



Serious Occurrence Policy and Procedures

Name of Child Care Centre: Thorncliffe Park Day Care Centre

Date Policy and Procedures Established: January 2009

Date Policy and Procedures Updated: January 2025

Purpose

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

This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for policies and procedures with respect to serious occurrences for Thorncliffe Park Daycare Centre Programs.

Policy

Identifying a Serious Occurrence

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

Category 1 - Death of a Child

Examples of Reportable Serious Occurrences:

- A child was unresponsive and not breathing while receiving child care. The child was later pronounced dead by emergency medical educators.
- A child developed a severe illness while at the child care centre or home child care premises and later passed away in hospital.
- A child developed a high fever at the child care centre or home child care premises and was sent home. The child later passed away.
- A child incurred fatal injuries from an accident while on a field trip from the child care centre.

Examples of Incidents that are **not** Serious Occurrences

- A child died following a known illness/disease/medical condition (e.g., cancer).
- A child died due to an automobile collision while in the care of the parents/guardians s.

Category 2 - Abuse/Neglect or Allegation of Abuse/Neglect

Definition: Abuse, neglect or an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child while receiving child care at a home child care premises or child care centre. This includes an allegation against any person who is on-site at the child care centre or home child care premises and not limited to employees and child care providers.

The following provides some examples of what would and would not be considered a serious occurrence under this category.

Examples of Reportable Serious Occurrences:

- A educators member observed another educators forcefully grabbing a child.
- A Thorncliffe Park Daycare Centre and School Age Program received an email from a concerned parents/guardians alleging that a educator's member was upset that a preschooler had a urine accident and the educator's member refused to permit the child to change his/her soiled clothes.
- A educator's member is observed using harsh/degrading language to a child.
- A parents/guardians noticed a bruise on his/her child's face; the child told parents/guardians that the home child care provider had hit him/her.
- A educators observed a parents/guardians slap a school age child while on the playground.

Example of Incident that is **not** a Serious Occurrence

- A child disclosed to a educator's member an incident that occurred while the child was not receiving care at the child care centre. In this case, a report would be required to the local children's aid society as per the Duty to Report under the Child, Youth and Family Services Act.

Category 3 - Life-threatening Injury or Illness

Definition: A life-threatening injury to or a life-threatening illness of a child who receives child care at a home child care premises or child care centre.

For greater clarity, where the Thorncliffe Park Daycare Centre and School Age Program or supervisor has been notified that a life-threatening injury or illness of a child has occurred, it must be reported whether it occurred while the child was receiving care at the time, or where there are any indications that the life-threatening injury or illness was sustained/developed while the child attended the home child care premises or child care centre.

CCLS has two sub-categories: injury, and; illness.

Life-threatening injury or illness is defined as an incident that is capable of causing death.

Examples of life-threatening injury or illness include but are not limited to:

Injuries:

- Injuries to the head, back or neck resulting in unconsciousness or physical paralysis
- Severe eye injury (impalement)
- Injuries to the chest resulting in labored breathing (collapsed lung), cardiac arrest, internal bleeding or vomiting blood
- Anaphylactic reactions

- Near drowning
 - Substantial blood loss
 - Drug overdose
 - First time seizure, multiple seizures or seizures lasting more than 5 minutes
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- Fracture with bone deformity and/or bone exposure

Illness:

- E. Coli
- Flesh Eating Disease

Examples of Incidents that are **not** Serious Occurrences

- A child with a pre-existing seizure disorder had a seizure at the child care centre. The Thorncliffe Park Daycare Centre and School Age Program was aware of the condition, had a plan in place to respond and followed the plan to appropriately respond to the incident. The child did not require emergency medical attention.
- A child fell on the outdoor playground/structure and sustained a cut that required a few stitches.
- A child tripped while running and chipped a tooth.
- A child ingested a non-toxic substance (e.g., playdough).

Category 4 - Missing or Temporarily Unsupervised Child(ren)

Procedures for missing children

A child going missing is very dangerous and serious.

The procedures for what to do when a child has gone missing need to be very clear and speak to how parents/guardians will be contacted.

When developing protocols around missing children, Thorncliffe Park Daycare Centre and School Age Programs should take into consideration if any steps need to be modified based on the age of the missing child.

Procedures around missing children should include **who does what and when** including:

- **Alerting all educators, volunteers and students** at the centre that a child is missing
- Immediately **searching the entire child care premises**, including outdoor play areas such as playgrounds
- Telling an educator person who is not searching the premises to **immediately alert the child's**

parents/guardians (in case parents/guardians have additional information about child's whereabouts)

- **Calling 911** (or local emergency services if the centre is in an area of the province which does not have 911)

Examples of Incidents that are **not** Serious Occurrences

- A parents/guardians picked up their child early from school and did not inform the child care centre educators. The educators called the parents/guardians and was able to confirm that the child was with the parents/guardians.
- An expected child did not get off the bus afterschool. The educators called the parents/guardians and found out that the parents/guardians had picked the child up from school.
- The school mistakenly placed a child on the school bus rather than waiting for the child care educators to pick up the child from the classroom afterschool.
- A child went missing while in the care of his/her parents/guardians.

Category 5 - Unplanned Disruption of Service

Unplanned disruption of service may involve program closure, relocation (not including a planned temporary relocation), immediate evacuation, prohibition to enter the premises and/or restrictions placed (i.e. lockdown, outbreak).

CCLS has these sub categories: fire, flood, gas leak, detection of carbon monoxide, outbreak, lockdown, other emergency relocation or temporary closure.

The following provides some examples of what would and would not be considered a serious occurrence under this category.

Examples of Reportable Serious Occurrences:

- A fire caused an emergency relocation or closure of the premises.
 - A fire occurred at the centre on the weekend when no children were on the premises. The Thorncliffe Park Daycare Centre and School Age Program decided to close the centre until repairs are completed or until air quality is tested.
 - There was a gas leak at the centre (occurred before/during/after operational hours).
 - Carbon monoxide was detected at the home child care premises; educators and children had to evacuate.
 - The local medical officer of health declared an outbreak which has caused closure of a room or the entire child care centre and child care cannot be provided for some or all children.
 - There was a lockdown at the centre.
 - Other unplanned disruption occurred (e.g., evacuation, etc.).
- Example of Incidents that are not Serious Occurrences
- A program does not open or must close due to extreme weather conditions (i.e. snow storm).
 - A planned temporary relocation for the licensed site (i.e. labour disruption and centre decided to relocate to continue operation of centre).

- A boil water advisory was in effect.
- A fire alarm was activated, the centre evacuated and fire services determined that there was no danger (i.e., someone pulled the fire alarm).
- The local medical officer of health declared an outbreak and has put restrictions on the program (e.g. discontinuing all sensory play).

Professional misconduct - registered early childhood educators

Registered early childhood educators (RECEs) are subject to the College of Early Childhood Educators' [Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice](#) as well as all applicable statutes, regulations, by-laws and legally binding policies that are relevant to their professional practice.

The [Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007](#) and its [Professional Misconduct Regulation](#) set out that it is an act of professional misconduct to “[contravene] a law, if the contravention has caused or may cause a child who is under the member’s professional supervision to be put at or remain at risk.”

Reporting a Serious Occurrence

- Educators will notify the Thorncliffe Park Daycare Centre and School Age Program, supervisor or designate of a serious occurrence as soon as they become aware of the incident.
- All serious occurrences will be reported to the Ministry of Education in the Child Care Licensing System (CCLS) within 24 hours of the Thorncliffe Park Daycare Centre and School Age Program, supervisor or designate becoming aware of the occurrence.
- Identifying information such as children or educators names will not be included in the serious occurrence reports.
- If CCLS cannot be accessed (e.g. where CCLS or an internet connection is unavailable), the Thorncliffe Park Daycare Centre and School Age Program, supervisor or designate will notify the program advisor (PA) assigned to the license by email or by telephone within 24 hours of becoming aware of the occurrence. A serious occurrence report will be submitted in CCLS as soon as the system can be accessed.
- Where a Ministry of Education PA cannot be reached by telephone, a voicemail message will be left to notify the PA of the incident.
- All updates to serious occurrences will be reported in CCLS through update reports until the serious occurrence has been closed by the Ministry of Education.
- Where the Ministry of Education requests updates to a serious occurrence in CCLS, these will be provided as soon as possible through update reports.
- Serious occurrences reported to the Ministry of Education will be documented in the daily written record.

Posting a Serious Occurrence Summary (Notification Form)

- Within 24 hours of becoming aware of a serious occurrence, Management team will complete a Serious Occurrence Notification Form in either CCLS or using the form available in Appendix B.
- The form will provide a summary of the serious occurrence and of any action taken by the child care centre.
- The summary will not include identifying information (e.g. names and ages of children, educators, or program rooms) and will contain gender-neutral language.
- The summary will be posted at the child care centre in a place that is visible and accessible to parents/guardians for a minimum of 10 business days, regardless of the serious occurrence type and the status of any related investigation.
- All updates to the serious occurrence will be added to the posted summary, and the summary will remain posted for an additional 10 business days each time any updates are added.
- All serious occurrence summaries will be retained for 3 years from the date they are created or last updated (whichever date is most recent).

Annual Analysis of Serious Occurrences

- An annual analysis of all serious occurrences that occurred in the previous calendar year will be completed by Supervisor/Director (the form available in Appendix C may be used for this purpose).
- The annual analysis will be used to identify issues, trends and actions taken.
- The analysis and record of actions in response to the analysis will be kept on file for Ministry of Education review and retained for 3 years from the date the analysis and record of actions were created.

Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a Child

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

Procedures to Respond to a Serious Occurrence

Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences

Steps for Educators, Students and Volunteers to Follow:	Steps for the Thorncliffe Park Daycare Centre and School Age Program/Supervisor/Designate to Follow:
<p>1. Immediately:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask for assistance from other educators, students, or volunteers. • Provide immediate medical assistance, if applicable, according to Standard First Aid and CPR training, where applicable. • Call emergency services and follow direction from emergency services personnel, where applicable, • Ensure that other children are removed from the scene and do not have access to the area, where applicable. • Address any risks to the health or safety of the child and/or other children present to prevent the risk of further harm. • Notify the supervisor/designate. <p>2. Ongoing and after the incident:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow any direction provided by third-party authorities (e.g. police, CAS, public health, etc.) • Ensure that children are supervised at all times. <p>3. Within 24 hours of becoming aware of the incident:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document the incident in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the daily written record; b. the child's record of symptoms of illness, if applicable; and/or c. in an accident report, if applicable. • Where an accident report is created, provide a signed copy to a family of the child. 	<p>1. Immediately:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide assistance to children, educators, students, volunteers and parents/guardians. • Provide immediate medical assistance, if applicable, according to Standard First Aid and CPR training. • Call emergency services and follow direction from emergency services personnel, where applicable. <p>2. Within 24 hours of becoming aware of the incident:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect all pertinent information to report the incident to the Ministry of Education as a serious occurrence, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A description of the incident; ○ The date, time, place where it occurred, actions taken and outcome; ○ The current status of the incident and child/parties involved; and ○ All other parties notified (e.g., emergency services, CAS, parents/guardians). <p>3. Report the serious occurrence in CCLS, or notify the Ministry of Education program advisor by telephone or email where CCLS is not available. Note: Where CCLS is not available, a serious occurrence report will be submitted in CCLS as soon as it becomes available.</p> <p>4. Post a summary of the serious occurrence and of any action taken by the child care centre in a place that is visible and accessible to parents/guardians.</p> <p>5. Ongoing and after the incident:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow any direction provided by third-party authorities (e.g. police, CAS, public health, etc.)

Steps for Educators, Students and Volunteers to Follow:	Steps for the Thorncliffe Park Daycare Centre and School Age Program/Supervisor/Designate to Follow:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain confidentiality at all times. • Update the serious occurrence report in CCLS, as required. • Conduct an internal review of the serious occurrence with educators, students and volunteers to establish next steps and reduce probability of repeat occurrences. • Provide children, parents/guardians, educators, students and/or volunteers with supports, if needed. • Review with educators, students and volunteers Thorncliffe Park Daycare Centre and School Age program statement policies and procedures that set out prohibited practices and expectations of promoting the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of all children.

Steps to Follow According to Specific Serious Occurrence Categories

Serious Occurrence Category	Steps for Educators, Students and Volunteers to Follow:	Steps for the Thorncliffe Park Daycare Centre and School Age Program/Supervisor/Designate to Follow:
Death of a Child	<p>Death occurs while a child is receiving child care:</p> <p>See 'Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences' for educators, students and volunteers.</p>	<p>See 'Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences' for the Supervisor/Designate, and</p> <p>a) Death occurs while a child is receiving child care:</p> <p>1. Immediately, upon becoming aware of the incident:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact a family of the child, or where parents/guardians cannot be reached, contact the child's emergency contact. <p>b) Death occurs while a child is not receiving child care:</p> <p>Within 24 hours of becoming aware of the incident:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact local Children's Aid Society (CAS) or police services to find out if there is an investigation. If an investigation is ongoing, conduct an internal investigation after CAS or police services have completed their investigation, if applicable.

Allegation of Abuse and/or Neglect	<p>'Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences' for educators, students and volunteers, and</p> <p>Where there is a concern about the abuse or neglect of a child by any person:</p> <p>1. Immediately:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report concerns to the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) as per the duty to report obligations under the <i>Child and Family Services Act</i> (CFSA). • Document the conversation with CAS and follow their recommendations. • Notify the supervisor/designate of the incident and the report made to CAS, where appropriate. • Refrain from discussing the allegation with others. • Maintain confidentiality at all times. 	<p>See 'Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences' for the Thorncliffe Park Daycare Centre and School Age Program/Supervisor/Designate, and</p> <p>Where there is a concern about the abuse or neglect of a child by a educators, student or volunteer, or where a person has otherwise reported alleged abuse/neglect concerns to the supervisor/designate:</p> <p>1. Immediately:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify the person who reported concerns about their duty to report obligations under the <i>Child and Family Services Act</i> (CFSA). • Report the concerns to the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) as per the duty to report obligations under the CFSA, unless it is confirmed that a report has already been made to CAS. • Document the concerns. • Contact and notify a family of the child, where appropriate. • Based on the nature of the allegation and/or the direction of CAS and/or internal policies, determine next steps such as disciplinary measures and additional actions, such as an internal investigation to protect children in care. • Determine whether the individual alleged to have abused/neglected a child is registered with a professional regulatory body (e.g. College of Early Childhood
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		<p>Educators, Ontario College of Teachers, etc.). If so:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Report the allegation of abuse to the appropriate regulatory body; ○ Report to the College of Early Childhood Educators when the employment of a registered early childhood educator (RECE) is suspended or terminated or if the RECE resigns. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refrain from discussing the allegation with others. • Maintain confidentiality at all times. <p>2. Once all external investigations are complete (e.g. by police and/or CAS), if applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the serious occurrence report in CCLS, as required. • Update all other authorities to whom the allegation was reported (e.g. College of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario College of Teachers, CAS, etc.).
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Serious Occurrence Category	Steps for Educators, Students and Volunteers to Follow:	Steps for the Thorncliffe Park Daycare Centre and School Age Program/Supervisor/Designate to Follow:
Life-threatening Injury or Illness a. Injury b. Illness	See 'Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences' for educators, students and volunteers.	See 'Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences' for the Thorncliffe Park Daycare Centre and School Age Program/Supervisor/Designate.
Missing or Unsupervised Child(ren) a. Child was found b. Child is still missing	<p>'Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences' for educators, students and volunteers, and</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Immediately, upon becoming aware that a child or children are missing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alert the supervisor/designate, and all educators, students and volunteers; Search the child care premises, including outdoor areas (e.g. hallways, washrooms, playground, outdoor classrooms, etc.); Ensure that remaining children are supervised at all times. a) Where the child or children are <u>not found</u> after being deemed missing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to search the premises. Update the supervisor/designate. b) Where the child or children <u>are found</u> after being deemed missing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the supervisor/designate. 2. After the child or children have been found, after being deemed missing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document the incident in the daily written record. 	<p>See 'Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences' for the Thorncliffe Park Daycare Centre and School Age Program/Supervisor/Designate, and</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Immediately, upon becoming aware that a child is missing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist with searching for the missing child(ren). a) Where the child or children are <u>not found</u> after being deemed missing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Call emergency services and follow direction from emergency services personnel. Contact the child(ren)'s parents/guardians (s), or where parents/guardians cannot be reached, contact the child's emergency contact. b) Where the child or children <u>are found</u> after being deemed missing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the child(ren)'s parents/guardians (s), or where parents/guardians cannot be reached the child(ren)'s emergency contact(s).

Serious Occurrence Category	Steps for Educators, Students and Volunteers to Follow:	Steps for the Thorncliffe Park Daycare Centre and School Age Program/Supervisor/Designate to Follow:
Unplanned Disruption of Normal Operations a. Fire b. Flood c. Gas Leak d. Detection of Carbon Monoxide e. Outbreak f. Lockdown g. Other Emergency Relocation or Temporary Closure h. Public Health ordered closure	<p>'Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences' for educators, students and volunteers, and</p> <p>a) Where the incident is suspected to be an <u>outbreak</u>:</p> <p>1. Immediately:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify the supervisor/designate on site of concerns. • Separate children who are showing symptoms of illness from other children. • Follow the Thorncliffe Park Daycare sanitary practices policy and procedures. <p>2. Within the 24 hours timeframe or as soon as possible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record symptoms of ill health in the affected child(ren)'s records, • Document the incident in the daily written record. <p>a) Where the incident is not an outbreak (<u>all other disruptions of normal operations</u>):</p> <p>1. Immediately:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow the Thorncliffe Park Daycare fire safety and evacuation plan and/or the emergency management policies and procedures, as applicable. <p>2. Within the 24 hours timeframe or as soon as possible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document the incident in the daily written record. 	<p>See 'Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences' for the Thorncliffe Park Daycare Centre and School Age Program/Supervisor/Designate, and</p> <p>a) Where the incident is suspected to be an <u>outbreak</u>:</p> <p>1. Immediately:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the local public health department. <p>b) Where the incident is deemed an outbreak by public health:</p> <p>1. Immediately:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow instructions from the local public health department. • Contact the parents/guardians (s) of the affected child(ren) and ensure the affected child(ren) are picked up by their parents/guardians (s) and/or taken to hospital. • Obtain an outbreak posting from the local Medical Officer of Health and post in an area easily accessible for parents/guardians. <p>Note: Outbreaks must be reported as a serious occurrence only if deemed an outbreak by public health.</p> <p>2. Within the 24 hours timeframe or as soon as possible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify all parents/guardians of children enrolled at the child care centre of the outbreak.

Serious Occurrence Category	Steps for Educators, Students and Volunteers to Follow:	Steps for the Thorncliffe Park Daycare Centre and School Age Program/Supervisor/Designate to Follow:
		<p>a) Where the incident is <u>not deemed an outbreak</u>, follow sanitary practices policy.</p> <p>b) Where the incident is not an outbreak (<u>all other disruptions of normal operations</u>):</p> <p>1. Immediately:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow the Thorncliffe Park Daycare fire safety and evacuation plan and/or the emergency management policies and procedures, as applicable. <p>Note: a hold and secure (an external threat in the area) is not a reportable serious occurrence.</p>