



TOP OF THE RIDGE DAYCARE

Parent Handbook

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PROGRAM STATEMENT

Top of The Ridge Day Care is a licensed non-profit child care center that provides a positive, safe, stimulating learning environment for your child that enhances their level of development, inclusive of individual needs and abilities. Through open-ended play experiences and the guidance of specially trained educators, your child will be exposed to situations that will encourage the following:

Goal	Approach
A) promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children	• Snack and lunch are planned according to Canada's food guide requirements • Access to drinking water at all times • All staff have read and understand any child's individual needs regarding food allergies/restrictions/intolerances, environmental allergies and specific parental requests • All staff have read and understand all policies, practices, and procedures for child safety, Safe Arrival and Dismissal, and basic procedures in care (i.e. attendance logs, identification methods, etc). • All staff will maintain ratios, enhanced ratios, and supervision of the children at all times they are signed into our care. • Have an understanding of transitions and common stressors on children, as well as any environmental hazards • Providing daily communication regarding the health and well-being of the children • Following daily cleaning and disinfecting protocols (recommended by Niagara Region Public Health) • Encouraging independence through proper handwashing and self-serving during meals
B) support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, child care providers and staff	• Plan for individual needs of each child that is interest based and child-led • Interacting at the child's level (physically and socially) • Supervisor and Assistant Supervisor are available daily from center open to close (in-person, phone or email) • Welcome any communication shared from the parents/guardians at arrival and departure, re-direct accordingly • Greeting the children and families warmly and professionally • Understanding of the family background • Staff are mutually respectful, positive and encouraging in daily interactions • Having IRSM supports readily available • Having on-going documentation where applicable for individual needs • Providing annual parent/family surveys
C) encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate	• Scheduling is relaxed and flexible • Encouraging positive communication between the children • Staff model appropriate behaviors and strategies to regulate their emotions • Staff label emotions the child may be experiencing • Speech and Language checklists are completed (with consent) • Having IRSM supports readily available, such as PECS. • Having on-going documentation where applicable for individual needs
D) foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry	• Incorporating the values, domains, and skill indicators of HDLH? and ELECT into documentation • Following the children's interests to engage, explore and extend learning • Understand children learn at their own pace, providing activities and experiences specific to the needs of all children • Providing learning experiences that allow for spontaneous learning and "teachable moments" to provoke questioning • Children are actively included in choices and planning daily activities • Ongoing weekly observations regarding children's learning and development • Access to a variety of open-ended, play-based materials and toys throughout the day that are frequently rotated and relevant to children's learning experiences
E) provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences	• Plan according to the children's interests and strengths • Flexible scheduling • Support the child's learning through HDLH guidance • Providing a diverse, creative environment • Allowing for "teachable moments" • Viewing the educator as a co-learner • Providing "process-based" opportunities as opposed to controlled "product-based" outcomes.

F) plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported and which is inclusive of all children, including children with individualized plans	• Observing and documenting children's learning and development • Completing Speech & Language checklists (with consent) and completing the C.A.R.E. checklist (if needed) • Planning using developmentally appropriate practices using Brigance • Creating an all-inclusive environment with equal representation • Accessing support from the IRSM team • Referring children based on observations to appropriate services • Documenting development in appropriate ISP's and sharing communication between the IRSM team and parents/guardians
G) incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, into the day, and give consideration to the individual needs of the children receiving child care	• Each child will experience indoor play daily • Each child will experience outdoor play for 2 hours per day, weather dependent; otherwise, will engage in physical activity for a minimum of 1 hour indoors. • Each child will have time to rest and engage in quiet activities or to sleep. • Staff will perform routine visual checks during the rest period, communicating and unusual behaviors with the Supervisor and parents/guardians • Providing a safe, calming environment that is responsive to children's needs. • Access to a wide variety of developmentally appropriate materials based on the interests and needs of the children • Flexibility in the daily routine – adaptability for changes and needs • Limiting the amount of transitions • Understanding the benefits of open-ended materials • Incorporating natural elements into the classrooms for the children to engage and explore
H) foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children	• Creating an open environment that allows families to be an equal partner in the care of their children • Providing ongoing communication with families, providing them with information about the child's day and progress in care • Parent/guardian surveys, reviewed annually • Supervisor and Assistant Supervisor are available daily (in-person, phone or email) • Parent handbooks are available for current and prospective families to view • Using photo displays in the classroom of the families for a "home-like" setting • Giving children the opportunity to showcase new skills and milestones with their families • Giving children and families the space and opportunities to present traditions, cultural norms, or personal affects with meaning.
I) involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and staff	• Planning activities that involve our local community helpers • Promoting local community events • Providing families with information on child care subsidies • Using the ECCDC as a valuable resource (curriculum kits, workshops and webinars) • Following IRSM guidance for inclusivity and connecting resources • Understanding and using the referral process for external resources to promote healthy child development (speech pathologists, Pathstones, Resource/Behaviour Consultant, etc.)
J) support staff, home child care providers or others who interact with the children at a child care centre or home child care premises in relation to continuous professional learning	• Support staff providing weekly prep time • Staff are required to complete at least 4 child-related workshops annually – contracted and signed • Staff complete CPR and First Aid training as required (reimbursed to the staff) • Staff follow HDLH practices and refer to ELECT for skill indicators • RECE's maintain good standing with the College of Early Childhood Educators (and reimbursed on an annual basis) • Top of the Ridge Daycare provides supports and resources to the staff regarding CPL, workshops of interest, webinars and community events (training allowances provided)
K) document and review the impact of the strategies set out in clauses (A) to (J) on the children and their families	• Parent/guardian surveys completed annually • Staff surveys will be completed annually • Tracking forms and documentation completed in its entirety • Ongoing policy monitoring and compliance done on a monthly basis • Hold staff meetings monthly to share information with all staff • Board of Director meetings held monthly, except in the months of July and August

Top of the Ridge Day Care believes that children are competent, capable, curious and rich in potential.

Based on this theory, children are able to explore and manipulate their environment through meaningful experimentations with active involvement. Top of the Ridge Day Care provides stimulating, developmentally appropriate activities that evolve through observation and collaboration with the children, based on the children's individual interests and needs.

We understand the importance of taking children's stages of development into consideration. For each child, their stage of development is an individualized and complex interplay between developmental factors and their unique family, community and life experiences. In each case, we strive to encompass all areas of the child's development into our program.

A key feature of the Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA) is the focus on strengthening child care programs and ensuring high quality experiences for children. The CCEYA authorizes the Ministry of Education to issue policy statements regarding programming and pedagogy for the purpose of guiding operators of child care and early year's programs. "How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's pedagogy for the Early Years" (HDLH), is the document used by Top of the Ridge Day Care Inc. The document has a strong pedagogical focus, indicating that the pedagogy is not a prescriptive formula that lays out a specific curriculum or activities but instead challenges the status quo and explores how learning happens for children. "How Does Learning Happen?" is organized around four foundational conditions that are considered essential to optimal learning and healthy development for children.

Belonging: Every child has a sense of belonging when he or she is connected to others and contributes to their world. Top of the Ridge Day Care provides authentic, caring relationships and connections to create a sense of belonging among and between children, adults, and the world around them.

Well-being: Every child is developing a sense of self, health and well-being.

Top of the Ridge Day Care nurtures children's healthy development and supports their growing sense of self.

Engagement: Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind and senses.

Top of the Ridge Day Care provides environments and experiences to engage children in active, creative and meaningful exploration, play and inquiry.

Expression: Every child is a capable communicator who expresses himself or herself in many ways. Top of the Ridge Day Care fosters communication and expression in all forms.

Program Statement Implementation

1. Educators will promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of each child in the center, by providing a clean and safe environment, access to drinking water throughout the day, following Canada's food guide, limited transitions, eliminating any environmental issues that may cause undue stress to the child, unnecessary disruptions to play and reducing hazards that may cause injury. Educators will familiarize themselves with all information concerning any medical conditions, exceptionalities, allergies, food restrictions, medication requirements, and family preferences in respect to exercise and rest time, within Ministry of Education limitations.
2. Educators will support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, and other authorized individuals, in a professional manner. For example, saying "Good Morning." And "Have a great night" during drop off and pick-up. Conversations should align with CECE Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice.
3. Educators will encourage children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate; acknowledging that each child is competent, curious and rich in potential. Educators will support self-regulation in children (defined as the child's ability to gain control of bodily functions, manage powerful emotions and maintain focus and attention). Self-regulation in early development is influenced by a child's relationship with the important adults in that child's life, including educators. The educators will provide the experiences, support and encouragement that help young children learn to self-regulate, which is a crucial component of quality care.
4. Educators (being qualified, attentive and interactive) will foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry by

providing a variety of activities, and an environment rich in content that encourages free choices and active play.

5. Educators will be supportive and observe the children daily and use their observations to plan and create a positive learning environment and experiences that are based on the interests of the child. Educators will be responsible for introducing new ideas, interests, facts, concepts, skills and experiences to expand on the child's knowledge and life experiences, and educators will be co-learners to the child.
6. Educators must be reflective practitioners who learn about children through listening, observation, documentation, and discussion with others (families in particular) to understand children as unique individuals. Educators will observe and listen to how children make meaning through their experiences in the world around them, and use these observations to have meaningful interactions, and engage children on a daily basis.
7. Educators will provide outdoor play as required (weather dependent; otherwise providing gross motor activities indoors). During rest, educators will ensure there is sufficient light to perform visual checks. Educators will play soft music and will encourage/ assist the children in taking off their shoes.
8. Regular and ongoing communication with families is an important piece of Top of the Ridge as a high-quality child care center. Communication may be in person, by phone, email or through written and posted communication tools. Communication comes from all members of the organization, including but not limited to the Board of Directors, the Supervisor/Designate and all members of staff. All members of staff must know when and where to redirect communications to the office. Educators will keep a daily written log of the children's health, behavior, eating and sleeping habits. These will be communicated with the parents/families upon departure or upon request (via phone or email).
9. Families will be directed to resources outside of the center if necessary, and community partners such as early year's services, speech pathologists, support services, occupational therapists, counsellors, etc. This will be an important part of the centers support to all children and their families. We view the community as a valuable resource and our educators plan learning opportunities to engage the community in our programs. We seek out opportunity to share our knowledge and to learn from others in the community. Participating in community walks (weather permitting), children can learn and explore the community and environment and the rich resources and history Ridgeway has to offer.
10. The organization will provide ongoing opportunities for educators to engage in critical reflection and discussion with others about pedagogy and practice, to support continuous professional learning. Opportunities will be provided for educators to attend workshops, webinars and community events relating to the practice of Early Childhood Education. Educators will be supported at Top of the Ridge Day Care for prep times to complete documentation, planning and professional learning.

**All educators and staff members will build a climate of trust, honesty and respect in the workplace, working collaboratively in order to provide a safe, secure, healthy and inviting environment for all children and their families, building and maintaining healthy professional relationships and encourage growth and offering support and mentorship, adhering to the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice in the College of Early Childhood Educators.*

Procedure:

Any person (staff members or students) involved with the children shall read and agree in writing to the program statement guidelines prior to commencing employment/placement, at any time there are updates and annually thereafter. Families will be updated on revisions to the policy before they are implemented.

1. Discipline will be:

- Used in a positive and consistent manner
- Developmentally appropriate to the child
- Designed to assist the child to learn appropriate behavior
- Implemented as soon as possible after troublesome behavior
- Reasonably related to the nature of troublesome behavior

2. Staff and students, shall not permit:

- corporal punishment of the child; which may include but is not limited to: hitting, spanking, slapping, pinching
- sexual abuse, sexual misconduct or engaging in a prescribed sexual act, as those terms are defined in the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007*. O. Reg. 137/15, s. 48; O. Reg. 126/16, s. 34; O. Reg. 197/26, s. 15.
- physical restraint of the child, such as confining the 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 himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent

- locking the exits of the child care centre for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures
- use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine their self-respect, dignity or self-worth
- depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
- inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will

3. Child Guidance Techniques

- Children will be guided in a positive manner that is developmentally appropriate
- Modeling from the educators will assist the children to learn self-discipline and appropriate behaviors
- Limits or rules of an activity or play area will be clearly communicated to children
- Regular encouraging comments and positive reinforcement that will permit logical and appropriate consequences.
- Educators will use soft, supportive voices, model acceptable behavior and not discuss the children's misbehavior in front of them.
- Children will be supervised by an adult at all times.
- Children will be encouraged to self-feed (where appropriate) and be encouraged to have a positive view of foods. Force feeding or withholding of food or drink is not permitted.
- Children will have the opportunity to rest each day after lunch. Any child unable to sleep will be allowed to play quietly with an individual activity that does not disrupt the rest of others in the room.
- Children will be assisted through the washroom routine according to individual needs. Hands must be washed after using the washroom, returning from outdoors, and prior to eating.
- Children will be transitioned in small groups to the washroom and cubby room, and will not be made to wait for extended periods of time. Lining up is to be discouraged.

4. Methods of managing misbehavior

If a child misbehaves, any of the following techniques may be implemented:

- Wherever misbehavior is attention seeking, it will be ignored, (unless safety is compromised).
- Children will be redirected to alternative activities.
- Children will be given a clear direction regarding the limits (if any) of the play area or routine.
- Educators will acknowledge and identify the child's feelings and label any emotions.
- Response to misbehavior will be in a soft, supportive voice.

5. Contravention to behavior management practices

- Educators are expected to comply with the CCEYA, Child Welfare Legislation, and policies and procedures with respect to the program statement policy. The Ministry of Education will be notified immediately by any staff, parent, or student who witnessed the abuse.
- Depending on the severity of the contravention, the educator/student may face the following:
 - o Verbal discussion of the contravention with Supervisor/Designate and/or the Board of Directors (note to be placed on file), with target date for improvement.
 - o Follow-up observation/documentation by Supervisor/Designate.
 - o Written warning with target date for improvement to be recorded and copies sent to the educator or student, their personnel file, and the Board of Directors within ten days of the occurrence.
 - o Suspension of employment without pay or student placement. This decision will be made jointly by the Supervisor/Designate, and the Board of Directors (where applicable). Reasons for suspension will be recorded in a report sent to the employee or student, and the Board President.
 - o Further failure to comply will result in termination of employment/placement.

Various criteria will be considered when determining which disciplinary measure to take.

These may include:

- Seriousness of the offense
- Actual or potential risk, or harm to children
- Past performance in general of the employee/student
- Frequency of occurrence(s)

- Previous disciplinary action taken (e.g. additional probationary periods)

Monitoring Record

1. All staff and students will sign and date that they have read the Program Statement implementation policy.
2. All staff and students will be monitored on the Program Statement at least 2 times a year by the Supervisor/Designate. A written record of this monitoring will be kept for three years.
3. The Assistant Supervisor will be monitored by the Supervisor.
4. The Supervisor will be monitored by the Assistant Supervisor.

Methods of discipline are discussed at staff meetings or with educators/students and will be used in a consistent manner. Educators and students will be continually supported and encouraged to seek further opportunities to enhance their professional development.

AGES OF CHILDREN

Top of the Ridge Day Care presently has a licensed capacity of 90 children per day.

TODDLERS (18 months – 2.6 years) *Approved for 3 children 12-17 months

PRESCHOOLERS (2.7 years – 6 years)

KINDERGARTEN (3.8 years – 6.7 years)

SCHOOL AGERS (6.8 years – 12 years)

DAYS AND HOURS OF OPERATION

Care will be provided 51 weeks of each year.

1. The center is closed between Christmas and New Years
2. Care is offered between 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. – Monday-Thursday and 7:00 a.m. to **5:30 p.m. Fridays** (*effective August 3, 2026*)
3. Current part-time families' schedules will be honoured until the end of their term. (*September 2025*)

HOLIDAYS OBSERVED

Top of the Ridge Day Care observes the following holidays (*alternative dates TBD as needed*):

New Year's Day, Family Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Civic Holiday, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

ADMISSION AND DISCHARGE POLICY

A tour interview may be conducted prior to your child's admission to Top of the Ridge Day Care to familiarize you and your child to the environment, our policies, and clarify any questions you may have.

Prior to admission, documentation of all immunization must be presented.

A non-refundable registration fee (base fee) of \$22.00 is also required and must be paid at this time.

You will also be required to complete a detailed emergency consent form for your child. This record is routinely updated and it is essential that your record contain current information at all times. Should you change your job or place of residence, we need to know the correct telephone numbers to contact you in an emergency.

Written notice of permanent withdrawal must be given two weeks in advance. If notice is not received, full program fees will be charged. A space cannot be guaranteed if you temporarily withdraw your child. You will need to apply back on the OneHSN List.

Top of the Ridge Day Care may terminate services if staff feel threatened by a parent/guardian, policies are not followed or fees are not paid.

ATTENDANCE

Top of the Ridge Day Care accepts full-time, Monday-Friday enrollments. Once a child is admitted to the program, he or she is expected to attend regularly. Keeping in mind the core hours of teaching happen between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., we ask that children attend no later than 10:00 a.m. (where applicable and approved by the Supervisor/Designate).

When a child is absent, please call the center to speak to the Supervisor/Designate, and/or to leave a voicemail. The Supervisor/Designate should be advised of the reason for absence (i.e. sick with a cold, doctor's appointment, vacation, etc.) and the expected duration of the absence. Full fees will be charged for cancellations, regardless of attendance.

VACATIONS

Families are allotted 10 vacation days per calendar year where fees are not charged. Families must use 5 or more days consecutively; the other 5 may be used however. Families should provide a 2-week notice to the administrative office to update your schedule on the Lillio platform. If any consecutive absences exceed the 10-day allowance, full fees will be charged (regardless of attendance).

FEE PAYMENTS (LILLIO BILLING)

Effective July 1st 2025, we will be transitioning to Lillio for scheduling, invoicing and billing. Fees are to be paid by pre-authorized debit payments and will be withdrawn on the 20th of the month for the current month of care. Any additional days will be added into the following month, or included prior to invoices being generated for that month. Any invoices that are cancelled or failed, families are responsible for immediately notifying the Supervisor/Designate, resolving the issue (whether it be incorrect banking information or non-sufficient funds) and processing the payment again.

Your child's attendance will be automatically put into the Lillio system and current part-time schedules will be honoured as we are transitioning to full-time enrolments moving forward.

As of September 2025, we no longer accept part-time registrations.

FEES AND SCHEDULES

Top of the Ridge Day Care has been successfully accepted into the Canada Wide Early Learning Child Care Program (CWELCC). Please refer to the Base Fee Table for current fee information:

Age Group	Program	Base Rate Pre-CWELCC (March 27, 2022)	Base Rate less 25% (effective April 1, 2022)	Base Rate less 50% (effective January 1, 2023)
Toddler	Full Day	\$30.50	\$22.88	\$14.41
	Half Day	\$20.50	\$15.38	\$12.00
Preschool	Full Day	\$29.50	\$22.13	\$13.94
	Half Day	\$19.50	\$14.63	\$12.00
JK/SK	Before School	\$8.00	\$8.00	\$12.00
	After School	\$13.00	\$12.00	\$12.00
	Before and After	\$21.00	\$15.75	\$12.00
	Full Day	\$29.50	\$22.13	\$13.94
	Half Day	\$19.50	\$14.63	\$12.00

TAX RECEIPTS

Receipts will be given for income tax purposes by February 28th for the previous calendar year. Breakdown of days/months attended will not be included (please refer to your attendance records). Receipts will be sent electronically via email based on the information you have provided to us.

CHILD CARE SUBSIDY

Subsidized services may be available to eligible families. If families have applied for subsidized care and a decision has not yet been made, full fees for care will be charged until we receive an approval letter outlining the terms of care. Once we receive this, the fees that have been paid will be refunded/credited back to you (depending on individual circumstances). Further information may be obtained from the Supervisor/Designate.

LATE FEES (NON-BASE FEE)

Should staff overtime result from the late pick up of your child, you will be charged the actual cost incurred. These rates are high and therefore should be avoided. Continued lateness may result in termination of care services at the discretion of the Supervisor/Designate.

TERMINATION

Notice of withdrawal from the child center is to be submitted in writing to the center's Supervisor/Designate at least two weeks in advance.

Top of The Ridge Day Care may terminate services if staff feel threatened by a parent, policies are not followed, or fees are not paid.

ARRIVAL AND PICKUP

Children depend on regular routines for consistency. We recommend that you establish fixed hours to pick up and drop off your child. When your child arrives, notify a member of the staff as to your child's presence. Similarly, when picking up your child, ensure staff are aware that you are leaving. Parents/Guardians are not permitted to open the classroom doors, nor enter into classroom or playground spaces at any time.

SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN

Families are primarily responsible for the children in their care until the transfer of care to the educator has been completed (signed in on the daily attendance record).

Once the child has been signed out of care, staff are not responsible for the supervision of the child.

Children should be supervised by an adult and not be left alone at any time.

This includes, but is not limited to the following situations:

- Allowing the child to use the washroom while you are in the cubby area
- Allowing one child to be in a cubby area while attending to another child elsewhere
- Allowing the child to run from the car to join the bus line, and vice versa
- Allowing the child to run around the center or enter unauthorized spaces

STAFF WILL NOT RELEASE YOUR CHILD TO ANY INDIVIDUALS NOT LISTED ON THE AUTHORIZED PICK UP LIST.

IF ALTERNATE PICK UP ARRANGEMENTS ARE NEEDED, THE INDIVIDUALS WILL BE ASKED FOR IDENTIFICATION UPON ARRIVAL FOR SAFETY PURPOSES.

SAFE ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Authority: Ministry of Education: Ontario Regulation 137/15

Created/Updated December 2023 **Revised:** January, 2026

Purpose:

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

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

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

Note: definitions for terms used throughout this policy are provided in a Glossary at the end of the document.

Policy: General

- **Top of the Ridge Day Care** will ensure that any child receiving child care at the child care centre is only released to the child's parent/guardian or an individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization that the child care centre may release the child to.
- **Top of the Ridge Day Care** 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.
- When 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

1. When accepting a child into care at the time of drop-off, program staff in the room must:
 - o greet the parent/guardian and child.
 - o 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 contact sheet or where the individual is not listed, ask the parent/guardian to provide authorization for pick-up in writing (e.g., note or email, phone call to the Supervisor/Designate).
 - o document the change in pick-up procedure in the daily written record.
 - o sign the child in on the classroom attendance record.

Where a child has not arrived in care as expected

1. 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),
 - Before School Care: at 8:00 a.m. (before bus pick up)
 - After School Care: at 3:00 p.m. (before bus drop off)
 - Toddler, Preschool, and full-day Kindergarten and School Age Care: 3 hours after centre opens (10:00 a.m.)
 - o Program staff inform the Supervisor/Designate and they will commence contacting the child's parent/guardian at 10:00 a.m. The Supervisor/Designate shall call the parent/guardian listed on the contact sheet. If the call is not answered, a voicemail must be left indicating the date and time, with notice of the child's absence from the centre.
 - o If the parent/guardian is unable to be reached, calls will continue periodically and will continue down the list of emergency contacts, in priority sequence.
 - The Supervisor/Designate will commence an incident report and document all interactions (including, but not limited to initial phone calls, voicemails, emails left with parent/guardian; if additional calls and voicemails are made to emergency contacts – as they occur)
 - The incident will be considered “resolved” if at any point the child's absence is properly communicated.
 - o If the parent/guardian is not reached by 12:00 p.m. next steps can include contacting one or more external agencies for guidance (e.g. FACS and/or local police department)
2. 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.

Releasing a child from care

1. The staff who is supervising the child at the time of pick-up shall only release the child to the child's parent/guardian or individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization that the child care may release the child to. Where the staff does not know the individual picking up the child (i.e., parent/guardian or authorized individual),
 - o confirm with another staff member that the individual picking up is the child's parent/guardian/authorized individual.
 - o where the above is not possible, ask the parent/guardian/authorized individual for photo identification and confirm the individual's information against the parent/guardian/authorized individual's name on the child's file or written authorization.

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

1. Where a parent/guardian or authorized individual who was supposed to pick up a child from care and has not arrived by 6:00 p.m., staff shall ensure that the child is given a snack and activity, while they await their pick-up.
2. Staff will notify the Supervisor/Designate of the child not being picked up.
 - The staff will commence an incident report and document all interactions (including, but not limited to initial phone calls, voicemails, emails left with parent/guardian; if additional calls and voicemails are made to emergency contacts – as they occur)
 - The incident will be considered “resolved” if at any point the child's dismissal is properly communicated.
3. 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 about their pick-up time. In the case where the person picking up the child is an authorized individual, the staff shall call the parent/guardian notifying them the child has been picked up and list the name of the individual who has picked the child up.
4. If the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the child, the staff shall continue calling emergency contacts in priority sequence until contact is made.
5. 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 6:30 p.m., the staff shall proceed with contacting the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) Family and Children's Services (FACS) 905-937-7731. Staff shall follow the CAS's direction with respect to next steps.
6. Depending on the circumstances of the child not being picked up by the time of the centre closure, the centre has a right to call a meeting with the parent to discuss the circumstances and to set further requirements as deemed necessary for the child to be picked up by the time of the centre closure. Should not picking the child up by the

required time, the centre has the right to charge additional fees to cover the overtime costs and administrative time required to deal with the situation.

Incident Reporting

The safety of the children attending Top of the Ridge Day Care is one of our top priorities. We must work in partnership with families to upkeep the strong communication for the best interest of the children. As always, we ask that if children are going to be absent, parents are to call the centre and leave a voicemail. If we do not receive any notification on the children's absence, we will follow our Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy. Every time Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy steps are taken into action, regardless of level or resolution, an incident report will be documented. These reports may require parent/guardian signature, as well as the Supervisor/Designate. At the centre's discretion, several noted incidences may result in further written warnings, and/or termination of child care services.

Failure to comply with the Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy may result in the following:

- First Occurrence: written notice from the Supervisor/Designate confirming the hours of care
- Second Occurrence: written notice from the Board of Directors and \$50.00 fine (non-base fee)
- Third Occurrence: \$100.00 fine (non-base fee)
- Fourth occurrence: termination of care

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 without supervision.

Glossary

Individual authorized to pick-up/authorized individual: a person that the parent/guardian has advised the child care program staff in writing can pick-up their child from care.

Licensee: The individual or corporation named on the license issued by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of the child care centre and home child agency.

Parent/guardian: A person having lawful custody of a child or a person who has demonstrated a settled intention to treat a child as a child of his or her family.

Regulatory Requirements: Ontario Regulation 137/15

Safe arrival and dismissal policy

50. Every licensee shall ensure that each child care centre it operates and each premises where it oversees the provision of home child care has a policy respecting the safe arrival and dismissal of children that,

- (a) provides that a child may only be released from the child care centre or home child care premises,
 - (i) to individuals indicated by a child's parent, or
 - (ii) in accordance with written permission from a child's parent to release the child from the program at a specified time without supervision; and
- (b) sets out the steps that must be taken if,
 - (i) a child does not arrive as expected at the centre or home child care premises, or
 - (ii) a child is not picked up as expected from the centre or home child care premises.

PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

- Deliver your child to the educator(s) every morning.
- Pick up your child at the specified time.
- Ensure that your child has had a good breakfast.
- Ensure that your child has adequate clothing and any supplies needed for the day.
- Ensure that your child's clothing is clearly labeled, we are not responsible for missing items.
- Ensure that your emergency consent record is always up to date; communicate changes.
- Please ensure your payment information is up to date.
- Always inform the staff if your child will be absent or late, or if alternate pick-ups are being used.

CLOTHING AND POSSESSIONS

Your child should be dressed in clothing that is appropriate for physical activity, the weather and the season. A second set of clothing should be kept at the day care in case of accidents. All clothing should be labeled with your child's name. Unless inclement weather has been posted, children are expected to participate in outdoor play for a minimum of 2 hours a day – rain or shine. It is a parent/guardian's duty to ensure their child is prepared for all weather types.

When clothing is loaned to enable your child to return home in dry clothing, you are expected to wash and return it. We are not responsible for lost clothing.

We encourage families not to allow children to bring articles from home. We offer a variety of developmentally appropriate and high-quality activities and materials for your child to use and access throughout the day. On special occasions, there may be times to bring items from home. This may include but not be limited to the following: toys, bottles, soothers, blankets, sippy cups and stuffed animals. We are not responsible for lost or stolen articles.

TOILET TRAINING

Toilet training is a wonderful milestone that children accomplish at their own pace. Once your child is showing signs of interest in toilet training at home, connect with the educators in your child's room to assess readiness at the center. Signs of readiness differ from home life to a public setting, so your educators will let you know what they have observed. We have put together a list of tips and tricks for having the best possible outcome for toilet training.

Signs of readiness can include:

- The child communicates that they have a wet/soiled diaper.
- The child communicates they feel the sensation to use the toilet.
- The child stays dry for 2 hours/wakes up dry from a nap.
- The child can pull pants/underwear down (with minimal assistance).

Tips for toilet training at day care:

- We advise that once children have met all signs of readiness, parents/guardians should connect with classroom teachers about their child's readiness in program.
- We strongly suggest the child transition straight to underwear (using pull-ups can be confusing for children and are much less absorbent than a diaper) and do not switch back and forth from one to another (be consistent).
- We do not encourage sleep diapers.
- Send many extra pairs of underwear, pants, socks and a pair of crocs (for easy cleaning).
- Accidents will happen! Patience is key to having success with toilet training.
- Praise and encouragement will build the confidence of your child.
- Consistency is important – sending your child to day care in underwear for the day is recommended, as opposed to sending them in a diaper to have the staff change the child into underwear. We must maintain consistency for the best possible outcomes!

COMMUNITY OUTINGS

The educators from time to time may bring the children off-site for outings within the community. Families will authorize their child to participate with a signed form at the time of registration.

VIDEO SECURITY SURVEILLANCE

To ensure the safety and security of all children, staff, parents, and visitors, as well as the security of our daycare facility, Top of the Ridge Day Care is equipped with a 24-hour video surveillance system. Security cameras have been installed in our classrooms, hallways, outdoor play area, indoor play area and parking lot.

We may conduct video surveillance of any portion of our premises at any time, the only exception being private areas of restrooms, showers, and dressing rooms.

Our video/security cameras have been positioned in appropriate places within and around our facility and are used in order to help promote the safety and security of persons and property.

The following are just some of the many benefits of having security cameras installed in child care centers:

- Security cameras keep children and child care staff safe. They are a very effective deterrent of any crime.
- People tend to behave/perform better when there are security cameras around.
- Supervisor/Designate can better monitor the entire facility and supervise/observe staff interactions with children and with other staff members effectively.
- Our cameras help provide peace of mind to our parents and our staff members. Because we respect the privacy of all children, parents, and staff in our daycare center, our 24-hour video security surveillance system are for internal purposes only. ONLY the Supervisor/Designate and Board of Directors are allowed to view our security cameras/video footage center's office at the site.

KEY FOB ACCESS

To ensure the safety and security of all children, staff, parents, and visitors, as well as the security of our daycare facility, Top of the Ridge Day Care is now equipped with secure access to our rear entrances for families. Upon registration, each

child will have 1 to 2 key FOBS assigned to authorized individuals (this may include parents, guardians, grandparents, etc.). We require completion of a Key FOB Agreement for each assigned FOB with rules set out.

For the continued safety of the children, staff and families – if you are unsure of any individual, please do not allow access to the building and notify a staff member and/or Supervisor/Designate.

As our focus remains on providing care for the children, those individuals who do not have key FOB access will still be able to use the rear doorbell system. We appreciate your patience while we may not be able to immediately answer the door – as a reminder, any unwarranted or frustrated behaviours during this time will not be tolerated.

PARKING

Parking is provided in the appropriate spaces on the south side of the daycare. Handicapped parking is provided for permit holders only, (those without permits may receive a fine). Also, there are designated spaces for staff. Please refrain from parking in these spaces. You will also notice the “no parking” zone at the front main doors, this area is not for dropping off your child, but for emergency vehicles, and deliveries only. Please use caution and reduce speed when entering and exiting the parking lot.

HEALTH

The Child Care and Early Years Act stipulates that prior to admission, each child must be immunized as recommended by the local Medical Officer of Health (or provide the centre with an appropriate exemption statement for their child’s file). It is our policy that if children are too ill to actively participate or engage in programming, they must stay home and recover. If a child becomes ill at the center, you will be notified immediately. It is your responsibility to pick up your child within an hour of being notified.

COMMON ILLNESSES & EXCLUSION PERIODS

As child care providers we share the common goal and responsibility of keeping children healthy while following Public Health infection and prevention control measures. With this in mind, our experienced staff are not formally qualified to diagnose any ill symptoms your child has been experiencing. We have developed a brief outline of common illnesses found in child care with the appropriate exclusion periods and clear examples for your reference.

<u>ILLNESS</u>	<u>EXCLUSION PERIOD</u>
NAUSEA/VOMITING A child who has been vomiting throughout the night or in the morning should not attend care. Children must be able to fully participate in all areas of the program, including outdoor play.	48 HOURS (2 CALENDAR DAYS) (after final episode)
<i>Example:</i> Child vomited on Monday (Day 0) and is sent home from care. Child will be absent Tuesday (Day 1) and Wednesday (Day 2). Child can return to care on Thursday <i>at the earliest</i> if no other symptoms are present.	
DIARRHEA The causes of diarrhea can be infectious or non-infectious. Only a health care practitioner can determine the cause of illness through an examination appointment. Persistent episodes of diarrhea will be recommended for medical explanation of the cause.	48 HOURS (2 CALENDAR DAYS) (after final episode)
<i>Example:</i> Child had diarrhea on Sunday night (Day 0). Child will be absent Monday (Day 1) and Tuesday (Day 2). Child can return to care on Wednesday <i>at the earliest</i> if no other symptoms present. <i>Example:</i> Child had diarrhea on Sunday night and could return Wednesday... but the child had another bout of diarrhea Monday night - this resets the clock and becomes Day 0. They cannot return until Thursday <i>at the earliest</i> if no other symptoms present.	
FEVER A fever may be a sign of infection. Children with a fever of 100.4°F or higher need to be kept at home. If your child has a fever that reaches 100.4°F while at the center, we will call you to arrange for immediate pick up. Full participation in all aspects of program is required.	24 HOURS (1 CALENDAR DAY) (after fever breaks without medications)

Example: Child had a fever on Tuesday night (Day 0). Child is absent Wednesday (Day 1). Child can return to care on Thursday <i>at the earliest</i> if no other symptoms present – <i>without the use of fever-reducing medications</i>.	
SORE THROAT A sore throat may be a sign of infection, which can easily spread. Children should attend care with a sore throat. Only a health care practitioner can determine the cause of a sore throat.	24 HOURS (1 CALENDAR DAY) (upon improvement or 24 hours following a round of medication – if required)
Example: Child has a sore throat on Sunday night. Child can return to care on Tuesday <i>at the earliest</i> if sore throat is improving, no other symptoms present, or has been on medications for 24 hours. Example: Child attends day care on Monday, but is sent home in the afternoon due to a sore throat (Day 0). The child is absent Tuesday (Day 1), and can return Wednesday <i>at the earliest</i> if sore throat is improving, no other symptoms present, or has been on medications for 24 hours.	
STREP THROAT Strep throat is an infection caused by a bacteria called Group A Streptococcus. A child should not return to the center until a health care practitioner has examined the child and antibiotics have been prescribed – taken for at least one full day (24 hours). The child must be well enough to take part in all aspects of programming.	24 HOURS (1 CALENDAR DAY) (24 hours following a round of antibiotics)
Example: Child has a sore throat on Monday morning (Day 0) is seen by a health care practitioner that afternoon, and is diagnosed with strep. Child starts antibiotic medication that afternoon. Child is absent Tuesday (Day 1). The child can return to care on Wednesday following 24 hours of a round of antibiotics.	
HAND/FOOT and MOUTH This infection is caused by the Coxsackie virus. Though it mostly affects young children, it can occur at any age and affect adults. Outbreaks are most common in the Summer and Fall. A child may return to the center when feeling well enough to participate in all activities and the sores have scabbed over. However, children that have blisters in their mouth, children that drool, and children with weeping rash on their hands must stay home.	24 HOURS (1 CALENDAR DAY) (Child is permitted to return ONLY once sores/blisters have scabbed over, and the child has not had a fever within the past 24 hours)
RASHES There are many kinds of rashes in children and most are not caused by infection. When a rash occurs with a fever, infection is the likely cause. Only a doctor can diagnose a rash. Children with rashes will be excluded from the center until the rash is gone or there is a doctor's note indicating the rash is not contagious.	RASH IS CLEAR (or doctor's note stating the rash is non-contagious)
EARACHE A child with an earache or drainage from the ear should not attend childcare until after they have seen a doctor. This is usually a sign of infection and only a doctor can diagnose. If medication is prescribed your child can return to the center 24 hours after the first dose provided, they are able to fully participate in all aspects of the program.	24 HOURS (1 CALENDAR DAY) (24 hours following a round of antibiotics)
PINK EYE (CONJUNCTIVITIS) Pink eye is highly contagious. Only a doctor can diagnose pink eye so please take your child to a doctor if: • The whites of the eyes are reddened with a discharge • Sometimes the lids are swollen and stuck together.	24 HOURS (1 CALENDAR DAY) (24 hours following a round of antibiotics)

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

The Medical Officer of Health emphasizes that Day Nursery operations may not have a child in their care who has a communicable disease that could be transmitted, in the child care environment.

Children returning to the center upon recovering from a communicable disease must be clearly free from illness.

You will be required to present a doctor's certificate should there be any doubt that your child is free from a communicable disease.

MEALS & SNACKS

Water is available and accessible to children at all times, and 2% milk is offered during the midday meal.

All children will be provided with a morning snack, a midday meal, and an afternoon snack that is nutritious and reflective of Canada's Food Guide and Ontario's Pediatric Associations recommendations.

Our weekly menu (in 4-to-5-week block) is posted. Our menu rotates between Fall/Winter & Spring/Summer. If you would like a copy of the menu, please let the Supervisor/Designate know.

Where parents/families provide their own meals/snack for their child whether it is due to a food allergy or a food restriction, they will be made aware of any known allergies in the centre.

Families ensure that food brought into the centre is labelled with the child's full name and if applicable, the date the food arrived at the centre.

Families must advise the child care centre of all ingredients in food supplied or any ingredients to which children may be allergic.

If foods supplied from home for children contain allergens, supervision of children will be maintained by the staff to ensure foods are not shared or exchanged.

Children will thoroughly wash their hands with staff supervision to ensure the risk of allergen exposure is reduced.

If the meal/snack is forgotten at home the Supervisor/Designate will contact the parent to arrange for an alternative meal/snack to be dropped off.

Top of the Ridge Day Care will provide a refrigerator to keep your child's food in and a microwave oven to reheat appropriate foods. We ask that you please put the food in proper containers if it needs to be reheated with a copy of written instructions for heating the food.

ANAPHYLAXIS

Anaphylaxis is a serious allergic reaction that can be life-threatening. It requires avoidance strategies and immediate response in the event of an emergency. Our 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, staff, students, and visitors at Top of the Ridge Day Care.

Prior to children starting, the Supervisor/Designate will communicate with the parents/guardians to discuss information about any medical condition, including whether the child is at risk of having or has anaphylaxis.

If a child has an anaphylactic allergy, prior to starting at Top of the Ridge Day Care, an Individualized Plan and Emergency Procedures will be developed in collaboration with the child's parent/guardian, and any regulated health professional who is involved in the child's care that the parent believes should be included in the consultation.

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

It is encouraged that food supplied from home does not contain ingredients to which children may be allergic.

Parents and families will be informed about anaphylactic allergies and all known allergens at Top of the Ridge Day Care through postings in our parent information area. Families will also be made aware during registration prior to enrolment, as well as regular ongoing communications (e.g. email, Lillio, etc.).

An updated list of all children's allergies including food and other causative agents will be posted in each cooking and serving area, play area or play room.

Each child with an anaphylactic allergy will have an Individualized Plan and Emergency procedure that detail signs and symptoms specific to that 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 plan will be made available and accessible wherever the child may be present while receiving child care.

The cook and individuals who collect groceries on behalf of Top of the Ridge Day Care and/or other food handling staff, where applicable, will be informed of all the allergies at the child care centre, including staff and students.

The allergen list is provided to the cook and is updated as soon as any new allergens are identified. Communications regarding allergens and ingredients will occur on an ongoing basis between the cook and the Supervisor/Designate to collaborate if substitutions may be provided, as applicable.

Top of the Ridge Day Care 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.

This communication plan will be continually reviewed to ensure it is meeting the needs of Top of the Ridge Day Care and that it is effectively achieving its intended results.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

Top of the Ridge Day Care will administer medication prescribed by a qualified medical practitioner in accordance with provincial legislation. Parents/guardians are required to provide:

- Written authorization, including the dosage, route, and times the medication is to be administered.
- Medication in the original container, clearly labelled with the prescription label (including the child's name, medication name, dosage, date dispensed, and instructions for storage and administration).
- Clear, specific written administration instructions. If the prescription or medication label includes a dosage range (e.g., "1-2 puffs" or "1-2 drops") or general directions (e.g., "affected eye(s)"), the parent/guardian and/or prescribing health care provider must *specify* the exact dose to be given and, where applicable, which eye(s) or body part(s) are to receive the medication. Child care staff cannot interpret or make decisions regarding dosage or treatment instructions.

If medication instructions are incomplete, unclear, or require staff to make a clinical judgment, the medication will not be administered until written clarification is received from the parent/guardian and/or prescribing health care provider.

Emergency medication (e.g., oral allergy medication, inhalers, and epinephrine auto-injectors) will accompany the child wherever they go while in care.

MEDICATION IS NOT TO BE LEFT IN THE CUBBY AREA. PLEASE GIVE ALL MEDICATION DIRECTLY TO A STAFF MEMBER.

EMERGENCIES & FIRE DRILLS

Should an accident occur, the center staff will seek the necessary medical assistance as well as inform the parent/guardian. In the event that your child has to be taken to a hospital or a doctor's office, you will be informed by telephone. You will assume the care of your child at the center, or meet your child and accompanying staff member at the hospital. In the best interest of the child, we will seek emergency medical treatment for your child, if we cannot contact you at the telephone numbers recorded in our files.

The staff will complete an Accident Report describing the nature of the accident and you will be requested to sign this form to acknowledge that you were informed of the incident. If you refuse your copy, this will be noted on the report and stored in the child's file.

In the event of an emergency, which requires the evacuation of the center, the children will be taken to Sanctuary Centre for the Arts (209 Ridge Road North), the phone number there is 289-321-0502. Staff will be required to bring all emergency binders and outdoor bags with them to the alternate location. Once at the location, staff will be required to call parents/guardians to notify them on the situation.

During inclement weather, the staff will make every effort to open the center. Top of the Ridge Day Care will follow the DSBN school closures for inclement weather. If a decision is made to close the center before 7:00 a.m., listen to the local radio stations, email, and/or other communications (Lillio etc.; where applicable). Notice of closure will be communicated as soon as possible prior to opening. If the decision to open the center is made, and staff and children are at risk due to power outage, or worsened driving conditions the decision to close the center will be decided by the Supervisor/Designate.

Top of the Ridge Day Care does have an emergency management policy, stating our policy and procedures may an emergency occur, if you would like to read the full policy, please let the Supervisor/Designate know.

Top of the Ridge Day Care conducts regular fire drills on a minimum monthly basis to ensure all children, staff and visitors are confident and well trained in our emergency procedures. Our fire plans are reviewed on an annual basis by the Fort Erie Fire Department, or as changes are made. Fire Plans are posted conspicuously throughout the centre, in all classrooms, kitchen, washrooms and other applicable areas outlining exit routes and procedures.

STUDENTS

From time to time, Top of the Ridge Day Care is supportive of post-secondary students looking to further their education in the child care field. Every student completing a placement at Top of the Ridge Day Care is supervised by an employee at all times and is never permitted to be alone with any child.

WAIT LIST

The following criteria were established in an attempt to create fair admission procedures which will be used consistently at Top of the Ridge Day Care, and give priority to the families we are able to serve: Toddlers to School-Aged children.

Procedure: The centre will give priority to a child seeking enrolment according to the following:

- 1) A sibling is already enrolled in the centre.
- 2) The date the child's name was placed on the waiting list.
- 3) The age of the child placed on the waiting list.

Top of the Ridge Day Care recognizes a commitment to serving children with special needs. Any child referred to the centre that has identified therapeutic or special needs will be considered on an individual basis, and will be enrolled only if the child's identified needs can be met by the existing resources within the center.

The Supervisor/Designate will, upon request, notify families inquiring on the application status of their child. Information will only be given in regard to the number placement - no guarantees of start dates will be available. Top of the Ridge Day Care will not charge or collect a fee for placing a child on the waitlist.

The final decision regarding any child's enrolment will be the responsibility of the Supervisor/Designate.

***Any child who is withdrawn from the centre for the summer or for any other period of time will not retain seniority for the time previously attended. The parent/guardian will have to re-register on the OneHSN list. The child will not be placed on the waiting list until the last day of attendance at the centre.**

***If a family who has a child enrolled in care with a sibling on our internal "sibling priority list" and is withdrawn from care at anytime for any reason, sibling priority will not be retained. Example: a child entering into Kindergarten in September and care is not needed; sibling priority will end on the date the child is withdrawn from care (e.g. end of August).**

When spaces are available, the Supervisor/Designate will call the primary contact and phone number listed on the OneList profile. If the contact does not answer, a voicemail will be left with a deadline to respond by before the Supervisor/Designate moves onto the next child waiting. Without a response from the primary contact, the child will be dropped to the bottom of the waiting list by default.

It is the parent/guardians responsibility to ensure their information is up-to-date and that there is a voicemail system available in case the phone call is missed. If no voicemail is set up, the Supervisor/Designate will attempt to call the primary contact once more, at a different time, before moving on.

Families that choose to pass on the available space may stay on the list, but lose their priority and drop to the bottom.

After two available spaces have been turned down, the child will be removed from the list. Parents/Guardians are welcome to re-apply, but their original date of application will not be reinstated.

Expired applications will not be reinstated by Top of the Ridge Day Care, as it is the parent/guardians responsibility to keep their child's application active.

PARENT ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Date Created/Revised: July 2023

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.

Definitions

Licensee: The individual or agency licensed by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management

of each child care centre it operates (i.e. the operator).

Staff: Individuals employed by the licensee (e.g., program room staff).

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 by Top of the Ridge Day Care and will be addressed by the Supervisor/Designate. 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. 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 5 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, and students, 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.

All families enrolling at Top of the Ridge Day Care are expected to thoroughly read the Parent Handbook and understand the expectations set within. All families must sign a Code of Conduct.

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 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*.

For more information, visit <http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaidthereportingabuse/index.aspx>

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
Program Room-Related e.g: schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.	Raise the issue or concern to - the classroom staff directly AND - the Supervisor/Designate or licensee.	- Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised or - Arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within 5 business days. Document the issues/concerns in detail.
General, Centre- or Operations-Related	Raise the issue or concern to - the Supervisor/Designate or licensee.	Documentation should include: - the date and time the issue/concern was received;

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:
e.g.: child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.		- 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.
Staff-, Duty parent-, Supervisor-, and/or Licensee-Related	Raise the issue or concern to - the individual directly - or - the Supervisor/Designate 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/Designate 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.
Student-Related	Raise the issue or concern to - the staff responsible for supervising the student - or - the Supervisor/Designate and licensee. All issues or concerns about the conduct of students that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the Supervisor/Designate as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.	Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within 2 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 the Board of Directors. Once the Board of Directors is aware of the issue/concern, they will have 5 business days to respond verbally or in writing.

Issues/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/concerns may also be reported to other relevant regulatory bodies (e.g., local public health department, police department, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Labour, fire department, College of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario College of Teachers, College of Social Workers etc.) where appropriate.

Contacts:

Top of the Ridge Day Care 905-894-5654

F.A.C.S 905-937-7731

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

Email: childcare_ontario@ontario.ca