confirmation has been received by 10:45 a.m confirming the absence, police will be contacted.*

Once the child's absence has been confirmed, the program staff shall document the child's absence on the attendance record and any additional information about the child's absence in the daily written record.

Where a child has not arrived in the program as expected in the morning for School Age children on Instructional Days:

All children must be escorted by a family member or designate into their classroom to a program staff. Program staff are only responsible for children when they are signed in for care. Children in our School age morning programs can have inconsistent attendance based on family need. Due to the nature of regular absences in the morning, School Age programs, and the short period of time that these children would be in the morning program, we will mark children who do not show up as absent on the attendance.

The York Region School Boards have safe arrival programs in place that ensures School Aged children arrive in the morning. School personnel make roll calls to any parents/guardians of children who do not show up at school each day.

Where a child does not arrive at the childcare centre and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off (e.g., left a voice message or advised the closing staff at pick-up the prior day), the program staff in the classroom must follow the procedure below:

**On instructional days (when the host school is in session), program staff will prepare a list of the children that were absent for the morning program. This list will be shared with the school administrative staff.*

Where a child has not arrived in the program in the afternoon as expected for School Age children on Instructional Days:

For school age children attending the after-school program, the program staff will notify the centre supervisor/designate. The host school or the school where the child attends during the day will be contacted. The program staff will confirm if the child attended during the day. A page will go out over the school PA system calling out for the child.

If the program staff/supervisor/designate are unable to confirm the child's absence with the school, they will contact the parent/guardian by calling and leaving a detailed message. Program staff will inform the supervisor/designate. Program staff will try to reach parent/guardian using all contact numbers in the children's file. If no response is received an email will be sent to the parent/guardian requesting confirmation of absence.

If the supervisor /designate/program staff are unable to confirm a child's absence as per the procedure above, they are to contact the emergency/authorized contacts to assist in reaching the parent/guardian.

If the program staff/supervisor/designate are unable to confirm a child's absence, within 15 minutes, the police will be called and emergency procedures followed.

- *Follow the direction provided by the police department*
- *Any additional staff shall look for the child on the grounds of the school.*
- *Program staff will continue to try to reach out to the parent/guardian/authorized or emergency contacts*
- *Once the child's absence has been confirmed, program staff shall document the child's absence on the attendance record and any additional information about the child's absence in the daily written record.*
- *A Serious Occurrence will be filed with the Ministry of Education within 24 hours.*

Releasing a child from care

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

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

Custody situations

In situations where parents are separated or divorced, Mother of Carmel cannot follow a parent's request NOT to release a child to the other parent. Mother of Carmel staff cannot follow a request without a court order that says the other parent cannot see the child. A court order may also state what days and times the parent can see the child.

If a parent asks program staff not to release a child to the other parent but does not have a court order indicating this, program staff will, follow these steps:

- *Tell the parent that you cannot stop the other parent from picking up their child, unless you see a court order that says this. Only a court of law can take away a parent's right to be with their child.*
- *If the parent is still concerned that the other parent may come, ask that the child not remain in care until this is sorted out.*
- *If the parent tells you that the other parent may be abusing the child, call the Children's Aid Society immediately.*

If there is a court order with instructions with which days each parent has and the parents want to switch days, a written note must be provided to the program staff indicating who is picking up

on which day ahead of time. If a parent comes to pick up the child on a different day, program staff will follow these steps:

- *Inform the parent who has come to pick up the child that you must call the other parent to make sure that it is okay to release the child.*
- *Call the parent who is supposed to pick up the child on that day. Ask for permission to release the child to the other parent. You must get an email / text message permission note or a message on the voice mail from this parent agreeing to the change. Do not release the child until you receive the email /text or phone message. Not a verbal agreement.*
- *If the parent insists on taking the child without permission, or begins to get upset, angry, or threatening in any way, release the child to them and call the police or 911. Inform the supervisor/designate as soon as the parent begins to get upset/threatening.*
- *If you know that there is a restraining order, condition of bail, or prohibition order that does not allow the person to be near the child, call the police immediately when that person arrives at the centre. You cannot let a parent visit a child if you know there is a court order against this, even if the other parent says it is okay.*
- *Call the Children's Aid Society if the child tells you that someone who is not allowed to be near the child has been visiting or seeing the child.*
- *Notify your supervisor that you have made the call.*

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

- *Where a parent/guardian has previously communicated with the Program Staff a specific time or timeframe that their child is to be picked up from care and the child has not been picked up, the Program Staff shall contact the parent/guardian by a phone call and advise that the child is still in care and has not been picked up.*
- *Where the Program Staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian, they must call again and leave a message for the parent/guardian. Where the individual picking up the child is an authorized individual and their contact information is available, the staff shall proceed with contacting the individual to confirm pick-up as per the parent/guardian's instructions or leave a voice message to contact the centre.*
- *Where the Program Staff has not heard back from the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was to pick up the child the staff shall contact emergency contact, wait until program closes and then refer to procedures under "where a child has not been picked up and program 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 from care and has not arrived by 6:00 p.m., program staff shall ensure that the child is given an activity, while they await their pick-up.*
- *One staff shall stay with the child, while a second staff proceeds with calling the parent/guardian to advise that the child is still in care and inquire their pick-up time. In the case where the person picking up the child is an authorized individual; the staff shall contact the parent/guardian first and then proceed to contact the authorized individual responsible for pick-up if unable to reach the parent/guardian.*
- *If after 15 minutes and the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the child, the staff shall contact the*

authorized individuals listed on the child's file. The child will be provided with a snack while waiting. Notify the supervisor/Executive Director or designate. If an alternate pick-up person is available to pick up, staff will confirm their identification before the child is released. Staff will leave a message on the parent's telephone to let them know who has picked up their child and at what time this occurred.

- *Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized individual listed on the child's file (e.g., the emergency contacts) by 7:00 p.m., the staff shall proceed with contacting the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) (905) 895-2318 or 1-800-718-3850. Staff shall follow the CAS's direction with respect to next steps.*
- *Staff will leave their name and phone number if they get an answering machine at CAS. Once the Children's Aid worker calls back, staff will tell the Children's Aid worker that they are calling from Mother of Carmel and that the staff have been unable to reach anyone to pick up the child.*
- *Staff will wait for a Children's Aid worker to arrive. This may take several hours. Staff will not go out or drive the child anywhere. When a Children's Aid worker or police officer arrives at the centre, the staff will ask for identification before letting them in.*
- *If the parent arrives before the Children's Aid worker arrives, release the child. Call Children's Aid to report when the child was picked up. Also, let the Children's Aid Society know the reason given as to why the parent was late.*
- *Document the incident in the communication book.*

Note: Do not follow this procedure if the parent has given you a reasonable explanation for being late. An example of a reasonable explanation would be there was a bad accident on the road and the parent is stuck in traffic.

Dismissing a child from care without supervision procedures

Staff will only release children from care to the parent/guardian or other authorized adult. Under no circumstances will children be released from care to walk home alone.