

PARENT 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](http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaidthereportingabuse/index.aspx) (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. Documentation should include:
General, Centre- or Operations-Related e.g.: child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.	Raise the issue or concern to - the Supervisor/Designate or licensee.	- 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;
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.	- 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. 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

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Email: childcare_ontario@ontario.ca