

Mother Earth Childcare Centre

Parent Handbook

Welcome, we are so happy you are considering MECC for your precious little one(s)!

This handbook has been created to inform families and staff looking to participate in childcare programs at MECC. This document will help avoid misunderstandings, and to inform all families and staff of the requirements of MECC, as well as the requirements of you, the parents/guardians. This handbook covers our childcare philosophies, policies, procedures, and expectations. Please read this handbook carefully, and feel free to discuss any questions that you may have with the site Supervisor or Classroom Teacher.

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Program Statement

At Mother Earth Childcare Centre (MECC) we are guided by the deep, thoughtful pedagogy of the “Ontario How Does Learning Happen?” document for the Ontario Early Years sector. By ensuring our programs foster the four foundations of HDLH: belonging, well-being, engagement, and expression, we can support every child through their early year development with confidence. These four foundations are key to a successful early years experience and optimal developmental growth.

Belonging: Every child has a sense of belonging when he or she is connected to others and contributes to their world. Early childhood programs cultivate 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. Early childhood programs nurture children’s healthy development and support their growing sense of self.

Engagement: Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind, and senses. Early childhood programs provide 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. Early childhood programs foster communication and expression in all forms.

Every child is unique, competent, capable, curious, creative, and full of potential.

(a) promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children

Approach: We establish and enforce policies and procedures to ensure the health, safety and well-being of every child in care. We value the nutrition of every child, by providing an organic, homemade menu with a variety of fruits, vegetables and whole grains.

(b) support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, child care providers and staff

Approach: Each classroom phone is used for daily learning stories, documentation, and daily logs will help paint the picture of your child’s day in care. Along with these tools, educators will have daily, ongoing, positive, and open communication with families to ensure they all feel welcome, safe, and heard. Staff will model positive interactions between children and others and will support their interactions using social stories, puppetry and visual posters/tools.

(c) Encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate

Approach: We use visual and physical support tools within all programs, we have access to Canadian Mental Health Association free services as a licensed centre, books, and other resources are available for teachers to help support children within care. We talk with families before the child transitions to support their needs, provide additional support, and create an individual plan if needed. We work with families to develop an individualized plan that supports the whole child and their needs while self-regulating or learning how to self-regulate with teachers and parents.

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(d) foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry;

Approach: Our learning environments focus on child-size, natural, and calming spaces that are set up to engage children and spark their curiosity. All the materials and furniture are child-sized and at their height, this ensures every child feels that the space has been made for them. This added comfort leads to quick engagement and comfort within the space. The materials chosen are thoughtful, intentional, and open-ended to support exploration, inquiry, peer relations, critical thinking, play, creativity, movement, and the senses.

(e) Provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences;

Approach: The Teachers will use weekly planning logs to document activities from each day and use this log as a planning tool for the upcoming week. With reflective practice, learning stories and documentation, the teachers will plan and create new learning experiences/environments within their program that are developmentally appropriate for all children within the program. Teachers will reflect, plan and implement based on child interest, development and inclusion and support children through their learning experiences.

(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

Approach: The teacher will use daily documentation, group discussions, observations of previous activities, and reflective and critical reflections to plan and initiate child-led experiences that are developmentally appropriate. MECC ensures all our staff receive a full orientation and training before starting. MECC also houses a large library of resource materials on development, philosophies, activities, and past programming to assist all Teachers in planning and creating positive learning environments and experiences for each child that meet their individualized needs.

(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

Approach: Every program has a daily rhythm which will ensure every child has a day filled with developmentally and socially appropriate activities and stimulation. Teachers will plan using child-led interest and feedback to create and present meaningful, engaging activities daily. The programs spend time indoors for eating, resting, dressing, Montessori work periods, circle, and art. Teachers will take groups off-site at least twice a week to a park, forest, or hiking space for children to have freedom of movement and creativity in nature.

(h) foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children.

Approach: We establish open, ongoing communication with families for the sharing of information about the child or program. We use classroom cell phones to communicate with families throughout the day and learn stories for visual stories of their child's day. Our teachers strive to speak with families in person and parents are encouraged to volunteer within our programs. Teachers engage with parents about their children daily at pick up and drop off and throughout the day via text messages, photos, calls and newsletters. Parents get a more in-depth overview of their child's time in our programs during our parent-teacher interviews. Where teachers and assistant teachers meet with parents for up to 1 hour to talk and connect about their child(ren) in care.

(i) involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and staff

Approach: We utilize these support systems that support children in their individual or group needs. We also encourage visits from community partnerships to enhance and foster the learning experiences of the children in care. We work with community resource consultants, County of Wellington representatives and community services workers. The centre also partners with small community groups and local small businesses for events, community gardens and seasonal festivals.

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(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

Approach: We host professional development and parent-child events for the community and centre families. Hosting open events to bridge communication with other community members. MECC is a social enterprise and has social impact goals that focus on community partnership, bettering quality in the early years, and honoring our role in child development. Through our outreach projects, community presentations and events, and ongoing search for partnership and collaboration, we believe these goals will be met and exceeded. We also partner with the County of Wellington to offer a variety of services to children and families within care.

(k) document and review the impact of the strategies set out above in (a) to (j) on the children and their families.

Approach: We will use daily learning stories that will have photos of the children engaged in their learning environment and with peers/teachers. We will also display a monthly newsletter that informs families of the upcoming events, learning opportunities and parent/child events. We will use quality checklists to evaluate the overall impact of our programs and meet with all our staff in teams and individually each month. Our staff will document and review the impact of our programs and their direct impact on families through critical reflection, team meetings, parent-teacher interviews, daily communication and classroom documentation. Our teacher will also be able to contact and maintain communication with families through their classroom cellphones. We encourage parent feedback and ideas, a feedback and suggestion box is located in the lobby and a page will also be added to our website and Facebook page for reviews.

Our Waldorf Inspiration

As part of our Waldorf curriculum inspiration, we support artistic activities such as storytelling, verbal songs (no pre-recording, CDs, or videos are used), drawing, painting, open-ended creative arts, rhythmic games, and modeling that foster the healthy development of imagination and creativity. Throughout our days we incorporate a variety of meaningful practical work such as cooking, baking, gardening, handwork, and domestic activities that provide opportunities to develop unfolding human capacities. Each classroom is a series of child-directed spaces with everything set at its height. The design is to mimic the feeling of being in a warm, cozy home-like daycare to allow children the comfort and reassurance to enter the world with confidence. The use of predictable rhythms throughout the day provides security and a sense of wholeness by following along with the rhythms and signs of seasonal changes in our daily activities, crafts, circles/songs, and our meals and baking. Aside from a more homelike environment, we also adopted a conscious, collaborative, more flexible approach where children often have the freedom to pursue their activities, interests, and passions. We have found that when blended with a Montessori curriculum, this approach allows the young child to thrive. Children naturally are curious, capable, eager to learn, and rich in potential. When given freedom, they often choose tasks that challenge them and inspire a love of learning. We strive to provide a balance for each child with a special focus on art, imagination, social-emotional development, and individual creativity, the young child is also given plenty of time for free play and outdoor free play/forest play. We believe that all children need long, open-ended play in nature to help foster the inner spirit along with an understanding of their world and developing and perfecting gross motor skills. This promotes imaginative learning and leads to positive peer and staff relationships. It also allows children to develop more advanced social skills and social stories.

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Our Montessori Inspiration

MECC also incorporates philosophies from the Montessori approach within our curriculum, classroom environment, and learning approach. The Waldorf philosophy does not focus on traditional academics and normally delays the learning of math and reading until grade 1. However, We believe by incorporating early literacy in our preschool program, we better support children who are eager to begin reading and higher literacy. Our infant and toddler programs do not engage in structured learning of these skills, but they are present in their Montessori shelf items, circle times, books, puppet plays, etc. Our learning environment incorporates materials based on a Montessori learning approach, catering to all five of the Montessori areas of learning that focus on a child-centered experience for the child to explore, grow, and be challenged. Our highly trained teachers will assist the children in settling into their play and will scaffold their learning by challenging ideas, fostering new approaches, and assisting in problem-solving and self-regulation. Each child is free to learn at their own pace and with small group sizes we can truly work with each child on a personal rhythm that best fits their needs and developmental stages. We do not engage in a set “seat work” time, the children are free to approach and use the Montessori materials at any time. The materials we offer are from a Montessori-based philosophy and curriculum which is made to be a hands-on experience for the child to learn at their own pace and be challenged as they progress, aims to develop all aspects of the young child; emotional, spiritual, and intellectual self to develop a well-rounded individual. In our programs, you will see a mixed-age grouping where the younger children have the opportunity to learn from older/role-model children. The older children have the opportunity to be leaders and teachers to those younger than them. This approach allows for an emphasis on caring for oneself, others the environment, and personal responsibility is practiced and fostered throughout the age groupings.

Our Educators and Caregivers

Our passionate educators work as a team to engage the children in activities that foster their development and scaffold their learning into new areas and ideas. Our educators use a mixture of philosophies to achieve a well-rounded curriculum that supports every child on an individual level. All educators receive a comprehensive orientation and training before working within our program. This ensures that all educators are aware of all of our policies and procedures, curriculum, program statement, and all measures of compliance and contravention within the early years field.

Our educators/caregivers truly understand that young children and even adults learn best through imitation and it is our duty as educators and caregivers to be deserving of their imitation. It is our goal to always be developing as educators to meet children and be worthy of their praise, imitation, love, and connection. Our program focuses on a strong connection with children and families that allows children to feel safe, loved, and cared for. With a strong focus on being warm, open, and loving towards all children in our care, we see a child’s healthy development unfold before us. These intentions with teachers/caregivers form the building blocks of interactions between the teacher/caregiver and the child, between the child and their peers, and the child’s behavior towards other adults/adult figures within the community.

At MECC all staff are recruited through a 3-step interview process. This ensures that we are choosing the best possible teachers and caregivers for young children within our programs. All staff hold current certifications in;

- Standard First Aid and CPR Level C
- Vulnerable Sector Criminal Reference Check
- At least 1 year of experience working within a childcare setting with young children
- Completed Staff Orientation
- On-going training, education, and professional development with MECC

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We have head teachers within the classrooms, they are responsible for programming, documentation, and the overall running of the program within their classroom and work in collaboration with their assistant teachers. The classroom head teacher holds an Early Childhood Educator Certification at a minimum and is registered with the Ontario College of ECEs.

Our assistant teachers have experience working within the childcare sector, hold a certification related to childcare, or are currently in the process of obtaining their ECE. Our team of educators is responsible for implementing our program values and curriculum throughout the year and are encouraged to use their creativity and individuality to enrich the program. All our staff member receive ongoing monthly Professional development and all have the option of sponsorship to obtain further part-time education while working within their role at MECC.

All our staff members are treated as equals with zero tolerance for any form of misconduct or prohibited acts/gestures/verbal or non-verbal cues. We are an inclusive environment and welcome and support all educators regardless of gender, disability, ability, race/ethnicity, or prejudice.

All staff members have yearly performance reviews and quarterly Quality Checklist observations. These reviews take into account work ethic, team relations, programming capabilities, parent interactions, child interactions, professional growth, work attitude, overall classroom and demeanor.

We at MECC identify that every educator is multi-dimensional and needs to be respected and honored as such. At MECC, we believe that the best Educators use a warm, responsive, and inclusive approach, building positive relationships with children, families, colleagues, and communities. Our Educators are a part of the learning process and work alongside children in partnership throughout learning experiences, children are included in the planning and implementation of their program through group discussions, voting systems, and suggestions. Together, they scaffold the child's learning built on their interests. The Educators support development, challenge thinking, and extend learning opportunities. It is through these approaches, resource materials, ongoing professional development, and ongoing training that our educators are truly supported in their professional practice and planning.

Critical Reflection

All our Educators are asked to complete "Critical Reflections". This process of critical reflection, learning, and growth is the basis of a high-quality program that continuously works to improve and create meaningful spaces and curriculums for the children and families within our care. Children naturally learn through questioning and testing theories in their play. In the same way, we encourage educators to be researchers, to try new ideas, and to test theories within their programs. We are strong believers that the children will be our critics when looking at the success rate of our approaches, curriculum, and overall approach. Monthly Quality Checklists will focus on the program as a whole and the level of quality within the program. We also encourage and plan professional development opportunities that foster collaboration and inquiry for all educators. During professional development events and within the workday, we encourage educators to question theory and practice, discuss ideas, test theories, and share learning, they are engaging in collaborative inquiry. This can occur in daily programs, in community networks, or as another form of training event. When educators engage in critical reflection together, they discover multiple perspectives and deeper understandings that lead to a better educator and more variety and support for children within our care.

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Prohibited Practices;

No licensee shall permit, with respect to a child receiving child care at a child care centre it operates or at a premises where it oversees the provision of child care

(a) corporal punishment of the child

(b) 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

(c) locking the exits of the child care centre or home child care premises 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

(d) 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 his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth

(e) depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding.

(f) inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

O. Reg. 137/15, s. 48; O. Reg. 126/16, s. 34.

No employee or volunteer of the licensee, or student who is on an educational placement with the licensee, shall engage in any of the prohibited practices set out above with respect to a child receiving child care at Mother Earth Childcare Centre.

This policy is in place to protect the safety and security of children by prohibiting dangerous, threatening and hurtful behaviours and practices which can cause serious physical or psychological harm to children.

Clarifying guidance;

Corporal punishment is another way to describe punishment that causes physical pain, discomfort, or harm to a person's body (for example, spanking is corporal punishment). In addition to making children eat or drink against their will, bodily harm may include forcibly pulling children by their arms/legs or otherwise forcibly moving a child or forcibly making children sit or lie down.

Applies to all persons in the child care program at all times whether the children are on or off-the premises (like on a bus or on a field trip).

Committing a prohibited practice can be very dangerous to children and has serious consequences under the CCEYA.

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Duty to Report

This professional advisory communicates the requirement to report child abuse and neglect, the suspicions of harm, or the risk of harm to children, under section 125 of the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017 (CYFSA). **ALL RECEs** have a responsibility to protect children from harm. They must be knowledgeable about their duty to report to a Children's Aid Society (CAS) under the CYFSA.

Within a care and relationship-based practice, RECEs work with a vulnerable population. The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice outlines RECEs' responsibilities to children and families, which includes building positive, trusting, and responsive relationships. As such, RECEs are in a unique position to recognize possible signs of child abuse, neglect, and family violence. Under section 125 of the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017 (CYFSA), RECEs have a particular duty to report to a Children's Aid Society (CAS) if they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm or injury.

RECEs are required to abide by the College's Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice as well as all applicable legislation, regulations, by-laws, and policies that are relevant to their professional practice. They are required to be aware of and prepared to act on their legislated duty to report concerns of harm or abuse towards children. Failure to do so is contrary to the law and, may constitute professional misconduct.

It is recommended that ALL RECEs review the College of ECEs Reflection Guide on Duty to Report, located on their website and in your RECE orientation package. The reflection guide will help deepen understanding of the duty to report through critical reflection on the topic, scenarios, and the associated complex factors.

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Mother Earth Childcare Centre Program Statement and Implementation Policy

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Well-Being: Every child is developing a sense of self, health, and well-being. Early childhood programs nurture children’s healthy development and support their growing sense of self.

Engagement: Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind, and senses. Early childhood programs provide 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. Early childhood programs foster communication and expression in all forms.

We believe in blending a variety of early years philosophies to ensure we achieve a curriculum that nourishes every young child from all walks of life and supports the needs of their family. We establish a deep, caring connection with each of our families to ensure every family feels at home, comfortable, and accepted. MECC strives to provide a nourishing, home-like space where the young child can flourish and grow within a warm, natural environment (toys, furniture, linens, cleaning items). At MECC we provide a home-made, local, organic, menu. We value whole nutritious food and the hard labor that goes into producing it locally. We ensure that the children understand the growth and care it takes to produce all our delicious creations. MECC incorporates the Waldorf early years approach with a loving acceptance of each child and their individuality. This approach offers the opportunity for self-initiated play with simple, natural, open-ended play materials as the essential activity for young children. This aspect of the Waldorf philosophy puts a strong focus on the young child’s play as their work and makes it possible for them to digest and understand their experiences. We at MECC believe that young children learn through imitation, real, hands-on, diverse sensory impressions, daily expression, and movement. We support that the young child is naturally curious and wants to actively explore their physical and social environment. Our goal as educators and caregivers is to provide surroundings that offer reasonable limits, structure, and protection, as well as the possibility to take risks and meet challenges. We truly believe that we must always strive to be worthy of a child’s imitation. At MECC we have a strongly supported tech-free environment that fosters individual creativity and allows the young child’s imagination to flourish without the limitations of “replaying” TV episodes instead of being able to create their ideas. At MECC we strive for a natural, stimulating environment indoors and outdoors that supports a calming and predictable day that fosters natural curiosity, discovery, and exploration of the surrounding world. Taking this first step to enroll your precious little one(s) into care is always a difficult journey to begin and we are here for every step along the way. We pride ourselves on supporting the whole child, their family, and the needs of the parent(s). We encourage all our families to approach teachers/caregivers and administrative staff at any time with questions, concerns, new ideas, suggestions, and feedback to keep an open line of communication and trust within the centre. We strive to keep open, honest communication and ensure we are transparent with all staff, families, and community members.

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- At least 1 year of experience working within a childcare setting with young children
- Completed Staff Orientation
- On-going training, education, and professional development with MECC

We have head teachers within the classrooms, they are responsible for programming, documentation, and the overall running of the program within their classroom and work in collaboration with their assistant teachers. The classroom head teacher holds an Early Childhood Educator Certification at a minimum and is registered with the Ontario College of ECEs. Our assistant teachers have experience working within the childcare sector, hold a certification related to childcare, or are currently in the process of obtaining their ECE. Our team of educators is responsible for implementing our program values and curriculum throughout the year and are encouraged to use their creativity and individuality to enrich the program. All our staff member receive ongoing monthly Professional development and all have the option of sponsorship to obtain further part-time education while working within their role at MECC. All our staff members are treated as equals with zero tolerance for any form of misconduct or prohibited acts/gestures/verbal or non-verbal cues. We are an inclusive environment and welcome and support all educators regardless of gender, disability, ability, race/ethnicity, or prejudice. All staff members have monthly performance reviews and feedback sessions, all staff also have a yearly review. These reviews take into account work ethic, team relations, programming capabilities, parent interactions, child interactions, professional growth, work attitude and demeanor, and overall performance.

We at MECC identify that every educator is multi-dimensional and needs to be respected and honored as such. At MECC, we believe that the best Educators use a warm, responsive, and inclusive approach, building positive relationships with children, families, colleagues, and communities. Our Educators are a part of the learning process and work alongside children in partnership throughout learning experiences, children are included in the planning and implementation of their program through group discussions, voting systems, and suggestions. Together, they scaffold the child's learning built on their interests. The Educators support development, challenge thinking, and extend learning opportunities. It is through these approaches, resource materials, ongoing professional development, and ongoing training that our educators are truly supported in their professional practice and planning.

Critical Reflection

All our Educators are asked to complete "Critical Reflections". This process of critical reflection, learning, and growth is the basis of a high-quality program that continuously works to improve and create meaningful spaces and curriculums for the children and families within our care. Children naturally learn through questioning and testing theories in their play. In the same way, we encourage educators to be researchers, to try new ideas, and to test theories within their programs. We are strong believers that the children will be our critics when looking at the success rate of our approaches, curriculum, and overall approach. Monthly Compliance and Contravention Checks will focus on the program as a whole and the level of quality within the program. We also encourage and plan professional development opportunities that foster collaboration and inquiry for all educators. During professional development events and within the workday, we encourage educators to question theory and practice, discuss ideas, test theories, and

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share learning, they are engaging in collaborative inquiry. This can occur in daily programs, in community networks, or as another form of training event. When educators engage in critical reflection together, they discover multiple perspectives and deeper understandings that lead to a better educator and more variety and support for children within our care.

Our Curriculum Goals

Belonging:

Goal for children: Every child has a sense of belonging when he or she is connected to others and contributes to their world.

Program expectation: In our program, you will see authentic, caring relationships and connections to create a sense of belonging among and between children, adults, and the world around them. Educators support every child's right to an attuned physical and emotional space. All our educators bring a warm and caring manner that is conveyed through body language, gestures, uniform, tone of voice, and overall demeanor. We focus on how we touch, talk, and engage with the children to ensure every child feels safe, heard, and valued. To promote this, children participate in social interactions, shared exploration, play, and learning with adults and children. Every classroom is equipped with professional workers for social, emotional, developmental, and physiological support for any child or family with interest. The centre as a whole supports the family and child through the entire process.

Well-Being

Goal for children: Nurture every child in developing a sense of self, health, and well-being.

Program Expectations: We support children by encouraging and fostering children in their physical activity and confidence in their growing abilities. We encourage children to take reasonable risks, explore new environments, and trust in their bodies. Our program focuses on these areas most when outdoors on hikes, climbing trees and hills, playing at large playscapes, and exploring forest environments. We encourage children to listen to their bodies and model how to do so throughout our daily routines. Every child is different and our staff members work collaboratively to ensure every child feels safe, healthy, and well-cared for.

Engagement

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

Program expectation: We believe in blending a variety of early years philosophies to ensure we achieve a curriculum that nourishes every young child from all walks of life and all of their developmental needs. We establish a deep, caring connection with each of our families to ensure every family feels at home, comfortable, and accepted. This connection is at the centre of engaging with the young child and scaffolding their learning and development. MECC strives to provide a nourishing, home-like space where young child can be active, create, curious, and reach their potential through exploration and meaningful learning opportunities. This is because young children are most likely to engage in long, complex episodes of play and demonstrate interest in learning when educators value their ideas and contributions to the curriculum. Children's engagement and learning are enhanced when educators are co-learners. This approach means that our educators engage with children, planning, participating, and learning with the child and about their questions, theories, and curiosities. Educators can gain a deeper understanding of children's developing skills and evolving learning approaches and can support new learning by collaborating with children in discovery and sustained shared thinking.

Expression

Goal for children: Every child is a capable communicator who expresses themselves in many ways. Children can communicate when they initiate, respond to, and engage in reciprocal communication with peers and educators. Through these interactions, young children begin to learn, understand, and use language for a variety of purposes and begin to form their ways of creative expression to communicate feelings, experiences, ideas, and understanding of the world around them.

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Program expectation: We strive to foster communication and expression in all forms within our programs and the community. Educators are eager to create experiences that are attuned to and responsive to children's varied cues and communication needs for all ages and developments. We focus on communication with children, families, and all staff members that is authentic, reciprocal communication, where each party can participate as both initiators and equal partners. We use written communication and photo learning stories to document the children's thoughts and ideas that are expressed to extend their understanding in future programming. We believe by providing uninterrupted time, warm, open spaces, and natural, open-ended materials, we encourage expression through creative materials that reflect children's capabilities as well as their social and cultural background;

Areas of Montessori Curriculum

1. Practical Life Skills
2. Sensorial Skills
3. Language
4. Mathematics
5. Cultural Studies
6. Botany/Sciences
7. Basic French (Colors, Numbers, Basic conversation, Songs and Poems)
8. Outdoor Learning

Areas of Waldorf Learning

Circle with puppetry, songs, games, and stories

Seasonal Inspired curriculum and meals

Nourishing the whole child including their inner spirit

Natural, artificial-free environment meant to nourish a young child and create a sense of warmth and safety

Areas of Forest Learning

Exposure to a natural forest space

Learning about our seasons, plants, and animals

Learning what we can find and eat in nature

Learning how to make and use things found in nature

Free play within groomed forest spaces that foster and inspire young minds

Pedagogical Documentation and Administration

Pedagogical documentation provides a format for learning about how children think and learn. It allows educators to think critically and ask questions about children and their development to better support them. As suggested by Carlina Rinaldi, it is a way of listening to children, helping us to learn about children during their experiences, and to make this learning visible to others for interpretation. And, it encourages educators to be co-learners alongside both children and their families. Rinaldi, 2004.

"Pedagogical documentation supports educators in both including child development in their view, but also looking beyond development to capture broader aspects of the experience for reflection and scaffolding."

These documents support all staff members in the implementation and ongoing high-quality programming at MECC.

- All written policies and procedures are located in the policy binder or through online requests via email.
- All daily, weekly, monthly, and seasonal logs/forms
- HDLH Pedagogical document
- MECC Curriculum Outline and Learning Objectives
- Pedagogical Documentation and how to complete it
- Weekly learning stories
- MECC Philosophy Resource Library (located in Centre Office)

Mother Earth Childcare Centre Parent Handbook

A collection of books/guides and supporting materials on all philosophies incorporated at MECC. Covers basic philosophy, how to implement, sample activities by age group, and how to scaffold ideas further.)

MECC staff, students, and volunteers will use a weekly program plan and weekly learning stories to adhere to the program philosophy and teaching elements of the program. All personnel on-site will have access to the office resource library equipped with resource materials to plan and implement our program statement and values. The resource library includes sample program plans, explanations of each philosophy, and ways it can be implemented. The resource library also includes sample forms of documentation with a clear layout of what is required within the documentation.

All the staff, students, and volunteers at MECC receive an in-depth walk-through and an orientation day equipped with training and modeling of the role. Each individual will be walked through all the spaces with the site supervisor, who will explain every aspect of the program and provide a detailed handout of orientation highlights.

After the walk-through, the supervisor will complete the staff orientation checklist and will answer any questions of the individual. All individuals at MECC will receive ongoing professional development, training, and mentorship throughout their time at MECC. These events will be offered at least monthly and will be open to all staff, students, volunteers, and early childhood workers. We offer a sponsorship ECE Diploma program offered part-time while working within the centre as well for any non-ECEs to gain their diploma while working at MECC.

Prohibited Practices

MECC has a firm standing and does not condone or incorporate ANY form of prohibited practices. This includes, but is not limited to; time outs, physical harm or moving of a child's body without their consent, ANY use of degrading, harsh tone, belittling language or gestures, or ANY form of physical, emotional, social or psychological harm. We ensure that all staff, students, and volunteers are thoroughly trained and have read and understand all our policies and procedures before engaging with the groups. All staff, students, and volunteers MUST provide a clear, police-vulnerable sector check before any engagement with the children. Any use of prohibited practices will be met with reporting to the appropriate authorities and will handle all in-house precautions.

Prohibited Practices include, but are NOT limited to;

- (a) corporal punishment of the child;
- (b) 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;
- (c) locking the exits of the child care centre or home child care premises 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;
- (d) 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 his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
- (e) depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
- (f) inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

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Duty to Report

This professional advisory communicates the requirement to report child abuse and neglect, the suspicions of harm, or the risk of harm to children, under section 125 of the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017 (CYFSA). **ALL RECEs** have a responsibility to protect children from harm. They must be knowledgeable about their duty to report to a Children's Aid Society (CAS) under the CYFSA.

Within a care and relationship-based practice, RECEs work with a vulnerable population. The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice outlines RECEs' responsibilities to children and families, which includes building positive, trusting, and responsive relationships. As such, RECEs are in a unique position to recognize possible signs of child abuse, neglect, and family violence. Under section 125 of the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017 (CYFSA), RECEs have a particular duty to report to a Children's Aid Society (CAS) if they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm or injury.

RECEs are required to abide by the College's Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice as well as all applicable legislation, regulations, by-laws, and policies that are relevant to their professional practice. They are required to be aware of and prepared to act on their legislated duty to report concerns of harm or abuse towards children. Failure to do so is contrary to the law and, may constitute professional misconduct.

It is recommended that ALL RECEs review the College of ECEs Reflection Guide on Duty to Report, located on their website and in your RECE orientation package. The reflection guide will help deepen understanding of the duty to report through critical reflection on the topic, scenarios, and the associated complex factors.

Monitoring Compliance and Contraventions within the programs

MECC has a Monitoring compliance and contravention policy that must be followed to monitor the implementation of our policies, procedures and individualized plans on an ongoing basis. This policy sets out how compliance and contraventions (non-compliance) with the policies, procedures and individualized plans listed below will be monitored, recorded and addressed.

Policies and procedures required under the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*:

- Playground Safety
- Anaphylactic policy
- Sanitary Practices
- Sleep Supervision
- Serious Occurrence
- Drug and Medication Administration
- Supervision of Volunteers and Students
- Program Statement Implementation
- Staff Training and Development
- Police Record Check
- Fire Safety and Evacuation
- Waiting List
- Parent Issues and Concerns
- Emergency Management
- Individualized Plans
- Anaphylaxis
- Special Needs
- Medical Needs

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Monitoring and Observations

Mother Earth Childcare Centre will monitor each staff, student and volunteer to assess whether policies, procedures and individualized plans are being implemented. The Director/Supervisor will observe and monitor the qualified staff in each program room (i.e. RECE or otherwise approved staff); The Director/Supervisor will observe and monitor other program staff (i.e. assistants); The Classroom Teachers will observe and monitor placement students; and The Director/Supervisor will observe and monitor volunteers.

Monitoring and observations will be conducted on an ongoing basis through various means including, but not limited to:

- participating regularly and informally in the program to observe and provide direction
- collecting feedback provided from parents and families
- reviewing completed written documentation (e.g. medication administration forms, daily written record, attendance records, etc.).
- Monitoring will be conducted at different times of the day (e.g. morning, afternoon, periods of arrival/departure, rest periods, meal times, outdoor play periods, transitions, etc.) to observe that policies, procedures and individualized plans are being implemented as required for different parts of the program and daily routines.
- These observation visits will be known as Quality Checks within the program. They will be conducted monthly for each classroom and will review documentation, interactions, teacher development, environment and more. These monthly quality checks will be completed by the Director/Supervisor and will be reviewed with all teachers within that program. Quality Checklists are used to check that all required elements of the program are being met. (enough materials, variety, documentation, and interactions with children/families/staff)

Documentation and Records

- Monitoring and observations will be recorded using the Quality Checks Log.
- Documentation of observations will be completed at the time the observations are made or within at least 1 month of the observation date. These observations will include concrete examples of observed compliance and non-compliance, feedback from improvement, and program recommendations.
- All records will be stored in the locked filing cabinet in the locked Director's office for at least three years from the date they are created.

Follow-up

- Any areas of concern with an individual's ability to comply with policies, procedures, and individualized plans will be brought forward to the supervisor or designate.
- The Director/Supervisor will address their observations through a review and discussion with the individuals observed every month and will seek to or provide them with appropriate support to achieve and maintain compliance (e.g. additional training, feedback, mentoring).

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Dealing with Contraventions of Policies, Procedures or Individualized Plans:

- Mother Earth Childcare Centre will make every effort to clarify expectations and encourage staff, students, and volunteers to raise their questions and concerns about implementing policies, procedures, and individual plans on an ongoing basis to support clarity, learning, development and ongoing compliance.
- Progressive discipline may be used to address observed non-compliance with policies, procedures, and individualized plans, taking into consideration the nature and severity of the incident, and the individual's history of previous non-compliance.

Where a staff, student, or volunteer is observed to be non-compliant, the licensee, supervisor, or designate will take one or more of the following actions:

- Inform the individual that a non-compliance was observed, including the review of any pertinent records or documentation that provide evidence of the non-compliance;
 - Re-review the relevant policies, procedures, and/or individualized plans with the individual;
 - Issue a verbal warning;
 - Issue a written warning;
 - Temporarily, unpaid suspension for the individual from their position at the child care centre for some time, based on severity.
 - Terminate the individual from their position;
 - Inform any relevant parties (e.g. College of Early Childhood Educators, College of Teachers, College of Social Work and Social Services, the contact person for the program from which a student has been placed, CAS, police, etc.); and/or
 - Report violations with the College of Early Childhood Educators' Code of Ethics to the College.
 - Where an observed non-compliance meets the criteria for a reportable serious occurrence (e.g. an allegation of abuse or neglect), the serious occurrence policy and procedures will be followed
 - Where appropriate, the supervisor or designate will follow up with the family of a child by our policies and procedures on parent issues and concerns.
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About Us

Mother Earth Childcare Centre was started by experienced RECE and Montessori Teacher Seandel Brown, with over 10 years experience within the Early Years field in roles from teacher to director. Along with her husband, Brandon Hastings, the two worked together to change their home into a beautiful, natural, licensed home childcare centre during the start of Covid-19. Brandon had built most of the furniture for the home childcare and childcare centre. Now the Duo are answering the call from their community! Scaling their home childcare into Mother Earth Childcare Centre to offer more high quality spaces to the community and establish a professional, sustainable workplace for RECEs, ECEs, EAs, and other Early Years educators! We look forward to all that Mother Earth Childcare Centre can become!

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Program	Age Group	December.1.2024 Fees with CWELCC	Jan.1.2025 Fees with CWELCC
Seeds Program	Children under the age of 18 months	\$64.44	\$22.00
Sprouts Program	Children 18 months to 30 months	\$53.10	\$22.00
Saplings Program	Children 30 months to 6 years old	\$49.68	\$22.00

****All fees are due on the 1st of each month and are accepted by E-transfer, cash or cheque.** Please see payment policy for more information.

****MECC charges a set, monthly fee for every program.** There are no additional fee costs. The “daily” rate reflected above is based on a 21 day month to help families looking at part-time options to get a clear understanding of their fee costs.

****Non-Base Fees;**

The only “non-base fees” that are charged at MECC are the late pickup fee AND the late invoice payment fee. We do not charge before/after care fees, registration fees or other forms of additional non-base fees.

The late fee schedule is as follows:

- As of 5:31pm, the fee is a flat \$5.00
- As of 5:32pm, the centre adds \$2 for every minute parents/guardians are late, with NO cap.
- The late fees will stop adding up once the parent/guardian has picked up their child (not when they pull into the parking lot or walk into the building).
- All late fees will be due within 24 hours of the late fees occurring, unpaid fees will be added to your monthly invoice. If unpaid, our payment policy and termination policy would come into effect.
- If a family is consistently late for more than 3 occasions, the family will be given a termination of care notice and the child will be dismissed from care.
- The classroom cell phone clock is the time used to determine the late payment. As they are all synced and automatically updated.

The closing teachers will complete any late fee payment forms needed and will ensure it is also signed by the parent/guardian upon pickup. By signing the form the parent/guardian acknowledges that they are late and agrees to the amount due. The fee is payable to the closing teacher who stayed with the child. This can be paid by cash, cheque or E-transfer directly to the teacher or through the centre.

****Please note that MECC is not part of the CWELCC program and all fees shown are at full parent cost.**

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Payment Policy

Mother Earth Childcare Centre has a set monthly fee schedule and invoices are sent out via email on the 15th of each month and are due by the 1st of each month. If you wish to pay for the full year of tuition up front, please contact the office directly. At the time of enrollment, we require a one-month deposit that is used to hold your space and to cover your first month of care.

Families can choose to **pay by cash, e-transfer, or post-dated cheques**. There is no refund or discount for sick days, vacation days, home days, home with COVID-19, or due to a family member with Covid-19. There are no refunds for closures/reduced hours due to unforeseen circumstances that occur with less than 48 hours notice.

A credit memo may be issued to a family when;

- There has been a planned closure or closure for PD through the County of Wellington or the Ministry of Education that is funded.
- If you have paid your month's tuition, give 2 weeks' notice to leave, remaining is refunded.
- When you return your key fob
- When an overpayment has been made on the account
- All situations for credits and refunds are evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

All fee cheques can be made out to "Mother Earth Childcare Centre" and all E-transfers to can be sent to the centre email at "motherearthchildcarecentre@gmail.com". We offer payment plan arrangements for families, please contact our office for more details.

We currently use Quickbooks Business Software for invoicing via email, please ensure your email is always kept up to date and accessible.

Late Payment Notice

****Non-Base Fees;**

The only "non-base fees" that are charged at MECC are the late pickup fee AND the late invoice payment fee. We do not charge before/after care fees, registration fees or other forms of additional non-base fees.

A late fee of \$10/day until the balance is paid will occur for late invoices after a 24-hour grace period from the time the invoice was due. For any invoices unpaid after 3 days and no payment arrangement made, the care agreement will be terminated, and the family will no longer have access to care. The families belonging will be gathered and their key fobs will need to be returned within 24 hours of the dismissal notice being issued.

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Waitlist Policy

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

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

Mother Earth Childcare Centre will strive to accommodate all requests for the registration of a child at the childcare centre via email, in-person, phone or social media contact method. Where the maximum capacity of a program has been reached and spaces are unavailable for new children to be enrolled, the waiting list procedures set out below will be followed. No fee will be charged to parents for placing a child on the waiting list. The Centre licensee/designate will be responsible for updating and maintaining the waitlist.

Procedures

Receiving a Request to Place a Child on the Waiting List

1. The licensee or designate will receive parental requests to place children on a waiting list via email, phone, in-person visit, website request or social media contact.
2. The licensee or designate will place a child on the waiting list in chronological order, based on the date and time that the request was received.
3. Once a child has been placed on the waiting list, the licensee or designate will inform parents of their child's position on the list.

Determining Placement Priority when a Space Becomes Available

1. When space becomes available in the program, priority will be given to children who need to move to the next classroom, then our current families within care for siblings or extra care dates.
2. Once these children have been placed, other children on the waiting list will be prioritized based on program room availability and the chronology in which the child was placed on the waiting list.

Offering an Available Space

1. Parents of children on the waiting list will be notified via email and phone that a space has become available in their requested program.
2. Parents will be provided a timeframe of 5 business days (not including stat holidays) in which a response is required before the next child on the waiting list will be offered the space.
3. Where a parent has not responded within the given timeframe, the licensee or designate will contact the parent of the next child on the waiting list to offer them the space. And will inform the previous family that the space has now been passed over the next family on the waitlist.

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

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

Maintaining Privacy and Confidentiality

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

Additional Procedures

****The waitlist families will be contacted every 6 months to ensure they are still in need of a space, if they are no longer in need of care, we will remove them from our wait list.

****All families will complete an in-person tour with the child who will be receiving care, prior to a space being offered. This is to ensure the centre and program are a good fit for the child and their family before enrolling.

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Mother Earth Childcare Centre Yearly Closures/Holidays

Month	Holiday Observed	Date of Holiday	Status
January	New Year`s Day	Wednesday, Jan.1.2025	CLOSED
February	Family Day	Monday, Feb.17.2025	CLOSED
April	Good Friday	Friday, April.18.2025	CLOSED
April	Easter Monday	Monday, April.21.2025	CLOSED
May	Victoria Day	Monday, May.19.2025	CLOSED
July	Canada Day	Tuesday, July.1.2025	CLOSED
August	Civic Holiday	Monday, August.4.2025	CLOSED
September	Labour Day	Monday, Sept.1.2025	CLOSED
October	Thanksgiving	Monday, October.13.2025	CLOSED
October	Diwali	Oct.17.2025 to Oct.23.2025	OPEN
October	Halloween	Friday, Oct.31.2025	OPEN
November	Remembrance Day	Tuesday, Nov.11.2025	OPEN
December	Christmas Eve	Tuesday, Dec.24.2025	CLOSED
December	Christmas Day	Wednesday, Dec.25.2025	CLOSED
December	Boxing Day	Thursday, Dec.26.2025	CLOSED
December	Hanukka	Sunday, Dec.14.2025 to Monday, Dec.22.2025	OPEN

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Mother Earth Childcare Centre Yearly Closures/Holidays

Month	Holiday Observed	Date of Holiday	Status
January	New Year`s Day	Thursday, Jan.1.2026	CLOSED
February	Family Day	Monday, Feb.16.2026	CLOSED
April	Good Friday	Friday, April.3.2026	CLOSED
April	Easter Monday	Monday, April.6.2026	CLOSED
May	Victoria Day	Monday, May.18.2026	CLOSED
June	National Indigenous Peoples Day	Sunday, June.21.2026	OPEN
July	Canada Day	Wednesday, July.1.2026	CLOSED
August	Civic Holiday	August.3.2026	CLOSED
September	Labour Day	Monday, September.7.2026	CLOSED
September	Orange Shirt Day	Wednesday, October.30.2026	OPEN
October	Thanksgiving	Monday, October 12.2026	CLOSED
October	Halloween	Saturday, October.31.2026	OPEN
November	Diwali	Sunday, November.8.2026	OPEN
November	Remembrance Day	Wednesday, November.11.2026	OPEN
December	Christmas Eve	Thursday, December.24.2026	CLOSED
December	Christmas Day	Friday, December.25.2026	CLOSED
December	Boxing Day	Saturday, December.26.2026	CLOSED
December	Hanukka	Wednesday, December 25th to Thursday, Jan.2nd.2026	CLOSED
January	New Year`s Day	Wednesday, January.1.2027	CLOSED

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Mother Earth Childcare Centre Daily Rythm Sample

7:30am to 8:30am	Arrival/Domestic Duties/Free Play (Domestic Duties; folding laundry, polishing toys, baking, caring for plants, re-working the nature garden, wiping tables, sweeping, setting the tables, putting out hand towels and more.)
8:30am to 8:45am	Waldorf Gathering Time (seasonal songs, books, puppetry, games)
8:45am to 9:00am	Washroom Routine
9:00am to 9:30am	Snack Time
9:30am to 10:30am	Outdoor Play (Playground, Forest, Trails, Parks)
10:30am to 11:30	Montessori work Period and Creative Period
11:30am to 12:00pm	Washroom Routine/Story Telling and Puppetry
12:00pm to 12:30pm	Lunch
12:30pm to 2:30pm	Nap Time/Rest Time
2:30pm to 2:45pm	Washroom Routine
2:45pm to 3:15pm	Snack Time
3:15pm to 4:15pm	Outdoor Play (playground)
4:15pm to 5:15pm	Free play/Reggio Projects/Group Games
5:15pm to 5:30pm	Clean up for the end of day
5:30pm	Centre is closed

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Date Policy and Procedures Established: July.1.2022

Date Policy and Procedures Updated: Sept.06.2024

Mother Earth Childcare Centre staff/students/volunteers will only release a child from the childcare premises to individuals specified by a child's parent/guardian. These individuals must be listed on the child's enrollment form and on their emergency contact form. A parent/guardian can give written permission for a child from the program to be released into the custody of an individual not listed on the child's enrollment form or emergency contact. This must be given with at least 1 hour of notice and the individual must arrive with a valid piece of ID before the child will be released. If the individual can not produce their ID, the child will not be released, and the parent/guardian will be contacted and informed of the situation. The child will need to be picked up by the parent/guardian or the individual will need to go get their ID and return to pick up the child. At no time will Mother Earth Childcare Centre permit any parent/guardian to drop off their child at a specified time without supervision. Any child who is dropped off without an adult, or is dropped off inside the main doors without an adult will be deemed as child abandonment and will be responded to accordingly with CSA.

If a child has not arrived by 9:30am;

1. The classroom teacher will contact the family via cellphone and email to inquire if the child will be away/late and will collect a detailed reason for the child being away/late.
2. If the child is away due to illness, the staff member will collect all details regarding when symptoms started, what symptoms are, and how they have progressed over 24 hours. The staff member will record all information in the daily log book and group chat. If a child is not picked up as expected by 5:30pm If a child(ren) remains in care at 5:25pm, a text message reminder will be sent to the family informing them. " Good evening, this is just a friendly reminder that we will be closing in 5 minutes, please ensure you arrive in time to avoid late pickup fees. Please note the front door locks automatically at 5:30pm and key fobs will not work, as this is when the centre is closed."

Late child pickup procedure

Mother Earth Childcare Centre closes at 5:30 p.m. Parents are asked to plan sufficient time to dress their child, collect the child's clothes, artwork, speak to a teacher (if necessary) and leave the centre by 5:30 p.m. If the parent/guardian is aware that they are going to be late, they should call the Centre to advise the Supervisor of this and of their plan to pick up their child/ren. Due to the operational and staffing costs incurred when a parent/guardian is late, a late fee will be charged. When a child is not picked up by 5:30 p.m. The staff member will remain at the daycare until the child has been picked up.

When the parent/guardian is late:

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Contact the parent/guardian at the numbers on the child's file card at 5:25pm to ensure they are on the way. And again at 5:30pm letting them know they are now late, that the keyfob will not work, will need to use the doorbell and will be subject to the late policy and fees. If contact with parent/guardian is not established, call the emergency contact(s) on the child's file card and make arrangements for the child to be picked up. And all late fees will be billed to the parent/guardian. Contact the Supervisor and let them know the situation and supporting details. In the event that the parents/guardians/emergency contact(s) are not available and it is 6:00pm; the teacher will contact the appropriate Children's Aid Society and follow their instructions. Under no circumstances is the teacher to remove the children from the Centre. Either by driving them to their home or to another location to await parents. If the parent/guardian is late, the teachers will notify the Supervisor who will meet with the parents/guardians regarding the situation. If the situation becomes reoccurring, the daycare may issue a termination notice. Upon arriving, there is ample parking at the front and side of the building for use. Please be cautious of other cars in the parking lot while loading and unloading children. Please arrive as close to your enrolled drop-off time as possible to avoid staffing issues and return promptly for your pickup time listed on your enrollment forms.

When arriving, use your assigned key fob to gain access to the building and head past the main lobby to your child's designated classroom. Your child will have a labeled cubby for their belongings and a classroom teacher will welcome you and transition your child into the program. When arriving to pick up your child, the group may be inside their classroom or will be in the playground. Please be sure you collect all the needed items for your child if picking up outdoors. If you have forgotten your key fob, please use the front doorbell to get assistance from the site supervisor or staff member. In the Summer of 2024, we installed an addition to our front fencing area. We extended the gated area to cover the front sidewalk of the building. This is to ensure better safety protocols when the groups are leaving the building to go to the playgrounds. This will also aid in a more safe departure for families when coming out the front doors into the parking lot area. If you or a family member needs assistance with picking up or dropping off children due to disabilities or other personal reasons, please speak with our office before enrollment to ensure a plan is set in place.

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We take the health and well-being of every child and staff member seriously. When a child is enrolled at any childcare centre or group setting, it is quite common for them to experience minor illnesses such as a runny nose or cough. Illnesses tend to decrease as your child builds up a group immunity with more time spent in the group setting. Any care family found to have violated our illness policy will be issued a dismissal from care immediately without notice or refund.

Any child with illness symptoms will be separated from the rest of the group in another play area, the family will be contacted for immediate pickup and a teacher will continue to support and monitor the ill child until the parent/guardian can pick up the child. 1 hour will be given to pick up the sick child, after which an emergency contact will be contacted to pick up the child.

Absences, Illness and Vacation Days

There is no discount or refund for children who are away due to illness, vacation days, home days or other reasons for a child not attending care. This includes if a child is home due to Covid-19 or due to a family member with Covid-19.

General Illness Symptoms Include

- ☐ fever or chills
- ☐ cough
- ☐ shortness of breath
- ☐ decreased or loss of taste or smell
- ☐ constant, runny nose (not from seasonal weather or allergies)
- ☐ nasal congestion
- ☐ headache
- ☐ extreme fatigue (If the child is unable to participate within the program due to irritability or fatigue)
- ☐ sore throat
- ☐ muscle aches or joint pain
- ☐ gastrointestinal symptoms (such as vomiting or diarrhea)
- ☐ ANY other form of illness, rash, etc.

If a child has a clear, occasional runny nose when transitioning indoors/outdoors, a cough only while lying down napping, seasonal allergies, or a doctor's note for additional conditions they will be permitted to stay in care.

If your child is away for more than 5 consecutive days, a doctor's note may be required to return to care to ensure the child is well enough to return.

If your child has developed or arrived with an unidentified rash, the child will be denied care and will require a doctor's note informing the childcare centre of what the rash is and if it is contagious. The child can not return until the rash has been identified by a medical doctor.

Mother Earth Childcare Centre Covid-19 Protocols (if needed in the future):

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ANY child with ANY ONE Covid-19 symptoms MUST stay home until they have improving symptoms to the point that the symptoms are occasional or cleared up entirely. A child that returns with the same or worsened symptoms will be denied care and must stay out of care for a full 24 hours before returning, and only with improved symptoms.

If your child is away for more than 5 consecutive days due to illness or symptoms, a Rapid Test may be required to return to care to ensure the child is negative for the virus. Rapid Tests are provided at the home for families and staff.

Symptoms Include.

- ☐ fever or chills
- ☐ cough
- ☐ shortness of breath
- ☐ decreased or loss of taste or smell
- ☐ constant, runny nose (not from seasonal weather or allergies)
- ☐ nasal congestion
- ☐ headache
- ☐ extreme fatigue
- ☐ sore throat
- ☐ muscle aches or joint pain
- ☐ gastrointestinal symptoms (vomiting or diarrhea)

If a family/Child/Teacher tests positive for Covid-19

- ☐ Inform the childcare immediately via phone or email
- ☐ Take 2 rapid tests to be sure it is a true positive case
- ☐ Stay home and isolate while treating your symptoms
- ☐ Remain out of the centre until you are symptom-free for at least 24 hours
- ☐ ANYONE with symptoms after testing positive will not be allowed into care until they are symptom-free
- ☐ Teacher may return to the program after 24 hours of improved symptoms IF they are wearing a medical or N95 mask for the duration of their time within the program, this includes when outdoors, as there is often close contact with the children outside as well.

Daycare and School Self-Screening Tool Link Below

[COVID-19 school screening \(ontario.ca\)](https://www.ontario.ca/covid-19-school-screening)

Rapid Testing Information:

Rapid antigen tests detect certain proteins in the virus to confirm the presence of COVID-19. A sample, which can be self-collected, is taken using a swab in the nose and/or throat and can produce a result in as little as 15 minutes. Rapid antigen tests continue to be available through local pharmacies, department stores and grocery stores.

These are just "examples" of contagious illnesses of when your child needs to stay out of daycare. Each individual case is different and may require more or less time out. If you feel that your child is sick with a contagious illness, please verify with a doctor/other practitioner that your child is clear to come to daycare before bringing the child to the daycare. This is for the protection of your child, all other daycare children present and the daycare provider.

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

This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for an anaphylactic policy for child care centres. The requirements set out in this policy align with [Sabrina's Law, 2005](#).

Individualized Plans and Emergency Procedures for Children with Life-Threatening/Anaphylactic Allergies

- Before attending the Mother Earth Childcare Centre (MECC), the supervisor/designate will meet with the parent of a child to obtain information about any medical conditions, including whether the child is at risk of having or has anaphylaxis.
- Before a child attends at MECC or upon discovering that a child has an anaphylactic allergy, an individualized plan and emergency procedures will be developed by the supervisor for each child with anaphylaxis in consultation and collaboration with the child's parent, and any regulated health professional who is involved in the child's care that the parent believes should be included in the consultation.
- All individualized plans and emergency procedures will include a description of symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction that are specific to the child and the procedures to be followed in the event of an allergic reaction or other medical emergency based on the severity of the child's symptoms.
- The individualized plan and emergency procedures for each child will include information for those who are in direct contact with the child on a regular basis about the type of allergy, monitoring and avoidance strategies and appropriate treatment.
- All individualized plans and emergency procedures will be made readily accessible at all times to all staff, students and volunteers at the child care centre and will be kept in each classroom, posted in a visible spot, in their emergency binder and in the supervisor's office.
- **All** individualized plans and emergency procedures will be reviewed with a parent of the child every year to ensure the information is current and up to date. Or more often if needed.
- Every child's with a epinephrine auto-injector shall carry it with them at all times from the time of drop off to pick up. The epi-pen will be carried in a red fanny pack labelled with the child's name and classroom. The fanny pack will be carried by the child around their waist. Should the child be unable to carry the fanny pack, a designated teacher will carry the fanny pack and will ensure the child is always with them. Should they switch off with another teacher the fanny pack would also be passed over.

Strategies to Reduce the Risk of Exposure to Anaphylactic Allergens

Mother Earth Childcare Centre will install the following strategies to reduce the risk of exposure to anaphylactic causative agents. These strategies must be always followed by employees, students and volunteers at all times.

These strategies include.

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- MECC will not serve foods where the ingredients are not known.
- MECC will not serve items with 'may contain' warnings on the label in any of our classrooms, regardless of if there is a child who has an individualized plan and emergency procedures specifying those allergens.
- MECC will consult with the centre cook to provide the known ingredients for all food provided, when needed. The ingredients will be reviewed before food is served to children to verify that causative agents are not served to children with anaphylactic allergies.
- In cases where a child has food allergies and the meals and snacks provided by the child care centre cannot meet the child's needs, MECC will ask the child's parent to supply snacks/meals for their child. All written instructions for diet provided by a parent will be implemented. All food supplied must align with Canada food guide and Ministry of Education standards and MECC's health and nutrient standards.
- Classroom staff and the centre cook will ensure that parents label food brought to the child care centre with the child's full name and the date the food arrived at the child care centre, and that parents label all ingredients within the item if homemade.
- Where food is provided from home for children, staff will ensure that appropriate supervision of children is maintained so that food is not shared or exchanged.
- All families at MECC are encourage parents who serve foods containing allergens at home to ensure their child has been rid of the allergens prior to attending the child care centre (e.g. by thoroughly washing hands, brushing teeth, etc.)
- We do not use craft/sensory materials and toys that have known allergens on the labels.
- At MECC we do share information about anaphylaxis, strategies to reduce the risk of exposure to known allergens and treatment with all families, volunteers and staff at the child care centre.
- The Supervisor/Designate will ensure each child's individual plan and emergency procedure are kept-up-to-date and that all staff, students, and volunteers are trained on the plans.
- The Supervisor/Designate will refer to the allergy list and ensure that it is up to date and implemented. They will also ensure a copy is visibly posted in every room that serves/handles food.
- The Supervisor/Designate will update staff, students, and volunteers when changes to a child's allergies, signs and symptoms, and treatment occur and will review all updates to individualized plans and emergency procedures with all members.
- The Supervisor/Designate will update families when changes to allergies occur while maintaining the confidentiality of children.
- The Supervisor/Designate will update or revise and implement the strategies in this policy depending on the allergies of children enrolled at the child care centre. This document will be reviewed annually for updates.

Communication Plan

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

- All families will be informed upon enrollment not to bring foods that contain ingredients to which children may be allergic or that any child/staff member within the centre are allergic to,
- Parents and families will be informed about anaphylactic allergies and all known allergens at the child care centre through email and physical letter.
- A list of all children's allergies including food and other causative agents will be posted in all cooking and serving areas, in each play activity room, and made available in any other area where children may be present.
- Each child with an anaphylactic allergy will have an individualized plan and emergency procedures that detail signs and symptoms specific to the child describing how to identify that they are having an allergic reaction and what to do if they experience a reaction.
- Each child's individualized plan and emergency procedures will be made available and accessible wherever the child may be present while receiving child care.
- The cook who does the groceries on behalf of the child care centre and/or other food handling staff, where applicable, will be informed of all the allergies at the child care centre, including those of children, staff, students and volunteers. An updated list of allergies will be provided to the cook as soon as new allergies are identified. The supervisor or designate will communicate with the cook about which foods are not to be used in food prepared for the child care centre and will work together on food substitutions to be provided.
- MECC 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 the child care centre and that it is effectively achieving its intended result.

Drug and Medication Requirements

- Where drugs or medications will need to be administered to a child in response to an anaphylactic reaction, the drug and medication administration policy will be followed including the completion of a parental authorization form to administer drugs or medications.
- Emergency allergy medication (e.g. oral allergy medications, puffers and epinephrine auto-injectors) will be allowed to remain unlocked and carried by children with parental authorization so that they can be administered quickly when needed. The medication/epi-pen will be worn on the child in the form of a red fanny pack.

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Training

- The Director will ensure that the supervisor/designate and/or all staff, students and volunteers receive training from a parent of a child with anaphylaxis on the procedures to follow in the event of a child having an anaphylactic reaction, including how to recognize the signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis and administer emergency allergy medication.
- Where only the supervisor/designate has been trained by a parent, the supervisor/designate will ensure training is provided to all other staff, students and volunteers at the child care centre.
- Training will be repeated annually, and any time there are changes to any child's individualized plan and emergency procedures.
- A written record of training for staff, students and volunteers on procedures to be followed for each child who has an anaphylactic allergy will be kept, including the names of individuals who have not yet been trained. This will ensure that training is tracked and follow-up is completed where an individual has missed or not received training. The form in Appendix B may be used for this purpose.

Confidentiality

- Information about a child's allergies and medical needs will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of the child, except when information must be disclosed for the purpose of implementing the procedures in this policy and for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society).

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Procedures to be followed in the circumstances described below:

Circumstance	Roles and Responsibilities
A) A child exhibits an anaphylactic reaction to an allergen	1. The educator who becomes aware of the child's anaphylactic reaction must immediately: i. implement the child's individualized plan and emergency procedures; ii. contact emergency services and a parent/guardian of the child, or have another person do so where possible; and iii. ensure that where an epinephrine auto-injector has been used, it is properly discarded (i.e. given to emergency services, or in accordance with the drug and medication administration policy). 2. Once the child's condition has stabilized or the child has been taken to hospital, staff must: i. follow the child care centre's serious occurrence policies and procedures; ii. document the incident in the daily written record; and iii. document the child's symptoms of ill health in the child's records.
B) A child is authorized to carry his/her own emergency allergy medication.	1. Staff must: i. ensure that written parental authorization is obtained to allow the child to carry their own emergency allergy medication; ii. ensure that the medication remains on the child (in a red fanny pack) and is not kept or left unattended. (In the teacher cupboard whenever the child is away or during evenings). iii. ensure that appropriate supervision is maintained of the child while carrying the medication and of children in their close proximity so that other children do not have access to the medication; and iv. Where there are safety concerns relating to the child carrying his/her own medication (e.g. exposure to other children), notify the centre supervisor/designate and the child's parent of these concerns, and discuss and implement mitigating strategies. Document the concerns and resulting actions in the daily written record.

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING THIS POLICY.

Anaphylaxis: a severe systemic allergic reaction which can be fatal, resulting in circulatory collapse or shock. Symptoms can vary for different people, and can be different from one reaction to the next, including:

- Skin: hives, swelling, itching, warmth, redness, rash
- Breathing (respiratory): coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath, chest pain/tightness, throat tightness/swelling, hoarse voice, nasal congestion or hay fever-like symptoms (runny nose and watery eyes, sneezing), trouble swallowing
- Stomach (gastrointestinal): nausea, pain/cramps, vomiting, diarrhea
- Heart (cardiovascular): pale/blue colour, weak pulse, passing out, dizzy/lightheaded, shock
- Other: anxiety, feeling of “impending doom”, headache, uterine cramps, metallic taste in mouth (Source: <http://foodallergycanada.ca/about-allergies/anaphylaxis/>)

Causative Agent (allergen/trigger): a substance that causes an allergic reaction. Common allergens include, but are not limited to:

- eggs
- milk
- mustard
- peanuts
- seafood including fish, shellfish, and crustaceans
- sesame
- soy
- sulphites which are food additives
- tree nuts
- wheat
- latex
- insect stings

Epinephrine: A drug used to treat allergic reactions, particularly anaphylaxis. This drug is often delivered through an auto-injector (e.g. EpiPen or Allerject).

Staff (Employee): Individual employed by the licensee (e.g. program room staff).

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

Parent: 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 (all references to parent include legal guardians, but will be referred to as “parent” in the policy)

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Late Pickup Policy

At MECC the safety of children in our care is of paramount concern. To ensure safety, all children are signed in by a classroom teacher upon arrival and are signed out upon departure. An individual picking up a child from MECC MUST be at least 18 years of age and bring a valid photo identification. In exceptional circumstances, and only with the parent/guardian's written consent before the event, a younger individual may be permitted to pick up a child.

Late child pickup procedure

Mother Earth Childcare Centre closes at 5:30 p.m. Parents are asked to plan sufficient time to dress their child, collect the child's clothes, and artwork, speak to teachers (if necessary), and leave the centre by 5:30 p.m. If the parent/guardian is aware that they are going to be late, they should call the Centre to advise the Supervisor of this and of their plan to pick up their child/ren.

Due to the operational and staffing costs incurred when a parent/guardian is late, a late fee will be charged. When a child is not picked up by 5:30 p.m. The staff member will remain at the daycare until the child has been picked up.

When the parent/guardian is late:

1. Contact the parent/guardian at the numbers on the child's file card at 5:25pm to ensure they are on the way. And again at 5:30pm letting them know they are now late, that the keyfob will not work, will need to use the doorbell and will be subject to the late policy and fees.
2. If contact with the parent/guardian is not established, call the emergency contact(s) on the child's file card and arrange for the child to be picked up. All late fees will be billed to the parent/guardian.
3. Contact the Supervisor and let them know the situation and supporting details
4. If the parents/guardians/emergency contact(s) are not available and it is 6:00pm; the teacher will contact the appropriate Children's Aid Society and follow their instructions. Under no circumstances is the teacher to remove the children from the Centre. Either by driving them to their home or to another location to await their parents.
5. If the parent/guardian is late, the teachers will notify the Supervisor who will meet with the parents/guardians regarding the situation. If the situation becomes reoccurring, the daycare may issue a termination notice.

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Late Fees

The late fee schedule is as follows:

- As of 5:31pm, the fee is a flat \$5.00
- As of 5:32pm, the centre adds \$2 for every minute parents/guardians are late, with NO cap.
- The late fees will stop adding up once the parent/guardian has picked up their child (not when they pull into the parking lot or walk into the building).
- All late fees will be due within 24 hours of the late fees occurring, unpaid fees will be added to your monthly invoice. If unpaid, our payment policy and termination policy would come into effect.
- If a family is consistently late for more than 3 occasions, the family will be given a termination of care notice and the child will be dismissed from care.
- The classroom cell phone clock is the time used to determine the late payment. As they are all synced and automatically updated.

The closing teachers will complete any late fee payment forms needed and will ensure it is also signed by the parent/guardian upon pickup. By signing the form the parent/guardian acknowledges that they are late and agrees to the amount due. The fee is payable to the closing teacher who stayed with the child. This can be paid by cash, cheque or E-transfer directly to the teacher or through the centre.

Pickup by an unknown person

If the person picking up the child is not known to the teacher, the teacher will consult with the classroom emergency binder. There, the teacher will check the child's form under the authorized pickup list. They will check the unknown person's ID and will check it against the listed authorized personnel. If the individual is NOT listed, the teacher will call the child's parents to confirm if the individual is given authorization. If the parent verifies verbally that the child CAN be picked up by the individual, the teacher will release the child AND record the individual's information on the child's emergency form for reference. Should the parent(s) be unavailable, **the child will not be permitted to leave with the unauthorized individual until the parent has given consent.**

If an attempt is made to take the child or if the individual does leave with the child, the Supervisor will call 911 immediately and if possible BEFORE the individual leaves with the child by force.

The Supervisor will continue to work with the police.

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When calling 911, describe to the 911 operator/police:

- the name of the person
- the appearance of the person
- the appearance of their car (if driving)
- the direction they left
- the appearance of the child, and inform the operator/police that you have a photo of the child

The Supervisor will follow up with police and will continue to make attempts to contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) to update them. The Supervisor will follow the Serious Occurrence Reporting procedures (see Serious Occurrence Policy).

Pickup by a person who appears unwell

If a parent/authorized person appears to the teacher to be unwell/intoxicated when they arrive to pick up a child and the teacher is concerned for the safety of the child, the teacher will suggest that the parent/authorized person not leave with the child. The teacher will call for the Supervisor and they will offer to call a cab or call another authorized contact person to pick up them and the child. The Supervisor will be involved in dealing with this situation and will make it clear that we can not allow them to leave the premises with the child while under the influence. Should the unwell/intoxicated person agree to a cab, a staff person will remain with the child and parent/authorized person until the cab has arrived.

If the unwell person insists on leaving the centre with the child, staff can not prevent the parent/authorized person from taking their child, as only CAS or a certified court order can permit this. The Supervisor will call 911 and explain the situation and all details. The Supervisor will also give all listed addresses on the child's file so police can ensure the family made it home safely. If safety concerns for the child are present, the Supervisor will also call CAS and document the event including:

- time and location of the incident
- your name and position and people involved/present
- your concern and details about the conversation
- any other relevant information

If the unwell/intoxicated person is driving the child and a teacher is concerned, the teacher should make note of the car, license number, and probable destination, then call the police (911) or have the Supervisor call for you. The Supervisor will follow the Serious Occurrence Reporting procedures and will make a note in the child's file of any agency persons contacted.

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Drug and Medication Administration Policy and Procedures

This policy and the procedures outlined within are to provide clear direction for staff to follow for administering drugs or medication to children at the child care centre and for appropriate record-keeping.

Where the term drugs and/or medications is used in this policy, the term refers to any product with a drug identification number (DIN), with the exception of sunscreen, lotion, lip balm, bug spray, hand sanitizer and diaper cream that is not used for acute, symptomatic treatment. For the purpose of this policy, drugs and medications fall into the following two categories, unless otherwise specified:

- Prescription, intended for acute, symptomatic treatment; and
- Over-the-counter, intended for acute, symptomatic treatment.

The policy and procedures support children's health, safety and well-being by setting out measures to:

- ensure children receive only those drugs or medications deemed necessary and appropriate by their parents;
- reduce the potential for errors;
- ensure medications do not spoil due to improper storage;
- prevent accidental ingestion;
- administer emergency allergy and asthma drugs or medications quickly when needed; and
- safely administer drugs and medications according to established routines.

This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for the administration of drugs and medication in a child care centre.

Parental Authorization to Administer Medication:

- Parents will be encouraged to administer drugs or medications to their children at home if this can be done without affecting the child's treatment schedule. Medication forms will be available in all classrooms, in the office and a digital copy as part of our parent handbook.
- Prescription and over-the-counter medications for acute, symptomatic treatment will only be administered to a child where a parent/guardian has given written authorization to do so by completing our Medication Administration Form. **The Authorization for Medication Administration form must be accompanied by a doctor's note for over-the-counter medications. All medication and forms will be inspected by the classroom RECE or supervisor prior to any administration to ensure all details line up and are correct. Any medication that is mislabelled or misrepresented will be given back to the parent/guardian and will NOT be administered.**
- **The authorization must include a schedule that sets out the times the drug or medication is to be given and the amounts to be administered.**
- Where a drug or medication is to be administered to a child on an "as needed" basis (i.e. there is no specific schedule or time of the day for administration), **the drug or medication must be accompanied with a doctor's note outlining signs and symptoms for administering the drug or medication and the appropriate dosage. In addition, the Authorization for Medication**

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Administration Form must clearly indicate the situations under which the medication is to be given as outlined in the doctor's note, including observable symptoms. Examples may include:

- 'when the child has a fever of 39.5 degrees Celsius';
- 'when the child has a persistent cough and/or difficulty breathing'; and
- 'when red hives appear on the skin', etc.

Prescription/over-the-counter skin products (with a DIN) that need to be administered for acute or symptomatic treatment will only be administered to a child where a parent of the child has given written authorization to do so by completing the child care centre's Authorization for Medication Administration Form.

All natural/holistic products/remedies must also be accompanied by **an Authorization for Medication Administration form and accompanied by a written professional practitioner's note. This excludes the use of first aid cream used by MECC staff with parent consent form. (arnica cream, calendula cream, lavender air fresheners, natural bug spray and sunscreen).**

Authorization for Medical Administration Forms will be reviewed with parents monthly, or when a new medication is started, to ensure the dosage continues to be accurate (e.g. based on the child's age or weight).

As long as sunscreen, lotion, lip balm, bug spray, hand sanitizer and diaper cream are non-prescription and/or are not for acute (symptomatic) treatment, and due to their longer-term daily usage, these products:

- Completed authorization forms in the enrollment package for each item by a parent
- can be administered without an Authorization for Medication Administration form
- do not require record-keeping for each use of the item, but date must be checked every month and sent home once expired, a replacement of the same product requested.

Drug and Medication Requirements

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

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

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All drug or medication containers must be clearly labelled with:

- **The child's full name;**
 - **The name of the drug or medication;**
 - **The dosage of the drug or medication;**
 - **Instructions for storage;**
 - **Instructions for administration;**
 - **The date of purchase of the medication for prescription medications; and**
 - **The expiry date of the medication, if applicable.**
-
- The information provided on the written parental authorization must match with all the requirements listed above.
 - Where information is missing on a drug or medication label and/or the written parental authorization does not match the label on the labelled container, the child care centre will not accept or administer the medication until the label and/or written parental authorization accurately contains all the required information.
 - Over-the-counter epinephrine purchased for a specific child can be administered to a child with an individualized plan and emergency procedures for an anaphylactic allergy as long as it is accompanied by a doctor's note and is clearly labeled with the child's name, the name of the drug or medication, the dosage, the date of expiration and the instructions for storage and administration.
 - Drugs or medications purchased by staff, students or volunteers for their own use will be kept inaccessible to children and will not be administered to children at any time. All drugs or medication for staff, students or volunteers will be kept in the centre staff room lockers, always locked.

Drug and Medication Handling and Storage:

- All drugs or medications will be always kept inaccessible to children in black lock boxes within each classroom, the office and the kitchen fridge. These boxes are black, keyed to open and labelled as "Medication Box". A refrigerated lockbox will also be kept in the centre kitchen fridge and labelled "Medication Lockbox" for any items that need to be kept refrigerated. The classroom medication boxes will be located in their upper teacher cabinet and door labelled with key location.
- Emergency medications will never be locked up and will be made easily accessible to all staff while being kept out of the reach of children, including during outdoor play periods and off-premises activities. Any emergency medication will be kept in a **red fanny pack** that will be labelled and stay with the head teacher at all times. The label will include the child's name for whom the medication is for and their classroom.

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- Where a child has written permission to carry their emergency allergy or asthma medication, precautions will be taken to ensure that these medications are not accessible to other children. The medication will be kept in a red fanny pack that will remain on the child at all times until pickup time. When the child leaves the centre at the end of each day, the fanny pack will be left in the upper basket of their cubby for the next day's arrival.
- In case of an emergency, all staff, students and volunteers will be made aware of the location of children's emergency medications at all times.
- Emergency medications will be brought on all field trips, evacuations and off-site activities.
- For First Aid purposes, all child wounds will be cleaned with first aid sanitizing wipes and then addressed with a natural Calendula cream based on need for bruising/bump/scraps. All families will be given a form of consent to complete in the enrolment package, families can choose to opt out of the natural remedies. Their child's wounds would be addressed solely based on Public Health guidelines without additional holistic care products.
- All drugs and medications for children will be stored in accordance with the instructions for storage on the label. Medication requiring refrigeration will be stored in the refrigerator in a locked container.
- Where drugs or medications are past their expiry date, they will be returned to the parent of the child for disposal, where possible, and this will be documented on the Authorization for Medication Administration Form.
- Any drugs or medications remaining after the treatment period will be returned to a parent of the child, where possible, and this will be documented on the Authorization for Medication Administration Form.
- Where attempts have been made to return a drug or medication to a parent and the parent has not taken the medication home, the person in charge of drugs and medications will ensure that the efforts made to return the drug or medication have been documented in the appropriate staff communication book (e.g. daily written record), and the drug or medication may be returned to a pharmacist for proper disposal.

Drug and Medication Administration:

- Drugs or medications will be administered according to the instructions on the label and only with written parental authorization.
- All RECEs in each classroom will be in charge of medications and forms, and will deal with all drugs and medications to reduce the potential for errors, whether on or off the premises. Where the person(s) is absent, they will delegate this responsibility to another individual. The name of the individual who has been delegated and the duration of the delegation will be documented in the appropriate staff communication book (e.g. daily written record). The individual administering will always be an RECE or Equivalent, if one is unavailable, the supervisor will administer.
- A drug or medication will only be administered from its original container as supplied by a pharmacist or its original package, and where the container is clearly labelled as outlined under the Drug and Medication Requirements section of this policy.

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- A drug or medication will only be administered using the appropriate dispenser provided by the parent. (e.g. syringe, measuring spoon/cup, etc.).

To support the prompt administration of emergency medication:

- Emergency medications may be administered to a child by any qualified person (RECE or Equivalent) trained on the child's individualized plan at the child care centre; and
- Children will be allowed to carry their own asthma or emergency medication in accordance with this policy, the drug and medication administration procedures, and the child's individualized plan, where applicable.
- Drugs or medications that are expired (including epinephrine) will not be administered at any time. And will be promptly sent home on their expiry date with a sign off that the parent had collected the expired medication.

Record-Keeping:

- Records of medication administration will be completed using the Records of Medication Administration every time drugs or medications are administered. Completed records will be kept in the child's file, located in the locked filing cabinet.
- Where a child's medication administration form includes a schedule setting out specific times to administer the medication and the child is absent on a day medication would have been administered, the child's absence will be documented on the medication administration record to account for all days during the treatment period (excluding weekends, holidays and planned closures).
- If a dose is missed or given late, reasons will be documented on the record of medication administration and a parent will be notified as soon as possible, as it may impact the treatment schedule or the child's health. The event will also be documented in detail in the daily log book.
- Where a drug or medication is administered 'as needed' to treat specific symptoms outlined in a child's medication administration form or individualized plan and emergency procedures for an anaphylactic allergy (e.g. asthma, fever, allergic reaction), the administration and the reason for administering will be documented in the appropriate staff communication book (e.g. daily written record) and in the child's symptoms of illness record. A parent of the child will be notified.

Confidentiality

- Information about a child's medical needs will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of the child, except when information must be disclosed for the purpose of implementing the procedures in this policy and for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society).
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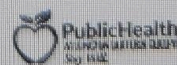
Nutrition

All meals and snacks at Mother Earth childcare Centre are home-made by our on site chef and are sourced local, organic as much as possible. We also partner with nearby farms for our seasonal produce, dairy, etc.

Sample Menu

Mother Earth Childcare Centre Fall/Winter Menu Week 2

Monday Rice Day	Tuesday Barley Day	Wednesday Millet Day	Thursday Rye Day	Friday Oats Day
Morning Snack	Morning Snack	Morning Snack	Morning Snack	Morning Snack
Country Sunrise Vanilla Cereal with Sliced Bananas	Pumpkin Barley Muffins with Apple Slices and Milk	Blueberry Millet Pancakes with Banana Slices, Maple Syrup and Milk	Spinach and Artichokes Grilled Cheese with Carrots and Milk	Oatmeal with Warm Cranberries and Milk, and Apple Slices
Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
Homemade Chicken Bites with Brown Rice/Peas and Green Beans and Milk	Roasted Squash/Diced Sweet Potato with Lemon Rosemary Chicken, Vegetable Quinoa and Milk	Vegetable Millet Bake with Diced Chicken, Brown Rice, Carrots and Milk	Harvest Vegetable Soup w/ Beans and Whole Grain Bread	Honey Garlic Glazed Salmon with Brown Rice, Cheesy Broccoli and Green Beans
Afternoon Snack	Afternoon Snack	Afternoon Snack	Afternoon Snack	Afternoon Snack
Rye Crackers with Wow Butter and Kiwi Slices	Hard-boiled Eggs with Crackers, Cheese and Blueberries	Fresh Peppers, Cucumbers, Baby Carrots with Hummus and Milk	Healthy Apple Oat Bars with Milk and Strawberries	Apple Crisp with Yogurt, Orange Slices and Milk



Date: November 3/22
Reviewed By: KW RD

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Sleep Supervision Policy

Children's sleep and rest play an integral part in a child's well-being and development. The purpose of this policy and procedures described within is to provide staff, students and volunteers with rules and procedures to follow to safeguard children from harm, injury or death while sleeping. The procedures provided for placing children under 12 months of age on their own backs for sleep align with the requirement to meet the recommendations set out in Health Canada's document entitled "Joint Statement on Safe Sleep: Preventing Sudden Infant Deaths in Canada". Procedures for monitoring sleeping children reduce the risk of harm or injury so that caregivers can look for and identify signs of distress and implement immediate responses to protect the health and safety of children. This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for sleep policies for child care centres.

All children at MECC will be provided with a child size cot, cotton sheet, cotton blanket and the opportunity to sleep or rest based on their needs for a period no more than 2 hours per day, with considerations of parent/guardian preferences. Children 6 to 18 months of age will be provided time to sleep based on their individual schedules and will be assigned to a crib in the Infant Sleep Room. All sleep arrangements will be in accordance with written instructions from the child's parent(s). Only light, 100% cotton, breathable blankets will be used for all children within care. Children 18 months to 30 months will be provided time to sleep for a period of no more than two hours each day, and will be assigned to a cot and blanket. Children 30 months or older will be provided time to sleep for a period of no more than two hours each day, and will be assigned to a cot and blanket.

Infant children will be in a separate sleep room, located just outside the Infant Classroom. This is to support nursing mother's needing privacy and children who require more than 1 nap a day. There is an extra Infant teacher to support Infant schedules and sleep routines. Infant children will have their name, picture and a detailed description of how they go to sleep/are woken. A detailed sleep chart will be located in the sleep room, which displays where each child is located.

Placement of Children for Sleep

Children under 18 months of age will be placed in their assigned cribs for sleep. All children who are younger than 12 months of age will be placed on their backs to sleep in accordance with the recommendations set out in Health Canada's document entitled "Joint Statement on Safe Sleep: Preventing Sudden Infant Deaths in Canada", unless other instructions are provided in writing by the child's physician. Parents of these children will be advised of the centre's obligation to place their child(ren) to sleep on their backs. Children over 18 months of age who sleep will be placed on individual cots for sleep.

Consultation with Parents

All parents of children who regularly sleep at MECC are advised of the centre's policies and procedures regarding sleep at the time of their child's enrolment and/or any time the policies and procedures are revised, as applicable. This information will be available to parents in the parent handbook and during their tour and enrollment process. The Director/Supervisor will consult with parents about their child's sleeping arrangements at the time of enrolment and at any other appropriate time (e.g. when a child transitions to a new program or room, or at the parent's request). Written documentation will be kept in each child's file to reflect the sleep patterns identified by their parent, and updates to the documentation will be made whenever changes are communicated to the child care centre. All sleep arrangements will be communicated to program staff by the The Director/Supervisor after meeting with the parent/guardian. These will be reviewed prior to the child starting their first day. Parents will be advised by the supervising staff of any significant changes in their child's behaviours during sleep and/or sleeping patterns. Staff will document their observations of changes in a child's sleep behaviours in the daily written record and in the daily sleep log comments. Any changes in sleep behaviours will result in adjustments being made to the child's supervision during sleep time, where appropriate, based on consultation with the child's parent.

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Direct Visual Checks

Direct visual checks of each sleeping child (i.e. every child placed for sleep in a crib or cot) will be conducted to look for indicators of distress or unusual behaviours. Direct visual checks will be documented by staff on the daily sleep logs. Direct visual checks are not required for children engaging in quiet activities, but these children will be supervised at all times. For infants (children under 18 months of age), direct visual checks will be completed at a frequency based on consultation with each parent and may be increased based on the observed sleeping patterns and/or medical needs of each infant. At MECC, an infant staff member will always be present in the sleep room and will maintain ongoing supervision until the child(ren) wake. The frequency of direct visual checks and the steps to complete them will depend on the typical sleep patterns of each child and their age, as identified in the sleep supervision procedures provided in this policy. At a minimum, Infant children will be visually checked every 15 minutes and Toddler and Preschool children every 30 minutes. During nap/rest times, there will always be at least 1 adult teacher within the classroom providing on-going supervision.

Staff will ensure that all sleep areas have adequate lighting available to conduct the direct visual checks of sleeping children. And all staff will ensure they visually check and are close enough to observe regular breathing patterns.

Use of Electronic Devices

Where electronic sleep monitoring devices are used to monitor children's sleep, staff will not use electronic sleep monitoring devices to replace direct visual checks. When a child is in the sleep room, a staff member will always be present. Staff will check the monitor each morning to verify that it is functioning properly, they will inform the supervisor if it is not working. A backup sleep monitor will be kept in the office at all time, in the event one malfunctions. Staff will actively monitor the receiving device.

Procedures

Age Group Frequency of Direct Visual Checks

Infant According to each infant's needs as identified by their parent, or at least every 15 minutes.

Toddler Every 30 minutes

Preschool and/or Kindergarten (where applicable) Every 30 minutes

* This is the minimum frequency of direct visual checks. Should a child have symptoms of illness (e.g. a cold) or if there are other issues or concerns related to the child's health, safety and well-being during sleep, the frequency of direct visual checks must be increased to a caregiver sitting with or near the child. The individual needs of each child during sleep as identified by the parent and/or the child's physician must be followed at all times. If the child is ill prior to nap time, and is awaiting pickup, they will be placed to rest/sleep in the office away from other children to avoid spread of infection.

Procedures for Completing Direct Visual Checks

1. Staff must:

- i. be physically present beside the child;
- ii. check each child's general well-being by looking for signs of distress or discomfort including, at a minimum:

- change in normal breathing
- changes in skin temperature
- changes in lip and/or skin colour
- whimpering or crying; and lack of response to touch or voice.

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2. Where signs of distress or discomfort are observed, the staff who conducted the direct visual check must attempt to wake the child up. Where no signs of distress or discomfort are observed, proceed to step 3.

a) Where the child wakes up, staff must:

- i. attend to the child's needs;
- iii. separate the child from other children in the cozy area, if the child appears to be ill;
- iv. document the incident in the daily log book and in the child's symptoms of ill health record, where applicable.

b) Where the child does not wake up, staff must immediately:

- i. perform appropriate first aid and CPR, if required;
- v. inform other staff, students and volunteers in the room of the situation;
- vi. contact emergency services or, where possible, direct another individual to contact emergency services;
- vii. separate the child from other children or vice versa if the child appears to be ill;
- viii. inform the supervisor/designate of the situation; and
- ix. contact the child's parent;

c) Where the child must be taken home or to the hospital, the supervisor or designate must immediately:

- i. contact the child's parent to inform them of the situation and next steps.
- ii. Follow up throughout the event and the next day, if applicable.

d) Where the child's condition has stabilized, and/or after the child has been taken home and/or to the hospital, the staff who conducted the direct visual check and any staff who assisted with responding to the incident must:

- i. follow the serious occurrence policies and procedures, where applicable;
- x. document the incident in the daily written record; and
- xi. document the child's symptoms of illness in the child's records.

3. Staff must:

- i. adjust blankets as needed;
- xii. ensure the child's head is not covered;
- xiii. ensure there are no other risks of suffocation present;
- xiv. document the date, time and initial each direct visual check on the room's sleep log; and
- xv. verbally inform other staff in the room that the check has been completed, where applicable and possible.

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Purpose

The following policy has been put in place to minimize or eliminate the health risks inherent in caring for young children in a group setting. The primary purpose of this policy is to protect, maintain and improve the health of all children within care and that of the teachers within the program.

General:

The centre will be cleaned and sanitized using the most natural options available to us that are approved for use by Public Health. Mother Earth Childcare Centre (MECC) will use Benefect Botanical Disinfectant. This disinfectant is an all-natural alternative to Bleach or Quattro solutions. Benefect is a Thyme oil based cleaner and is proven effective against all forms of illness, including Covid-19. MECC will use Benefect products for cleaning tables, chairs, floors, handles, surfaces, toys and materials. It will also be used as a disinfectant in the kitchen.

Arrival/Health Checks:

Upon arrival, each family will be greeted by a Teacher. This Teacher will be responsible for connecting verbally with the family, completing a visual health check and addressing any concerns regarding the well-being of the child. This includes saying good morning, asking how the previous evening was, looking for any physical changes in the child since the previous care date (new scraps, bumps, bruises, goopy, runny nose, heavy cough, fever). The teacher will then welcome the child into care, if there are no concerns. The teacher will document the health check on the daily attendance and will make any needed notes in the daily log book. Any communicable illnesses will be noted using an illness form and will remain in the child's file in the office. If a child is showing signs/symptoms of illness at the time of arrival, they will not be permitted into care and will be issued an illness form.

Outbreaks:

An outbreak will be defined as an occurrence of more cases of a disease than would normally be expected in a specific place or group of people over a given period of time.

For the purpose of this policy, when any symptoms of ill health affect more than 10% of the child care centre population or reoccur over a period of two weeks, it will be considered an outbreak.

In the event of an outbreak, the supervisor, in conjunction with our local Public Health representative will devise a plan for the management and resolution of the outbreak. During an outbreak, MECC will inform the following upgraded sanitation practices;

- ❖ Increased hand washing and use of hand sanitizers
- ❖ All frequently touch surfaces and handles are sanitized 3 times a day
- ❖ All toys and materials are sanitized twice a day
- ❖ All personal items will not be permitted into care (stuffedies, home toys, etc.)
- ❖ All natural cleaning solutions will be replaced by a high efficiency natural bleach solution with higher concentration than the Benefect solution
- ❖ Emphasizing proper hand hygiene and hand washing practices for staff and children
- ❖ Reemphasizing the practice of proper coughing and sneezing etiquette
- ❖ Staff common spaces will be sanitized twice a day, no personal items outside lockers, all blankets and soft items removed until Outbreak has ended.
- ❖ Eliminating group plays or activities that may increase the spread of illness, such as water tables, playdough and other group sensory activities.
- ❖ During an Outbreak, the general illness policy at MECC will be extended from the regular 24 hours symptom free policy to 48+ hours before a child can return to care. In the event of an outbreak and for illness of gastro-origin (vomiting/diarrhea) a total of 48 hours symptom free is still required.
- ❖ During an Outbreak, if a child shows signs of illness the Teacher will group infected children separately from the healthy children, or close the centre for a period of time, as necessary.
- ❖ All Outdoor play spaces will also be subject to all guidelines and recommendations from the local Public Health officer during an outbreak.

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- ❖ MECC will work directly with our local Public Health representative to ensure we cooperate with the procedures recommended including, exclusion, testing of stool, blood, or urine samples.
- ❖ In the event that an Outbreak is declared that requires MECC to close a classroom or the centre as a whole, our Serious Occurrence Policy will be followed.

Surveillance for Environmental Concerns

Responsibility of Classroom Teachers:

- ❖ Report any safety hazards, heat, light, ventilation, or maintenance problems to the Finance/Maintenance Manager.
- ❖ Inspect the playground daily prior to use and follow the Playground Policy for reporting hazards

Responsibility of Supervisor:

- ❖ Conduct a safety check of the centre on a monthly basis using the classroom Quality Checklist that is used for Monthly observations of all elements within each classroom.

The Supervisor will also check each room for the following monthly;

- ❖ Medication storage
- ❖ Medication forms and tracking logs
- ❖ First Aid Kit and Contents
- ❖ Storage of Toxic Material, disinfectant, cleaning materials
- ❖ All postings/policies should be up-dated and current
- ❖ All Child files should be up-dated and complete
- ❖ All staff files should be up-dated and complete
- ❖ Supervisor will correct any deficiencies under their authority
- ❖ Supervisor will report maintenance or facility deficiencies to the Finance/Maintenance Manager

Toxic Materials:

MECC is an all-natural centre, and as such we should not have any toxic or dangerous chemicals or products on site. However, if for any reason there were products of this sort on the premises, these procedures would be followed by all staff and teachers.

- ❖ All toxic materials will be clearly labeled, marked TOXIC in **RED** sharpie and stored in the locked cabinet in the back storage room. This is to ensure it is inaccessible to any children within the centre. Once the product is no longer needed, it will be removed from the centre and disposed of in accordance with the labeled instructions and Ministry of Environment requirements.

Cleaning and Sanitizing Practices

- ❖ Educators will follow the cleaning schedule set out by MECC for daily, weekly, monthly, yearly and seasonal cleaning. All cleaning schedules will be developed in accordance with the local public health unit recommendations.
- ❖ Cleaning and sanitizing will only be completed with Public Health Unit approved disinfectants.

Toys/Furnishings

- ❖ Mouth toys will be removed immediately after use, washed and disinfected daily
- ❖ Plush toys will be laundered weekly, unless soiled. If soiled, it will be washed immediately.
- ❖ All toys and Montessori materials will be washed and disinfected with Benefect disinfectant daily and deep cleaned weekly.
- ❖ Gross motor equipment and furniture will be washed and disinfected weekly or more frequently when necessary. (Eating table after every meal/activity)

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- ❖ The water tables are filled with fresh water and sanitized at the end of each day the water table is in use. Children with cuts, sores etc. on their hands are not permitted to use a communal water/ sensory table. Children are discouraged from drinking water in the sensory table. Children and teachers are required to wash their hands before and after sensory play.
- ❖ Sandboxes outside will be raked daily and covered when not in use. Any debris from trees or surroundings will be removed by the Teachers prior to play.
- ❖ Items such as playdough will be portioned out individually and kept in individual containers with names of children. Homemade playdough will be made with more than 30% salt content to ensure anti-microbial action and tea tree oil used as a natural disinfectant and sensorial smell.

Safe Drinking Water- Flushing for Lead

At MECC there is no requirement to flush for lead, as it is not a risk in our current location of 190 Nicklin road. Should there be any reason to need lead flushing, this portion of the policy would be used;

- ❖ Plumbing is flushed for five (5) minutes on the first day that the child care is open each week
- ❖ Plumbing is flushed for five (5) minutes that the child care is open on each day if plumbing is before 1990. However, if the site has had results from their Annual Test of less than 10 micrograms per liter of water or 10 part of total lead per billions part of total water for 2 years consecutively THEN the site may flush on the first day of the WEEK instead of daily.
- ❖ As well, if the site has a result from their Annual Test of MORE than 10 micrograms of Lead per liter of water then daily flushing needs to begin immediately and will continue until another 2 years of clear results take place.
- ❖ Flushing is completed before the child care is open for the day
- ❖ To flush a system; open all cold water taps and allow water to run for at least five minutes
- ❖ Record is made of the date, start & end time of flushing and name of person who performed the flushing and kept in the Water Flushing Binder in the office.
- ❖ The intent for Flushing for Lead is to ensure that stale water that contains higher levels is not consumed
- ❖ Annual Lead Sampling & Testing will be conducted between the periods of May 1 to October 31, at ALL the Child Care Centres unless there is a shared agreement with the school location that they are in.
- ❖ Records are kept for six (6) years

Handwashing

- ❖ Teachers will wash their hands under running water (see proper procedure for hand washing as shown in attached poster) OR hand rubbing with hand sanitizer of 70% alcohol content, which is the optimal concentration for killing germs (see proper procedure for hand rubbing as shown in attached poster) upon arriving to program, upon returning from outside and before and after handling food, helping children with their food and eating. See Washroom section for handwashing around washroom routines
- ❖ Children will wash their hands under running water (see proper procedure for hand washing as shown in attached poster) OR hand rubbing with hand sanitizer of 70% alcohol content, which is the optimal concentration for killing germs (see proper procedure for hand rubbing as shown in attached poster) upon arrival to the program, upon returning from outside and before and after eating/handling of food. See Washroom section for handwashing around washroom routines

Washrooms

- ❖ White drying towels will be kept near all sinks used by children/teachers for hand washing
- ❖ Blue face cloths will be provided for all programs, to clean the faces and hands of the children after each meal or snack.
- ❖ A Teacher must always accompany children to the washroom and wait for the children to complete their wellness routine before returning to the activity room. The Teacher may wait outside the washroom to give the children their privacy, however, at times younger children may need added support and guidance, therefore, the Teacher may go in to assist the child.
- ❖ Teachers will wash their hands after assisting a child with toileting.

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- ❖ Teachers must always do a visual check of the washrooms prior to a child entering if the washroom is not within the room.
- ❖ Children's hands are to be washed after toileting.
- ❖ Toilets are to be flushed after each use; disinfected after each group washroom routine.
- ❖ Every bathroom is cleaned and disinfected by classroom teachers during rest time.
- ❖ Where the washroom is located outside of the playroom, the Teacher will remain within ratio at all times, taking the appropriate number of children together to ensure that ratios are met in all groups. A head count will be conducted before leaving the room and the Teacher will announce how many children they are taking with them to their co teachers before leaving. They will do another head count when leaving the washroom and a full headcount of the entire group upon returning to the room.

Diapering

- ❖ Gather supplies (diaper, wipes, gloves, spare clothes if needed).
- ❖ Wash your hands
- ❖ Put on gloves
- ❖ Place the child on the changing table if not changing the child while standing, never leaving the child unattended.
- ❖ Remove clothing and diaper
- ❖ Clean child with supplies provided or approved by parent
- ❖ Remove soiled items to diaper genie, discard gloves.
- ❖ Put on new diaper and replace clothing
- ❖ Once child is down and safe, wash your hands
- ❖ Clean and disinfect diaper changing table with disinfectant and any touched items during the diaper change. (diaper cream containers, nearby items, etc.

Garbage

- ❖ All garbage will be emptied every night by the closing teacher in each classroom
- ❖ Diapers that have been soiled will be placed in the diaper genie that is only for diapers.
- ❖ For any child with cloth diapers, soiled items will be placed in their wet bag to be laundered at home. If no cloth diaper supplies are available, a spare disposable diaper will be used.
- ❖ Disposal of garbage will be done daily for all forms of garbage in all classrooms
- ❖ Garbage, recycling and compost are collected weekly.

Electrical Outlets

- ❖ Outlets in all areas used by children will be protected by outlet guards when not in use

Rest Equipment

- ❖ Cots will be cleaned and disinfected weekly
- ❖ Linen will be stacked with the beds, so that each child's bedding is separate
- ❖ Linen will be laundered regularly, weekly or more frequently if required
- ❖ Cots will be individually labeled. If shared, then cots will be cleaned and disinfected, a set of clean linen will be used

Food and Nutrition

Planning

- ❖ Meals and snacks will be planned in accordance with Canada's Food Guide and in consultation with the Public Health Unit
- ❖ The Dietary Managers and Child Care Supervisors, under supervision of the Manager Program Integrity, Children's Services will plan the menu and buy the food
- ❖ Extra food items will always be on-site to prepare for any instances that may arise where the planned food is spoiled or to support the children that are in our care for extended periods and may require more

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Menus

- ❖ List foods served for snacks and lunch daily
- ❖ Prepare and post menus one week in advance
- ❖ Keep copies of menus for one month and have available to parents for inspection
- ❖ Records of what was served for each snack and lunch will be written in the Daily Written
- ❖ Record if not specified on the menu. I.e. If the menu says "fruit" it will be noted on the posted menu and in the Daily Written Record what the fruit was that day.
- ❖ If extra food is provided above and beyond snacks and meals, it will be logged in the Daily

Special Diets

On sufficient notice, the centre will endeavor to accommodate requests for special diets on an individual basis (ie. Gluten, Dairy etc.). Speak with the Supervisor for further discussion; special dietary restrictions for medical reasons will also be observed. All special diets will be recorded in the child's file and on the Allergies and Restrictions list. Any change will be noted in the Daily Written Record and on a Diet, Rest, Change form with written instructions signed by a parent of the child concerning any special requirements in respect of diet.

Food Handling

- ❖ All food will be kept covered and stored at proper temperatures (4.4 degrees C or 40 degrees F)
- ❖ Kitchen appliances, equipment and shelves will be cleaned and disinfected monthly
- ❖ Kitchen counters will be washed with a mild disinfectant: water solution each day prior to food preparation and throughout the day as required
- ❖ All items to be labeled with the date that it was opened/prepared and who it belongs to where applicable. Expressed milk will be labeled with the Date Expressed as well as Date Provided
- ❖ When preparing food, there will be no cross contamination. I.e. One spoon will be used for each item, condiments will be scooped into a separate bowl for children to serve themselves with and then the left overs in the bowl to be discarded. Never scoop anything back into its original containers after use
- ❖ There will be at least one person at each Full Day Centre that has their Safe Food Handlers Certificate and we will aim to have one Educator at each After School Program where possible. Any Centre that runs for a full day (PA Day, March Break etc.) will have at least one person that has their Safe Food Handler's Certificate. The Food Handler's Certificate will be on site at all times for proof and will be maintained up to date to avoid passing expiry date.

Food Service

- ❖ Nuts, hot dogs, caramels, lollypops and hard candy will not be served to the children due to the risk of choking. Peanut Butter is prohibited from all YMCA Child Care Centres for allergy reasons
- ❖ Children must be supervised while eating
- ❖ Caution will be exercised when the following foods are served to children under 2.5 years of age:

- o Grapes – cut lengthwise and crosswise
- o Apples – raw – cut lengthwise and crosswise
- o Carrots – raw – cut lengthwise and crosswise
- o Raisins
- o Chip like items

Dishwashing

Where there is no use of a food sanitizer on site, these procedures will be followed;

- ❖ Scrape excess food off dishes
- ❖ Wash the dishes with dish detergent in hot water in sink/basin 1 (or in dishwasher)
- ❖ Rinse dishes in hot water in sink/basin 2 (or in dishwasher)
- ❖ Sanitize the dishes with a disinfectant that has been approved by the Local Health Officer following the instructions on the bottle in hot water in sink/basin 3 and use test strips to ensure proper levels are met
- ❖ Allow dishes to fully air dry before next use. Do not towel dry

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Smoking

Smoking and Vaping in ANY form is prohibited in all areas at MECC including the outdoor playground and parking lot areas.

Students and Visitors

- ❖ Students and visitors will be excluded from the Centre if they are exhibiting any of the symptoms of ill health as described in the Daily procedures.
- ❖ Students are requested to observe all policies pertaining to Educators in the previous section.

Animal Management

At MECC, we believe that animals can be a valuable learning tool and can stimulate children's interest in, curiosity and appreciation of nature. As described in How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years, a growing body of research suggests that connecting to the natural world contributes to children's mental, physical, emotional and spiritual health and well-being. Providing opportunities to explore, care for, and interact with the natural world helps to strengthen these connections. While animals can pose a risk of infectious disease transmission and injury, particularly for infants and children under the age of five years, important measures can be taken to minimize these risks while offering children these important opportunities. The following precautions will be taken when animals are brought into any of the classrooms or outdoor spaces at MECC.

- ❖ Parents will be notified prior to new animals being introduced into any Program with the exception of fish
- ❖ All animals with the exception of fish will be seen by a Veterinarian on an Annual basis and will be up to date with any vaccinations requested by the Veterinarian
- ❖ All documentation from the Veterinarian will be kept on site
- ❖ Contact information for a Veterinarian will be kept in the Child Care office if there is a pet on site
- ❖ The local Public Health Unit will be consulted with prior to new animals being introduced into any Child Care setting
- ❖ Proper care and cleaning will be provided according to the type of animal and in consultation with the local Public Health Unit
- ❖ Any visiting animal will require proof of vaccination prior to entering the Centre
- ❖ Training will be provided to any regular Educator in the program and to all children as follows;
- ❖ Always treat animals gently and calmly. Never hurt, tease, frighten, surprise or corner an animal
- ❖ Avoid chasing and kissing animals
- ❖ Never disturb an animal that is eating or sleeping
- ❖ Always perform hand hygiene (see below) before and after touching animals, their food bowls, toys, bedding, etc.
- ❖ Avoid touching animal food and feces
- ❖ Avoid touching their faces after animal contact until hand hygiene is performed
- ❖ Bites and scratches inflicted by animals will be promptly washed
- ❖ Bites from any mammals (regardless of species, health or vaccination status) to humans will be reported to the local public health unit, as per O. Reg. 557.
- ❖ Parents will be informed of any bites or scratches that have occurred and will be provided with a completed Accident/Incident Form detailing the injury
- ❖ Any suspected illness or injury caused by animals in our care will be reported to our local Public Health Unit
- ❖ Animals will not be allowed into areas where food is being stored, prepared, served or consumed
- ❖ Raw pet food will not be used in any Child Care setting
- ❖ Animal food will be stored out of reach of children
- ❖ Children will only assist with feeding animals when being monitored by an adult and will follow proper hand washing before and after feeding
- ❖ Hand Hygiene when handling animals will be as follows;
- ❖ Rinse hands under running water
- ❖ Apply liquid soap to hands

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- ❖ Lather hands with soap for at least 15 seconds (or sing 'Happy Birthday' twice) with attention to rubbing between fingers, back of hands, fingertips and under nails
 - ❖ Rinse soap with running water
 - ❖ Dry hands well with paper towel or an air dryer
 - ❖ Turn taps off with paper towel, if available
 - ❖ A fully equipped first aid kit will be kept in an accessible location in all classrooms
 - ❖ First aid kits will contain treatment procedures for common emergencies and any special conditions of the children.
 - ❖ All Child Care Educators must maintain current certification on Standard First Aid and Child and Infant CPR
 - ❖ Child Care Educators may be allotted 3 months grace in recertification in Standard First Aid and Child and Infant CPR, provided there is a currently certified Educator on site and accessible at all times.
 - ❖ Child Care Educators with an expired certification must show proof of their enrollment in a course and completion of recertification within 3 months past expiry.
-

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Weather and Outdoor Play

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

The *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years* document describes how children thrive in programs where they can engage in vigorous physical play in natural outdoor spaces and playgrounds that present manageable levels of challenge. In addition to providing physical benefits, active play outdoors strengthens functioning in cognitive areas such as perception, attention, creative problem solving, and complex thinking.

While these environments need to be safe, it is also important for them to provide children with interesting opportunities for a reasonable degree of risk-taking.

The purpose of this policy is to set out the responsibilities of the licensee, staff, students and volunteers in ensuring that the outdoor and playground spaces provide a safe and well-supervised environment for children's play and meet Canadian Standards Association (CSA) standards.

This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for a playground safety policy for child care centres.

- The child care centre will ensure that there are enough play materials available that are appropriate for the children's age and learning and developmental needs during outdoor play.
- The maximum capacity of the playground will not be exceeded at any time.

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Infants will not go outside if the temperature is higher than 30 degrees or below -15 degrees with windchill. Children will be monitored at all times for signs and symptoms of hot/cold and outdoor times will be reduced accordingly.

Toddlers will not go outside if the temperature is higher than 30 degrees or lower than -20 degrees with windchill. Children will be monitored at all times for signs and symptoms of hot/cold and outdoor times will be reduced accordingly.

Preschoolers will not go outside if the temperature is higher than 30 degrees or lower than -25 degrees with the windchill. Children will be monitored at all times for signs and symptoms of hot/cold and outdoor times will be reduced accordingly.

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Playground Inspections/Checks

Outdoor play space, fixed play structures and surfacing checks will be conducted on a daily, monthly and annual basis. All playground inspections will be documented. All documentation and reports will be filed by the Director/Supervisor in the main office, locked cabinet.

The licensee will ensure that where the playground has fixed equipment, the certified playground inspection is conducted by a third party inspector who:

- o Has declared non-conflict of interest including declaration of non-affiliation with playground equipment and protective surface manufacturers, suppliers and/or other contractors involved in the retrofit, upgrade or repair of the playground equipment and protective surfaces;
- o has proof of current Professional Errors and Omissions insurance coverage; and \
- o has proof of playground inspector certification.

Repairs and Maintenance

- All items identified in the checklists as requiring repair will be documented in the repair log and repaired or addressed in a timely manner (the form in Appendix C may be used for this purpose). Note: the amount of time required will depend on the scope of the work and who is required to conduct the repairs..
- Documentation on the repair log will also include:
 - o the date the issue was identified;
 - o documentation of what steps and efforts have been taken to address any identified items which cannot be repaired immediately due to circumstances out of the child care centre's control; and
 - o the date the related repairs were completed.

Where outdoor space or playground repairs cannot be completed immediately, the area or space requiring repairs will be sectioned off to prevent children from using that area in order to protect their safety and reduce the risk of injury. Children will be supervised at all times during outdoor play to ensure that they do not approach or use spaces that are sectioned off pending repairs.

Any repairs requiring alterations or renovations to the playground premises will not begin until site or playground plans are approved by a Ministry of Education Director.

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Compliance with the CSA Standards

- Any outdoor play space, fixed play structure or surfacing under those structures that is constructed or renovated will meet the requirements set out in the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) standard CAN/CSA-Z614-14, “Children’s Playspaces and Equipment”.
- Written confirmation of compliance with the CSA standard will be obtained from a Certified Playground Safety Inspector, upon completion of any repairs or renovations which have resulted in a non-compliance with the CSA standard as outlined in a playground inspection report.

Supervision

- Children will be supervised at all times during outdoor play.
- Staff will position themselves throughout the playground and rotate their position where required to ensure children can be visually supervised while engaging in play.
- Staff to child ratios will be maintained on the playground at all times.
- Reduced ratios will never be used on the playground.
- All children in each age grouping will be separated from other children during outdoor activities.
- Staff will ensure that all gates are securely closed at all times.

Documentation and Report Retention

- All documentation and reports related to the outdoor space or playground will be:
 - Kept for three years from the date they were created and/or updated (whichever date is most recent); and
 - Made available for Ministry of Education staff to review at all times.

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Field Trip and Off-Site Play

The children will often go off-site to play at nearby parks, trails and forest spaces. The group will also go out for walks in wagons and strollers. On occasion, the children may have a field trip. When a field trip is being proposed, families will receive a permission form with at least 1 week notice from the day of the trip. Parents will have the option to volunteer for the day, but must hold a police vulnerable sector check prior to volunteering. Any child without a completed form, staff will contact the family with a digital form with signing option. If it is received before the group leaves for the field trip, the child can attend.

Any child who does not have a completed permission form to attend the trip will remain at the centre with a staff member for the duration of the field trip.

A field trip form will be presented to the families with at least 1 week notice from the field trip date.

Sample Field Trip Form to be added below in the future.

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Inclusion Policy

Inclusion/inclusive: An approach to policies and practice in early years settings where all children and families are accepted and served within a program and where each child and family experiences a sense of belonging and is supported to participate fully in all aspects of the program or service.

Any child requiring any form of additional support or tools will have an Individual Support Plan drafted by their classroom teachers, site supervisor and parent(s)/guardian(s). This document will outline the areas needing support and how each party on the care team will support the whole child and their family throughout their time in childcare.

At MECC, we believe each child's individuality, wellbeing, belonging and independence deserves to be nurtured in a warm, welcoming environment. Our programs strive to support all children and their families in; individuality, dignity, development, self esteem, respect and acceptance. Each child will be given equal opportunity to engage, learn and grow through exploration, inquiry, discovery, connections, encouragement and guidance.

We aim for our programs to reflect the varied needs and diversity of the communities around us and the communities we serve. All staff, students and volunteers at MECC are thoroughly screened and are trained prior to any engagement with the group. All individuals receive training on individual support plans and any that are currently in place. The individuals working/volunteering at MECC will be committed to support all children equally, regardless of race/demographic/ethnicity/gender/spiritual belief/etc. We recognise each child's individuality, uniqueness, strengths, needs and abilities. All staff members both full and part time are required to undertake professional development on a regular basis while employed at MECC. These include mandatory orientation and training prior to starting employment.

To ensure that our programs all remain completely inclusive, MECC will facilitate the use of specialized equipment, tools, learning materials/strategies and use of inclusion support workers or additional support staff to meet the needs of our program and all of those within it.

MECC staff and administration will communicate with families, community partners, resource consultants and other consultants to meet each child's needs. If however, after all reasonable measures, our program does not suit the needs of a child and we have exhausted all resources, have collaborated with families to look at other sources then MECC will issue a notice of dismissal and will work with the family and community resources to find a more suitable fit. This will allow MECC to follow the steps required to support families in an alternate childcare centre or care experience.

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Inclusion means:

An all inclusive society creates both the feeling and the reality of belonging. Inclusivity is no longer defined by physical and cognitive disabilities but also includes a full range of human diversity with respect to ability, language, culture, gender, age and of other forms of human differences.

Definition of Exceptionalities:

A child who, due to familial, physical, behavioral, developmental, cognitive, communicative or emotional factors, is at risk of not maximizing their potential. These exceptionalities encompass children who require support and assistance with daily tasks, whether formally diagnosed or not, and whether a diagnosis is short or long-term in nature.

Accountability:

This Inclusion Policy will be reviewed by all staff, students, volunteers and support staff annually. The Inclusion Policy will also be available in hard copy in the office.

Legislation:

This policy falls within the guidelines of:

- **College of ECE's Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice** – Early Childhood Educators make the well-being and learning of all children who are under their professional supervision their foremost responsibility. They value the rights of the child, respecting the uniqueness, dignity and potential of each child, and strive to create learning environments in which children experience a sense of belonging. Early Childhood Educators are caring, empathetic, fair and act with integrity. Early Childhood Educators foster the joy of learning through play-based pedagogy.
 - **Canadian Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms** – States that: all individuals must be treated equally, regardless of their race, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.
 - **Canadian Human Rights Act** – States that employers and service providers are required to accommodate special needs, including those of people with disabilities, short of undue hardship.
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Accident and Incident Procedures

At Mother Earth Childcare Centre, should a child ever have an accident (an injury to themselves that is caused by their own actions, environmental, peer or other source) an accident/incident form will be completed and the following process followed.

1. Child's injury and well-being are addressed and are re-evaluated periodically if needing follow up.
2. An accident/incident form will be completed by the educator who witnesses the accident. They will also add names and notes from any other educators who also witnessed the event.
3. The accident/incident form will be completed in full, given to the supervisor to review and photocopy. The 2 copies will then be returned to the classroom teacher(s) to be reviewed with the child(ren)'s family upon pickup/drop off. The ORIGINAL COPY is signed by the parent and returned to the office for filing by the Supervisor. The additional copy is the parent copy that is for their records.
4. All staff will receive training during orientation on how to complete all of the accident/incident form and the process.
5. Accident/Incident forms will ONLY be completed by classroom teachers. Accident/Incident forms are NEVER to be completed by a student or volunteer.

All accident/incident reports MUST be filled out completely and given to the Supervisor within 3 hours of the accident/incident occurring. If for any reason the staff member is unable to complete the form during program hours, the Supervisor will provide additional classroom support to ensure the document is completed in full by pickup time.

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Serious Occurrences

This policy reflects the procedures to follow in the event of a Serious Occurrence at MECC and provides clear instructions for staff, students, and volunteers to follow for how to identify, respond to and report a serious occurrence. It ensures that there is a plan to deal with any serious incidents that may affect the health, safety, and well-being of children and those working directly with children, and that these serious incidents are addressed by the childcare 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 childcare centres. It is the responsibility of ALL personnel on site to report any serious occurrences to the Supervisor in a timely manner. The Supervisor must report it to the Ministry of Education within 24 hours.

Identifying a Serious Occurrence

- Under the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*, serious occurrences are defined as:
 1. the death of a child who received childcare at a childcare centre,
 2. abuse, neglect or an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child while receiving childcare at a childcare centre,
 3. a life-threatening injury to or a life-threatening illness of a child who receives childcare at a childcare centre,
 4. an incident where a child who is receiving childcare at a childcare centre goes missing or is temporarily unsupervised, or
 5. an unplanned disruption of the normal operations of a childcare centre that poses a risk to the health, safety or well-being of children receiving childcare at the child care centre.

Reporting a Serious Occurrence

- Staff will notify the Supervisor/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 licensee, supervisor or designate becoming aware of the occurrence.
- Identifying information such as children or staff 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 licensee/supervisor or designate will notify the program advisor (PA) assigned to the licence 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 contact information for the Ministry is located by the phone in the front office.

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- 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, The Director/Supervisor will complete a Serious Occurrence Notification Form in either CCLS or using the form available in Appendix A.
- The form will provide a summary of the serious occurrence and of any action taken by the childcare centre.
- The summary will not include identifying information (e.g. names and ages of children, staff, or program rooms) and will contain gender-neutral language.
- The summary will be posted at the childcare centre in a place that is visible and accessible to parents for a minimum of 10 business days, regardless of the serious occurrence type and the status of any related investigation.
- All serious occurrence summaries will be retained for 3 years from the date they are created or last updated (whichever date is most recent).

Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a Child

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

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Procedures to Respond to a Serious Occurrence

STEPS FOR STAFF, STUDENTS AND VOLUNTEERS TO FOLLOW:

1. Immediately:

- Ask for assistance from other staff, 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. They will manage and update the situation from there.

2. Ongoing and after the incident:

- Follow any direction provided by third-party authorities (e.g. police, CAS, public health, etc.)
- Ensure that children are always supervised.
- Follow up as needed. Log all relevant information in daily log books.

3. Within 24 hours:

- Document the incident in:
 - 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 parent of the child.

STEPS FOR THE LICENSEE/SUPERVISOR/DESIGNATE TO FOLLOW:

1. Immediately:

- Provide assistance to children, staff, students, volunteers and families.
- 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.

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Within 24 hours of becoming aware of the incident:

- Collect all pertinent information to report the incident to the Ministry of Education as a serious occurrence, including:
 - 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).

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. 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.

Ongoing and after the incident:

- Follow any direction provided by third-party authorities (e.g. police, CAS, public health, etc.)
- Maintain confidentiality at all times.
- Update the serious occurrence report in CCLS, as required.
- Conduct an internal review of the serious occurrence with staff, students and volunteers to establish next steps and reduce probability of repeat occurrences.
- Provide children, parents, staff, students and/or volunteers with supports, if needed.
- Provide options for professional development around topics related to the serious occurrence. (RIRO training, Supporting mental health training, grief training, etc.)
- Review with staff, students and volunteers the childcare centre's program statement policies and procedures that set out prohibited practices and expectations of promoting the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of all children.

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Steps to Follow According to Specific Serious Occurrence Categories

SERIOUS OCCURRENCE: Death of a Child

STEPS FOR STAFF, STUDENTS AND VOLUNTEERS TO FOLLOW:

Death occurs while a child is receiving child care:

- Immediately inform the supervisor/designate (who will call emergency services)
- Clear all other children away and maintain supervision
- Await further instructions, remain calm.

STEPS FOR THE LICENSEE/SUPERVISOR/DESIGNATE TO FOLLOW:

a) Death occurs while a child is receiving child care:

1. Immediately, upon becoming aware of the incident:

- Contact emergency services (police, ambulance, fire, etc)
- Contact a parent of the child, or where a parent cannot be reached, contact the child's emergency contact.
- Contact local Children's Aid Society (CAS) to help support the family

b) Death occurs while a child is not receiving child care:

Within 24 hours of becoming aware of the incident:

- 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.

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SERIOUS OCCURRENCE: Allegation of Abuse and/or Neglect

STEPS FOR STAFF, STUDENTS AND VOLUNTEERS TO FOLLOW:

Where there is a concern about the abuse or neglect of a child by any person:

1. Immediately:

- Report concerns to the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) as per the duty to report obligations under the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017* (CYFSA).
- Document the conversation with CAS and follow their recommendations.
- Notify the supervisor/designate of the incident and the report made to CAS.
- Refrain from discussing the allegation with others and maintain confidentiality at all times.

STEPS FOR THE LICENSEE/SUPERVISOR/DESIGNATE TO FOLLOW:

Where there is a concern about the abuse or neglect of a child by a staff, student or volunteer, or where a person has otherwise reported alleged abuse/neglect concerns to the supervisor/designate:

Immediately:

- Notify the person who reported concerns about their duty to report obligations under the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017* (CYFSA).
- Report the concerns to the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) as per the duty to report obligations under the CYFSA, unless it is confirmed that a report has already been made to CAS.
- Document the concerns.
- Contact and notify a parent 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 Educators, Ontario College of Teachers, etc.). If so:
 - 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.
- Refrain from discussing the allegation with others.
- Maintain confidentiality at all times.

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Once all external investigations are complete (e.g. by police and/or CAS), if applicable:

- 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.).

SERIOUS OCCURRENCE: Life-threatening Injury or Illness

STEPS FOR STAFF, STUDENTS AND VOLUNTEERS TO FOLLOW:

1. Immediately:

- Ask for assistance from other staff, students, or volunteers.
- Provide immediate medical assistance, if applicable, according to Standard First Aid and CPR training, where applicable.
- Provide immediate emergency medical plan or individualized plan, if 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.

2. Ongoing and after the incident:

- Follow any direction provided by third-party authorities (e.g. paramedics, police, CAS, public health, etc.)
- Ensure that children are supervised at all times.

3. Within 24 hours:

- Document the incident in:
 - d. the daily written record;
 - e. the child's record of symptoms of illness, if applicable; and/or
 - f. in an accident report, if applicable.
- Where an accident report is created, provide a signed copy to a parent of the child.

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STEPS FOR THE LICENSEE/SUPERVISOR/DESIGNATE TO FOLLOW:

Immediately:

- Provide assistance to children, staff, students, volunteers and families.
- Provide immediate medical assistance, if applicable, according to Standard First Aid and CPR training.
- Call emergency services and follow directions from emergency services personnel, where applicable.

Within 24 hours of becoming aware of the incident:

- Collect all pertinent information to report the incident to the Ministry of Education as a serious occurrence, including:
 - 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).

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.

Post a summary of the serious occurrence and of any action taken by the childcare centre in a place that is visible and accessible to parents.

Ongoing and after the incident:

- Follow any direction provided by third-party authorities (e.g. police, CAS, public health, etc.)
- Maintain confidentiality at all times.
- Update the serious occurrence report in CCLS, as required.
- Conduct an internal review of the serious occurrence with staff, students, and volunteers to establish the next steps and reduce the probability of repeat occurrences.
- Provide children, parents, staff, students, and/or volunteers with support, if needed.
- Review with staff, students, and volunteers the child care center's program statement policies and procedures that set out prohibited practices and expectations of promoting the health, safety, nutrition, and well-being of all children.

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SERIOUS OCCURRENCE: Missing or Unsupervised Child(ren)

a. Child was found

b. Child is still missing

STEPS FOR STAFF, STUDENTS, AND VOLUNTEERS TO FOLLOW:

1. Immediately, upon becoming aware that a child or children are missing:

- Alert the supervisor/designate, and all staff, 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 not found after 2 minutes of being deemed missing.

- Continue to search the premises.
- Update the supervisor/designate.

b) Where the child or children are found after being deemed missing.

- Update the supervisor/designate.

2. After the child or children have been found for 5 minutes after being deemed missing:

- Document the incident in the daily written record.
- Update the supervisor/designate
- Follow emergency service advice and direction.

STEPS FOR THE LICENSEE/SUPERVISOR/DESIGNATE TO FOLLOW:

1. Immediately, upon becoming aware that a child is missing:

- Assist with searching for the missing child(ren).

a) Where the child or children are not found after 2 minutes of being deemed missing:

- Call emergency services and follow directions from emergency services personnel.
- Contact the child(ren)'s parent(s), or where a parent cannot be reached, contact the child's emergency contact.

b) Where the child or children are found after being deemed missing:

- Update the child(ren)'s parent(s), or where a parent cannot be reached the child(ren)'s emergency contact(s).

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SERIOUS OCCURRENCE: 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**

STEPS FOR STAFF, STUDENTS, AND VOLUNTEERS TO FOLLOW:

a) Where the incident is suspected to be an outbreak:

1. Immediately:

- Notify the supervisor/designate on site of concerns.
- Separate children who are showing symptoms of illness from other children.
- Follow the child care center's sanitary practices policy and procedures.

2. Within 24 Hours:

- Record symptoms of ill health in the affected child(ren)'s records,
- Document the incident in the daily written record.

a) Where the incident is not an outbreak (all other disruptions of normal operations):

1. Immediately:

- Follow the child care center's fire safety and evacuation plan and/or the emergency management policies and procedures, as applicable.

2. Within 24 Hours:

- Document the incident in the daily written record.

STEPS FOR THE LICENSEE/SUPERVISOR/DESIGNATE TO FOLLOW:

a) Where the incident is suspected to be an outbreak:

1. Immediately:

- Contact the local public health department.
- Contact Local Program Advisor
- Inform Staff and Families based on conversation with Public Health
- Where the incident is deemed an outbreak by public health

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Immediately:

- Follow instructions from the local public health department.
- Contact the parent(s) of the affected child(ren) and ensure the affected child(ren) are picked up by their parent(s) and/or taken to hospital.
- Obtain an outbreak posting from the local Medical Officer of Health and post it in an area easily accessible to parents.
- Inform all staff and families
- Remove all natural/linen/wool from all programs
- Switch natural cleaners from Benefect Botanical Deacon 30 to Bleach Solution.
- Remove and wash all blankets, pillows, and plush items within the centre
- Deep clean the centre, use a bleach solution to sanitize all surfaces, handles/knobs/switches, tables/chairs, toys, materials, windows, shelving, books, dolls, kitchen, bathrooms, outdoor toys, and sheds, strollers/wagons, staff room, and toy rotation areas.

Note: Outbreaks must be reported as a serious occurrence only if deemed an outbreak by public health.

1. Within 24 Hours:

- Notify all parents of children enrolled at the childcare centre of the outbreak.
 - Post any relevant documentation
 - Report to the ministry of Education as needed.
-

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Duty to Report

While upholding the profession's core set of beliefs and values of care, respect, trust, and integrity, RECEs make the well-being, learning, and care of children their foremost responsibility (Code and Standards, Ethic A). This responsibility is directly related to an RECE's duty to report, which ensures that the well-being, health, and safety of children are prioritized. Within a care and relationship-based practice, RECEs work with a vulnerable population.

The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice outlines RECEs' responsibilities to children and families, which includes building positive, trusting, and responsive relationships. As such, RECEs are in a unique position to recognize possible signs of child abuse, neglect, and family violence.

Under section 125 of the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017 (CYFSA), RECEs have a particular duty to report to a Children's Aid Society (CAS) if they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm or injury. RECEs are required to abide by the College's Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice as well as all applicable legislation, regulations, by-laws, and policies that are relevant to their professional practice. They are required to be aware of and prepared to act on their legislated duty to report concerns of harm or abuse towards children.

Failure to do so is contrary to the law and, may constitute professional misconduct.

- Introduces the CYFSA and explains section 125 in the context of an RECE's practice
- Examines reasonable grounds, professional judgment, and ethical decision-making around reporting
- Describes reportable harms, risks, and circumstances
- Covers consequences of not reporting
- Highlights bias, racism and stereotypes in relation to the duty to report
- Provides guidance for RECEs related to their role and the duty to report.

Prohibited Practices of all MECC staff, students and volunteers;

- (a) corporal punishment of the child;
- (b) 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;
- (c) locking the exits of the child care centre or home child care premises 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;
- (d) 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 his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
- (e) depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
- (f) inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will. O. Reg. 137/15, s. 48; O. Reg. 126/16, s. 34.

****Any case of a staff/student/volunteer using prohibited practices will be removed from the program immediately and follow up actions will be taken by the site supervisor and employer to ensure that the incident is reported to local authorities, the college of eces or teachers depending on the staff's qualifications. A serious occurrence would also be completed, filed and followed up on, as per our serious occurrence policy.**

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Monitoring Compliance and Contraventions

This policy sets out the process that will be followed to monitor the implementation of our policies, procedures, and individualized plans on an ongoing basis.

The policy sets out how compliance and contraventions (non-compliance) with the policies, procedures, and individualized plans listed below will be monitored, recorded, and addressed.

This document is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for written policies and procedures for monitoring, recording, and addressing compliance and non-compliance with policies, procedures, and individualized plans for child care centers.

Policies and procedures required under the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*:

- Playground Safety
- Anaphylactic policy
- Sanitary Practices
- Sleep Supervision
- Serious Occurrence
- Drug and Medication Administration
- Supervision of Volunteers and Students
- Program Statement Implementation
- Staff Training and Development
- Police Record Check
- Fire Safety and Evacuation
- Waiting List
- Parent Issues and Concerns
- Emergency Management

Individualized plans required under the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*:

- Anaphylaxis
- Special Needs
- Medical Needs

Policy and Procedures for Monitoring Compliance and Contraventions

1. Monitoring and Observations

- Mother Earth Childcare Centre will monitor each staff, student, and volunteer to assess whether policies, procedures, and individualized plans are being implemented, as follows:
 - The Director/Supervisor will observe and monitor the qualified staff in each program room (i.e. RECE or otherwise approved staff);
 - The Director/Supervisor will observe and monitor other program staff (i.e. assistants);
 - The Classroom Teachers will observe and monitor placement students; and
 - The Director/Supervisor will observe and monitor volunteers.

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Monitoring and observations will be conducted on an ongoing basis through various means including, but not limited to:

- participating regularly and informally in the program to observe
- collecting feedback provided from parents and families
- reviewing completed written documentation (e.g. medication administration forms, daily written record, attendance records, etc.).
- Monitoring will be conducted at different times of the day (e.g. morning, afternoon, periods of arrival/departure, rest periods, meal times, outdoor play periods, transitions, etc.) to observe that policies, procedures and individualized plans are being implemented as required for different parts of the program and daily routines.
- These observation visits will be known as Quality Checks within the program. They will be conducted monthly for each classroom and will review documentation, interactions, teacher development, environment and more. These monthly quality checks will be completed by the Director/Supervisor and will be reviewed with all teachers within that program.
- See document - Monthly Quality Checklist

2. Documentation and Records

- Monitoring and observations will be recorded using the Quality Checks Log.
- Documentation of observations will be completed at the time the observations are made or within at least 1 month of the observation date. These observations will include concrete examples of observed compliance and non-compliance, feedback from improvement and program recommendations.
- All records will be stored in the locked filing cabinet in the locked Director's office for at least three years from the date they are created.

3. Follow-up

- Any areas of concern with an individual's ability to comply with policies, procedures and individualized plans will be brought forward to the supervisor or designate.
- The Director/Supervisor will address their observations through a review and discussion with the individuals observed every month and will seek to or provide them with appropriate supports to achieve and maintain compliance (e.g. additional training, feedback, mentoring).
-

4. Dealing with Contraventions of Policies, Procedures or Individualized Plans:

- Mother Earth Childcare Centre will make every effort to clarify expectations and encourage staff, students and volunteers to raise their questions and concerns about implementing policies, procedures and individual plans on an ongoing basis to support clarity, learning, development and ongoing compliance.
- Progressive discipline may be used to address observed non-compliance with policies, procedures and individualized plans, taking into consideration the nature and severity of the incident, and the individual's history of previous non-compliance.

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Where a staff, student or volunteer is observed to be non-compliant, the licensee, supervisor or designate will take one or more of the following actions:

- Inform the individual that a non-compliance was observed, including the review of any pertinent records or documentation that provide evidence of the non-compliance;
- Re-review the relevant policies, procedures, and/or individualized plans with the individual;
- Issue a verbal warning;
- Issue a written warning;
- Temporarily, unpaid suspension for the individual from their position at the child care centre for a period of time, based on severity.
- Terminate the individual from their position;
- Inform any relevant parties (e.g. College of Early Childhood Educators, College of Teachers, College of Social Work and Social Services, the contact person for the program from which a student has been placed, CAS, police, etc.); and/or Report violations with the College of Early Childhood Educators' Code of Ethics to the College.

Where an observed non-compliance meets the criteria for a reportable serious occurrence (e.g. an allegation of abuse or neglect), the serious occurrence policy and procedures will be followed.

Where appropriate, the supervisor or designate will follow up with the family of a child in accordance with our policies and procedures on parent issues and concerns.

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Fire and Emergency Procedures

Fire Safety Policy:

All staff members/volunteers at MECC will hold a valid First Aid/CPR Level C prior to working in any program, this includes all volunteers, non-program staff and occasional staff members. All staff members will be required to participate in monthly, internal fire drills and quarterly system fire drills. The following procedures have been put in place at MECC to ensure the protection of all staff, visitors and children on site. All staff members/volunteers will uphold the prevention measures in their daily practice and will report any signs of distress or potential danger. All staff members/volunteers will be trained in person about the fire evacuation plan and where/what to do in the event of a fire. All staff members/volunteers are required to read this policy fully and review it yearly. Emergency evacuation diagrams are posted at both exits and in each room by the entrance. Fire drills will be held monthly and will be conducted by the Supervisor/Designate using a metal school bell. Quarterly, the Supervisor/Designate will use the internal alarm system for a full-scale fire drill. The Supervisor/Designate must inform the Guelph Fire Department and Alarm Company before conducting their drill using the system.

Procedures for Fire Prevention

1. Fire extinguishers are located throughout the childcare centre in the event of a fire.
2. All drapes, curtains and decorative materials in all exit and lobby areas are flame-retardant.
3. All hazardous substances are inaccessible to children and are clearly labeled in original containers with their respective labels.
4. No accumulation of combustible waste materials.
5. No flammable items are located in or near the kitchen stove areas.
6. No external heat sources are used within any classroom or accessible to children.
7. There will be no combustible creative materials within the centre, but should any item be purchased in the future, creative materials that are combustible will be stored in sealed metal containers or those approved by the underwriter's laboratories of Canada.
8. All waste containers are made of non-combustible materials with a fitted lid, with minimal plastic use.
9. All wood toys, cubbies, and furniture are all sealed with a fire-resistant stain.
10. All classroom artwork will be displayed on 1 wall only and will be hung using mini clothespins and a string line. Artwork will NOT be taped, glued or tacked to the walls. All artwork is taken down weekly and sent home to avoid clutter on the 1 art wall.
11. All hanging decor items used within the classrooms will be sprayed with Fire-Proof Clear Coat. This will be re-applied as directed by the product and the Local Guelph Fire Chief. The string the artwork wall has will also be sprayed with Fire-Proof and all clothespins used.

Procedures to Prepare for a Fire Evacuation

1. Mother Earth Childcare Centre will use a metal school bell for fire drills, but quarterly the integrated alarm/security system will be used which will sound throughout the building and will have flashing lights. The school bell drill will just be the Supervisor/Designate shaking the bell and saying "Fire Drill, Time for a Fire Drill" repeated while walking through the building starting at the back and working towards the front of the building, evacuating with the group. In the event of a real fire, the alarm system in the building will sound and will alert the local Guelph fire department. The alarm sounds loudly throughout the building and lights will flash from the smoke alarms.

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2. In the event of a fire, MECC will have an outdoor meeting location of the parking lot area located on the far side of the playground. (outside the playground, an easy area to keep the group away from the building and traffic flow safely). If the evacuation requires us to be indoors, the centre will be evacuated to 192 Nicklin Road "Impact Dance Studio". The group would enter 192 Nicklin and would remain within their lobby/studio areas until all children can be accounted for, inspected for harm, and released to a parent/emergency contact. The agreement of the indoor location will be re-confirmed at the end of each calendar year. Our secondary indoor location is 188 Nicklin Road "Ontario Plowmen's Association. In the event of a fire and we are unsuccessful in entering location 1 (Impact Dance Studio) our secondary location will be used. Upon entry the group would remain in the large meeting room until all children can be accounted for, inspected for harm, and released to a parent/emergency contact. The agreement of the indoor location will be re-confirmed at the end of each calendar year. Parents/Guardians will be informed by the Supervisor/Designate via email and phone of the situation and where the group is located for immediate pickup.
3. Each classroom will have a daily emergency bag that has all of the below items. The office will have a bag that has more items for an emergency. These bags will be checked by the Supervisor/Designate every month and replenished as needed and recorded on the "Emergency Bag Checklist".
4. **In the event of a fire or drill, staff must collect all children promptly, do a headcount, get all medication, the attendance and emergency bag. Closing the door on the way out.**

These include the following;

- ❖ Binder of all child and staff emergency cards
- ❖ classroom cellphone
- ❖ emergency numbers list
- ❖ any medication from the medication lock box
- ❖ any epi-pens/emergency medication
- ❖ kleenex
- ❖ first aid kit
- ❖ gloves
- ❖ diapers/pull-up
- ❖ wipes
- ❖ garbage bags
- ❖ folding potty
- ❖ hand sanitizer
- ❖ pens,pencils, notebook
- ❖ tent tarp (used as a shelter from rain or as a picnic blanket for snacks/rests)

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The office emergency bag would be larger and include the following;

- ❖ Binder of all child and staff emergency cards
- ❖ emergency numbers list
- ❖ phone
- ❖ any medication from the kitchen or left in classrooms
- ❖ kleenex
- ❖ first aid kit
- ❖ gloves
- ❖ diapers/pull-up
- ❖ wipes
- ❖ garbage bags
- ❖ folding potty
- ❖ hand sanitizer
- ❖ pens,pencils, notebook
- ❖ water bottles
- ❖ granola bars, crackers, snacking items that are non-perishables.
- ❖ Blankets
- ❖ Batteries and lanterns
- ❖ Books, puppets, coloring
- ❖ formula for infants
- ❖ keys to centre

5. During fire drills and real fires, staff must do a headcount before leaving the classroom and at all meeting points. Children should never be left unattended and should be reassured by their teacher during the transitions and gathering points to avoid panic and outbursts. The emergency bags have items to engage the children and keep them calm and busy during the event.
6. In the event of a real fire, the Supervisor/Designate will inform their Program Advisor and will file a serious occurrence in accordance with our policy. The fire event will also be subject to MECCs Emergency management policy. All policies and procedures are included in our Monitoring compliance and contravention policy.

Conducting a Fire Drill

1. If the school bell, grab the bell, go to the back kitchen, begin shaking the bell loudly while walking slowly towards the front exit. Shake the bell loudly and repeat in a loud, clear voice “Fire Drill, Fire Drill, Time for a Fire Drill”. Once at the front reception, continue to shake the bell and repeat the phrase until all classrooms and the cook have fully evacuated. Follow the groups over to the meeting place outdoors, have teachers take attendance, if all children and staff are accounted for stop the timer. The groups can now return to the building and record their group size and the time and date of the fire drill in their log books. The Supervisor/Designate will also record the time it took to evacuate in the “Emergency Procedures” binder.

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2. If the drill is a quarterly drill. The Supervisor/Designate will call and inform the security company and the local Guelph fire department to inform them both that a drill will be conducted. Once confirmed with both, the drill can proceed. If one or both have NOT been contacted, the drill must be postponed. Once the system has been activated to trigger the fire drill will proceed. Once all have been evacuated and attendance is confirmed, stop the timer and turn off the fire alarm. The groups can now return to the building and record their group size and the time and date of the fire drill in their log books. The Supervisor/Designate will also record the time it took to evacuate in the "Emergency Procedures" binder. All Supervisors and Designates will be trained on how to turn on and turn off the alarm system in order to conduct drills. Every month after the fire drill, the Supervisor/Designate will also inspect and complete the checklist for the fire equipment monthly inspection.

Staff roles during a Fire drill or real fire.

1. Hear the alarm, begin gathering the group quickly.
2. Get or tell a co-teacher to get the emergency backpack, attendance and any medication within the room or lockbox.
3. Put shoes/boots on the children grab coats instead of putting them on. (for infants, grab their snowsuit/coat and carry them in their arms). Lead all children out of the room, turn off lights and close the door behind you.
4. Lead the children out of the building and outside to the left of the playground to our back grass meeting area. Once here, take attendance again and physical headcount. If all children are accounted for, calm the group and keep supervision over the group until further instructions come from the Supervisor/designate or the local Fire department.
5. If any children, staff, volunteers, students or visitors are in need of assistance evacuating the building or premise, the Cook would assist these individuals. An individualized plan will be made for any children or staff requiring regular assistance or accommodations and would outline their needs and what to do in the event of emergencies. These plans would be reviewed by all staff and volunteers/students prior to engaging in the centre. These plans will also be reviewed by all every year.
6. When able to re-enter, bring all items from outside and do a headcount once in the classroom.
7. Log the details of the fire drill or real fire in your daily log book (date, time, duration, cause, number of staff by room and number of children by room, any other important details)
8. Resume regular operations if given the all clear to return to regular care. If a pickup order is issued where we can not reenter the building that day due to dangers, teachers will begin calling their classroom`s families for immediate pickup. The Supervisor/Designate would be responsible for informing families of the details of the event, giving resources as needed, supporting the families, staff and children after the event and in the after-effects of the event.

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Procedures to Follow During a Fire Evacuation:

In the event of a FIRE

1. Inform the Supervisor/Designate
2. Tell the co-teacher to get; emergency bag, medication and then help you get the group to the meeting spot.
3. Gather children, get attendance, headcount, lights off, close the door and leave the room.
4. Put shoes/boots on the children grab coats instead of putting them on. (for infants, grab their snowsuit/coat and carry them in their arms).
5. Lead the children out of the building and outside to the left of the playground to our back grass meeting area. Once here, take attendance again and physical headcount. If all children are accounted for, calm the group and keep supervision over the group until further instructions come from the Supervisor/designate or the local Fire department.
6. If any children, staff, volunteers, students or visitors are in need of assistance evacuating the building or premise, the Cook would assist these individuals. An individualized plan will be made for any children or staff requiring regular assistance or accommodations and would outline their needs and what to do in the event of emergencies. These plans would be reviewed by all staff and volunteers/students prior to engaging in the centre. These plans will also be reviewed by all every year.
7. When able to re-enter, bring all items from outside and do a headcount once in the classroom.
8. Log the details of the fire drill or real fire in your daily log book (date, time, duration, cause, number of staff by room and number of children by room, any other important details)
9. Resume regular operations if given the all clear to return to regular care. If a pickup order is issued where we can not reenter the building that day due to dangers, teachers will begin calling their classroom`s families for immediate pickup. The Supervisor/Designate would be responsible for informing families of the details of the event, giving resources as needed, supporting the families, staff and children after the event and in the after-effects of the event.

During an event of real fire, the Supervisor/Designate is responsible for;

- Assisting anyone in immediate danger.
 - Inform all personnel of the situation and to begin their duty of evacuating the children safely.
 - Trying to isolate any burning area by closing the door. Use a fire extinguisher/blanket if needed.
 - Turning off stoves or other similar electrical appliances.
 - Sounding the alarm.
 - Retrieving the emergency bag and binder from the office
 - Searching the premises including washroom areas, closets and other hiding places.
 - Closing all doors and ensuring that the building is locked after everyone has vacated.
 - Administering first aid, where required.
 - Contacting emergency services (e.g., local fire department);
 - Remaining at the designated place of shelter until parents are notified of the evacuation and have arrived to pick up their children.
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Emergency and Daily Communication

At Mother Earth Childcare Centre we use cellphones for daily communication. Classroom emails will be activated by March.2024, the list below outlines each of communication lines used.

Current Email: motherearthchildcarecentre@gmail.com

As of Jan.1.2025

Main Office 519-780-1900

General Inquires;

Seandel.Admin@mecc.com

Brandon.Admin@mecc.com

Waitlist@mecc.com

resumes@mecc.com

Infant CellPhone 226-820-5459

Seeds.Infants@mecc.com

Toddler CellPhone 226-332-6838

Sprouts.Toddlers@mecc.com

Preschool CellPhone 226-332-8323

Saplings.Preschool@mecc.com

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Technology-Free Policy

MECC is a technology free program, we do not use any tablets or online programs. All our programming and documentation are displayed within the classroom for parents/guardians to use. Each classroom is equipped with a cellphone to communicate with families and other classrooms. These phones are monitored by the Supervisor and used only for MECC programs. The cellphones are used for taking photos to complete daily, weekly and monthly learning stories, classroom documentation and newsletters. We do not allow any personal cellphone devices within the programs, any messages for staff members will be relayed by the Supervisor.

MECC also has a zero-tolerance for any electronic toys/stuffies/tablets within the program AND arriving with children. All home toys and electronic (even battery powered or talking stuffies) need to be left at home.

Scent-Free Policy

Mother Earth Childcare Centre is a Scent-Free environment and is in effect at all times. The scent-free policy applies to all staff members, children in care and adults dropping off/picking up children. We ask that families do not send in scented items or arrive with an excess amount of cologne or perfume on.

All staff are prohibited from wearing any form of perfumes while on-site, this includes over scented hand sanitizers and hand lotions.

This is due to the staff and children on-site with sensory sensitivities and scent allergies.

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Withdrawal and Dismissal Notice

Occasionally, a child may experience some difficulty in adapting to a childcare environment or abiding by the childcare guidelines and routines. A team meeting will be scheduled if your child should experience some difficulty and we will work with the family, child, teachers and available support to create a plan to support the child and family. We will work closely with the family and child to see if the hurdles can be resolved with changes and support systems. If the child's behavior continues to be disruptive to the group or cause physical/emotional hardship to others, MECC reserves the right to ask you to withdraw your child from our care and issue a withdrawal/termination notice. This notice gives the family 2 weeks to find an alternative care option for their child. The supervisor will also assist families in relocating to a new form of care that better supports the child.

If a family is choosing to withdraw their child for reasons of their own choosing, they must give a two weeks written notice when voluntarily withdrawing their child. The family takes full responsibility for all final payments through the end of the notice period, whether in attendance or not.

If any of the MECC policies are NOT followed by families, we reserve the right to terminate the daycare agreement WITHOUT refund.

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The child care arrangements will be terminated immediately for any of the following reasons (but not limited to):

- * Failure to comply with the policies set forth in the parent handbook.
 - * Failure to comply with enrollment guidelines and paperwork
 - * Destructive or hurtful behavior persists even with parent cooperation in stopping the behavior.
 - * Non-payment of childcare or late fees and/or recurring late payment of fees.
 - * Repeated failure to pick up the child at scheduled times.
 - * Failure to show up for 5 consecutive days without any communication.
 - * Inability to meet the child's needs without additional staff.
 - * Blatant disrespect towards ANY member of staff, volunteers, other families, etc.
 - * If a parent knowingly brings their child ill to care on more than one occasion.
 - * Consistent child-rearing style differences between the parent and provider.
 - * False information given by a parent either verbally or in writing.
-

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Placement Students and Volunteer Supervision

Mother Earth Childcare Centre welcomes both placement students and volunteers into the various programs offered in our childcare program. We believe it is a valuable part in gaining experience in a childcare environment. Volunteers and students also play an important role in supporting staff in the daily operation of childcare programs. At Mother Earth Childcare Centre, we encourage our volunteers and students to partake in professional development and community initiatives to build connections within the field. This policy will provide supervising staff, students, and volunteers with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, and is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for policies and procedures regarding volunteers and students for childcare centres.

Students and volunteers will always be supervised by an employee and never permitted to be alone with any child or group of children who receive childcare. Students and volunteers will not be counted in staff to child ratios while in their placement. Students and volunteers may be contracted as a staff member after showing promise within their placement or volunteer hours. When working in the program as a staff member the individual will be counted in ratio. Student and Volunteer Supervision Procedures: Roles and Responsibilities

The Supervisor must:

Ensure that all applicable policies, procedures and individual plans are reviewed with students and/or volunteers before they start their educational placement or begin volunteering, annually thereafter and when changes occur to the policies, procedures and individualized plans to support appropriate implementation.

Ensure that all students and/or volunteers have been trained on each child's individualized plan and any anaphylactic children. Ensure that a vulnerable sector check (VSC) and annual offence declarations are on file for all students and/or volunteers in accordance with the childcare centre's criminal reference check policy and procedures and Ontario Regulation 137/15. Ensure that expectations are reviewed with students and/or volunteers including, but not limited to how to report their absence how to report concerns about the program timeline and due dates for implementing projects and assignments timeline and requirements student-teacher interviews and evaluations expectations within the program and their role professional development opportunities and resources Inform students and/or volunteers that they are never to be included in staff to child ratios or left alone with children. This includes staff leaving to "grab items" or "use the restroom". Appoint supervising staff to the students and/or volunteers and inform them of their supervisory responsibilities. This is voluntary for the classroom teachers within our programs. Once the student has completed their time with MECC, the supervising teacher will receive a "Certificate of Completion in Mentorship" from MECC for their CPL portfolio. (CPL- Continuous Professional Learning) Inform students and/or volunteers of their duty to report suspected child abuse or neglect under the Child and Family Services Act.

The supervising staff must:

Complete a first day orientation, tour, walk over of their role and expectations Ensure that students/volunteers are never included in staff to child ratios. Ensure that students/volunteers are always supervised and never left alone with children. Introduce students and/or volunteers to parents/guardians. Provide an environment that facilitates and supports students' and/or volunteers' learning and professional development.

Provide students and/or volunteers with clear expectations of the program in accordance with the established program statement and program statement implementation policy. Provide students and/or volunteers with

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constructive feedback on their performance and interactions. Work collaboratively with the student's practicum supervising teacher. Monitor and notify the centre supervisor/director of any student and or volunteer misconduct or contraventions with the centre's policies, procedures, prohibited practices or individual plans (where applicable) in accordance with the childcare centre's written process for monitoring compliance and contraventions. Make the student/volunteer feel welcome and part of the team. Allow them to share in team meetings, planning, collaboration, and opportunity to take the lead.

Students and/or volunteers must:

Always maintain professionalism and confidentiality, unless otherwise required to implement a policy, procedure, or individualized plan. Notify the supervisor or designate if they have been left alone with children or have any other concerns about the childcare program (e.g. regarding staff conduct, program statement implementation, the safety and well-being of children, etc.). Submit all required information and documentation to the licensee, supervisor or designate prior to commencing placement or volunteering, such as a valid VSC. Review and implement all required policies, procedures and individualized plans, and sign and date a record of review, where required. Review allergy lists and dietary restrictions and ensure they are implemented. Respond and act on the feedback and recommendations of supervising staff, as appropriate. Uphold to the same standards of practice and code of ethics as all MECC educators. Participate in Professional development that relates directly to your role within the program.

The opportunity to attend free, optional PD at MECC with other staff/community members. Report any allegations/concerns as per the "Duty to Report" under the Child and Family Services Act

Complete offence declarations annually, no later than 15 days after the anniversary date of the last VSC or offence declaration (whichever is most recent) in accordance with the childcare centre's criminal reference check policy. Provide an offence declaration to the supervisor/designate as soon as possible any time they have been convicted of a Criminal Code (Canada) offence.

Possibility of employment:

Students and volunteers who show great promise within their roles may be contacted for an employment interview or may be offered a position directly. Upon completing an employment interview, the individual will be offered a position and contract. After contract review and negotiations, all needed documents have been submitted, the individual will have the choice to join the team! We have both paid and volunteered opportunities. We also offer opportunities in running community courses; yoga, craft workshops, parent-child classes, garden workshops, meditation, music classes, etc.

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Documentation Policy

At Mother Earth Childcare Centre (MECC) we use learning stories as our form of documentation. Each teacher in our programs is responsible for taking photos using the classroom cellphone (no data or wi-fi are on these phones and all are monitored by the owner; Seandel Brown). These photos will be of the children and teachers engaged within their work, play and as a group. When taking these photos the goal for the teacher is to capture the beginning, middle and end of the learning process. This ensures a more comprehensible learning experience for parents and children to interpret. The learning story photos are accompanied by a short written paragraph that outlines what learning is taking place, how it is developmentally benefiting the child, how we will scaffold this learning and how these learning objectives relate to the foundations of HDLH and our philosophy/program statement.

Each classroom will be responsible for completing 1 learning story per child per week and 1 group learning stories per week. It is the responsibility of ALL teachers to complete the required learning stories with all required components and for all children in the class.

The learning stories are completed on the classroom phone using an app called InCollage or Canva. These apps allow us to capture photos in real-time and create a collage of photos and write in the description in one place. The learning stories are printed weekly by the supervisor. The supervisor will collect the classroom phones on each Friday evening at 4pm and will print all completed learning stories. These printed stories will be left in the mailbox of each classroom. It is the responsibility of all classroom teachers to ensure that ALL learning stories are completed by 4pm EVERY Friday and that all printed learning stories are posted in the classroom for a full week before being removed and added to their documentation binder, where learning stories are stored.

Any parent/guardian that does not wish for their child to have their photo taken will be required to fill out a "No Picture/Video Documentation Form". The child's learning stories will just include the write up component, any group photos the child is caught in will have their face replaced by a MECC logo to ensure their identity remains protected.

Learning stories are NOT shared digitally through email or other sources, they are only printed and posted within the centre and are only seen by families within care. We do not use these learning stories in any form of advertising or photo sharing.

Each month there will also be a Newsletter sent out for the centre with the following;

- ❖ Brief description from each classroom for the upcoming month
- ❖ Important dates coming up (holidays/closures/etc.)
- ❖ Event days and community events
- ❖ Relevant article for parents/guardians
- ❖ Seasonal songs for children
- ❖ Seasonal craft or family activity
- ❖ Seasonal recipe
- ❖ 1 Holistic teaching that is relevant to time of year or group dynamics

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If the childcare group is out in the community, only the children in the childcare group will be featured in documentation. Teachers/Volunteers/Visitors will never include children NOT in our care.

The classroom cellphones will also be the means of communication between parents and teachers. Each classroom phone will be pre-loaded with the numbers and names of all enrolled families. This is to ensure that all teachers have access to emergency contacts quickly. The classroom cellphones will also be used to communicate with other classrooms; infant, toddler, preschool, supervisor and cook. This is as a means of quick and on-going communication about centre daily operations. Each classroom will still have a daily log book, which will be used to document any daily messages, notes, important dates, future absences/vacation days. Daily log books will be a small paper notebook used 1 per year for each classroom to document. Each teacher is responsible for both writing notes as they come in and reading their classroom log book when starting their shift, returning from break and before leaving at the end of their shift.

If at any time a group decides to go off-site to a nearby park, nature trail or for a walk, the group leaving will take the phone. The group that stays from the classroom will not keep the phone, as they will be on site and can access the supervisor or cook by window or by ringing the doorbell near the back of the preschool playground.

At NO time shall ANY phone be taken home by a staff member. ALL phones MUST be left in their classroom mailboxes each evening for charging and will be taken back to the classroom in the morning by the opening teacher from each classroom. The supervisor will ensure all classroom phones are on their charger each evening and are ready for the next day. All classrooms will have a charger within their classroom to charge as needed, should they not be charged overnight.

The supervisor/owner will review this policy at a minimum of yearly for updates in pedagogical documentation and philosophy based documentation.

Mother Earth Childcare Centre

Parent Handbook

Parent/guardian Issues and Concerns Policy

At Mother Earth, we strive to provide a transparent process for parents/guardians and childcare staff to use when parents/guardians bring forward issues/concerns. This policy outlines the process of bringing issues/concerns forward and the process MECC administration and staff will follow to resolve issues and address concerns.

Policy

Mother Earth Childcare Centre values the participation and activism of our families within the centre and our community initiatives. Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our childcare centre and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing with our program. We encourage families to share ideas, suggestions, community impact projects, social events, workshop subjects and more. We support positive, responsive interactions with engagement and ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children.

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by The Director/Supervisor and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties and as quickly as possible.

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

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

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

Confidentiality

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially, and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff, students and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society).

Conduct

Our centre maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication, and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated from any party.

If at any point a parent/guardian, provider or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused, or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the supervisor and/or licensee.

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Parent Handbook

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>

Escalation of Issues or Concerns: Where parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may escalate the issue or concern verbally or in writing to The Director and Ministry of Education.

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:

Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care Help Desk:

1-877-510-5333 or childcare_ontario@ontario.ca

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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 or - the supervisor or licensee.	- Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised or - arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within 5 business days. The supervisor will be available for after hours or weekend meetings during these times. Document the issues/concerns in detail. Documentation should include: - the date and time the issue/concern was received. - the name of the person who received the issue/concern; - the name of the person reporting the issue/concern; - the details of the issue/concern; and - any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.
General, Centre- or Operations-Related E.g: child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.	Raise the issue or concern to - the supervisor or licensee.	Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.
Staff-, Duty parent-, Supervisor-, and/or Licensee-Related	Raise the issue or concern to - the individual directly or - the supervisor or licensee. All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, duty parents, etc. that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.	Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within 5 business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing.
Student- / Volunteer-Related	Raise the issue or concern to - the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student or - the supervisor and/or licensee. - All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.	Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern. And continue to update them as needed.

Mother Earth Childcare Centre

Parent Handbook

Confidentiality

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially, and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff, students and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society).

Conduct

Our centre maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication, and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated by any party. If at any point a parent/guardian, provider or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused, or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the supervisor and/or licensee.

Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a Child

Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, is required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) directly. Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to CAS as per the "Duty to Report" requirement under the Child and Family Services Act.

For more information, visit

<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaidthereportingabuse/index.aspx>

Escalation of Issues or Concerns: Where parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may escalate the issue or concern verbally or in writing to The Director and Ministry of Education. 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.

Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care Help Desk:

1-877-510-5333 or childcare_ontario@ontario.ca

Issues/Concerns may also be reported to other relevant regulatory bodies (e.g. local public health department, police department, ministry of Environment, Ministry of Labor, Ontario college of teachers, college of early childhood educators, etc).

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Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

The Privacy and Confidentiality Policy safeguards the personal information of each child, family, staff member and other organizations and/or individuals involved in the Centre. Personal information is defined as any information; written or spoken, that is about an identifiable individual, centre, daily operations or situation. This policy governs the use, disclosure and storage of personal information, adhering to the requirements of the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA). When information is received by the Supervisor/Director of the Centre, they alone will determine who should be privy to the information and inform within required channels.

Owner/Director/Supervisor:

- Guide and monitor that information is being shared appropriately.
- Ensure that any confidential information received in the course of work or association of the Centre is maintained confidential and is not communicated to any 3rd person, unless allowed by Centre policies and procedures or approved by the Privacy Officer.
- Review Privacy and Confidentiality Policy (statement) annually.
- Act within Scope of Authority.
- Provide training to all staff on Privacy and Confidentiality Policy.
- Ensure compliance with Privacy and Confidentiality Policy by all staff.
- Delegates designate based on Chain of Authority to act as Privacy Officer when off site
- Notify clients of initial enrollment of how their information will be shared.
- Always maintain staff and children's files in a secure manner.
- Ensure Confidentiality Agreement completed annually for all employees, volunteers and students.

Finance and Maintenance Manager:

- Receive information and pass to appropriate people, those directly involved.
- Speak to Director regarding the sharing of confidential information. See Sharing of Information in the Privacy and Confidentiality Procedures and Practices.
- Provide personal information for the purpose of individual files.
- Collect information for the purpose of updating children's files.
- Return any written confidential information upon termination of their employment.

RECE/Equivalent Teachers:

- Receive information and pass to appropriate people, those directly involved.
- Speak to Director regarding the sharing of confidential information. See Sharing of Information in the Privacy and Confidentiality Procedures and Practices.
- Provide personal information for the purpose of individual files.
- Collect information for the purpose of updating children's files.
- Return any written confidential information upon termination of their employment.

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Parent Handbook

Non-RECE Teachers:

- Receive information and pass to appropriate people, those directly involved.
- Speak to Director regarding the sharing of confidential information. See Sharing of Information in the Privacy and Confidentiality Procedures and Practices.
- Provide personal information for the purpose of individual files.
- Collect information for the purpose of updating children's files.
- Return any written confidential information upon termination of their employment.

Centre Cook:

- Receive information and pass to appropriate people, those directly involved.
- Speak to Director regarding the sharing of confidential information. See Sharing of Information in the Privacy and Confidentiality Procedures and Practices.
- Provide personal information for the purpose of individual files.
- Collect information for the purpose of updating children's files.
- Return any written confidential information upon termination of their employment.

Confidentiality is maintained for all knowledge and information as described in the Confidentiality Agreement. To ensure confidentiality, all employees are required to review, confirm, and sign the Confidentiality Policy as an employee of Mother Earth Childcare Centre, I may be provided with confidential information regarding the children in my care. As an employee with need-to-know access to child care information, I may have privileges to access confidential information about children and their families receiving services at Mother Earth Childcare Centre. Confidential Information may include, but is not limited to: banking phone number, address, occupation, email, date of birth, religion, marital status, emergency information, subsidy information, gender, ethnicity, citizenship, citizen visa code, veteran and payment information. All MECC Employees must review, confirm, and sign the Confidentiality Agreement prior to starting employment.

All Employees must agree:

- To respect the confidentiality rights of every child who attends this child care facility.
 - Not to disclose confidential information without proper authorization from the Owner directly.
 - Not to access, report on, extract, or disclose information that relates in any way to Mother Earth Childcare Centre, it's operations, philosophy, programming, curriculum or other related operations/administration
 - Not to discuss or otherwise communicate any form of information concerning the care or condition of any child with unauthorized individuals. This includes child/families/staff/owner personal information, experiences at the centre, personal operations/achievements or lack of.
 - That confidentiality applies equally to verbal information and information stored in information systems (databases) and on paper records. Written or printed information will be stored in a secure place and/or disposed of with proper regard for Confidentiality, following all legal requirements related to the information in question.
 - Failure to abide by the child confidentiality requirements will resulting my immediate termination. Violations or suspected violations of the Confidentiality Agreement will be reported immediately. Reports from families, staff, or community members are handled according to the centre policies and procedures.
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Mother Earth Childcare Centre

Parent Handbook

**Our enrollment package and first day checklist
will be emailed to families once an open space has been offered.**

Contact Us

Owner/Supervisor

Seandel Brown

Site Designate

Alaina Grazziotto

Address

190 Nicklin Road

Hour of Operation

7:30am to 5:30pm

Main Office Phone Number

519-780-1900

Main Office Email

Seandel.Admin@mecc.com
