



Dandy Lion *Daycare*

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Table of Contents

Section 1 – Introduction

1.1	Welcome Note	5
1.2	Centre Information	5
1.3	Philosophy Statement	5
1.4	Guiding Principles	6
1.5	Board of Directors	7
1.6	Administration and Governance	7
1.7	Staffing	7
1.8	Hours of Operation and Holiday Closures	8

Section 2 – Admission and Withdrawal Processes

2.1	Wait List	8
2.2	Admission Procedures	9
2.3	Escorting Children to and from School	9
2.4	Withdrawal Procedures	10

Section 3 – Working with Families

3.1	Preparing for Childcare at Dandyllion Daycare Centre Family Involvement	10
3.2	Family Involvement	11
3.3	Volunteering at the Centre	12
3.4	Parent/Guardian Communication	13
3.5	Parent/Guardian Separation and Custody Agreements	13
3.6	Arrivals and Departures	14
3.7	Vacations and Absenteeism	14
3.8	Late Pick-Ups	14
3.9	Updated Child Records	15
3.10	Releasing Children (Other than to Parents/Guardians)	15
3.11	Releasing Children - Alone (Unescorted by an Adult)	15
3.12	Taxi Services	16

Section 4 – Program Information

4.1	Program Offerings	16
4.2	Curriculum	17
4.3	Trips and Outings	18
4.4	Rest Periods	19
4.5	External Resources (Program/Family Support)	19

Section 5 – Nutrition

5.1	Meal Planning	20
5.2	Allergies, Dietary Needs and Food Restrictions	21
5.3	Special Occasions	21

Section 6 – Financial Information

6.1	Enrolment Fees	21
6.2	Program Fees	21
6.3	Methods of Payment	22
6.4	Subsidized Childcare	22
6.5	Arrears	23
6.6	Non-Sufficient Funds (NSF) Payments	23
6.7	Refunds	23

Section 7 – Policies and Procedures

	Overview of Policies and Procedures	23
7.1	Access, Equity and Inclusion Policy	24
7.2	Accessibility for Ontarians with a Disability Act Policy	24
7.3	Anaphylactic Policy	24
7.4	Anti-Racism Policy	25
7.5	Behaviour Management Policy	25
7.6	Child Abuse Policy	27
7.7	Cleaning and Sanitary Practices Policy	27
7.8	Code of Conduct Policy	27
7.9	Conflict of Interest Policy	28
7.10	Criminal Reference Policy	28
7.11	De-escalation Policy	28
7.12	Death, Trauma and Bereavement Policy	29
7.13	Enrolment Policy	29
7.14	Emergency Management Policy	29
7.15	Financial Management Policy	30
7.16	Fire Safety Policy	30
7.17	Flushing for Lead Policy	31
7.18	Health and Wellness Policy	31
7.19	Lockout/Tagout Policy	32
7.20	Medication Policy	32
7.21	No Smoking Policy	33
7.22	Pandemic Influenza Policy	33
7.23	Parent Issues & Concerns Policy	33
7.24	Playground Safety and Outdoor Programming Policy	36
7.25	Privacy Policy	37
7.26	Program Statement	38
7.27	Serious Occurrence Policy	44

7.28	Sleep Safety Policy	44
7.29	Sun Safety and Smog Alert Policy	44
7.30	Supervision of Students and Volunteers Policy	45
7.31	Suspension and Withdrawal Policy	45
7.32	Wait List Policy	46
7.33	Whistleblower Policy	46
7.34	Workplace Anti-Harassment Policy	46
7.35	Workplace Anti-Violence Policy	47
7.36	Workplace Occupational Health & Safety Policy	47
7.37	Emergency Closures	47
7.38	Notice of Temporary Disruption of Service	48
7.39	School Exclusions, Expulsions and Suspensions	48
7.40	Prohibited Practices	48

Section 8 – Agreement Form

Parent/Guardian Agreement Form	50
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Section 1 – Introduction

1.1 Welcome Note

On behalf of the Management, employees and Board of Directors we welcome you and your family to Dandylion Daycare Centre!

This handbook has been developed to provide families with information regarding Dandylion Daycare Centre (“the Centre”) and to serve as a manual of reference. Contained within are the Centre’s policies and procedures as well as rights and responsibilities of parents/guardians and their children as members of the Centre.

Every year, the Board of Directors reviews the handbook and reissues as required. Each new version of the *Family Handbook* supersedes all previous versions. Parents/guardians are asked to acknowledge that they have read, understand and agree to be governed by the policies and procedures contained herein by signing the attached *Parent/Guardian Agreement* form for each child enrolled.

1.2 Centre Information

Dandylion Daycare Centre is a non-profit corporation and is the onsite childcare centre of Wilkinson Junior Public School. The Centre has proudly served its community since opening its doors in 1982 and operates in the Annex building of the school (located east of the main school building).

Childcare services are currently offered within 8 programs to children aged 2.5 – 12. The Annex building has 5 programs (99 spaces) for children and 2 programs (35 spaces) located in the main school building. (See 4.1 Program Offerings for specific program details).

1.3 Philosophy Statement

The aim of Dandylion Daycare Centre is to provide a stimulating environment that enables the child to develop emotionally, socially, intellectually, creatively and physically.

Children are given the opportunity to work on self-chosen tasks in an attractive environment, especially designed and equipped to meet their needs. This environment, along with daily routines, will help the children build a sense of independence, responsibility and self-worth.

Respect, caring and nurturing are an integral part of all programs and it is hoped that all children will learn to give, share and receive these qualities. The children are encouraged to verbalize their aggressive feelings rather than resort to physical action.

Each child is a unique person whose individuality will be respected and encouraged. This individuality and equity is fostered through the Centre’s environment, which is non-sexist, non-violent, anti-racist, anti-bias, and inclusive of all families. Various role models are made available to the children through literature, creative play, songs and outings.

Dandyllion provides an environment where learning is an enjoyable and rewarding experience and a place where the children are encouraged to develop and grow at their own individual pace.

1.4 Guiding Principles

The goal of Dandyllion Daycare Centre is to provide a healthy, safe and stimulating environment, which enables every child to develop emotionally, socially, intellectually, creatively, and physically. The Centre's guiding principles are embedded within its policies and programs and ultimately, the Centre believes:

- Every child is unique whose individuality will be respected and encouraged
- Every child and their family have the right to privacy and dignity
- All children bring value to the Centre's programs
- Children are supported best through collaboration
- Children learn best when they are able to participate with others who have different goals and abilities
- Parents/guardians are integral to a successful inclusion process
- Strong working relationships between the Centre and families assist in the growth of children's developmental needs
- In working with community partners to support children and their families
- Program delivery is reflective of changing and varying needs of children and their families
- Programs are delivered by Centre employees that demonstrate flexibility in their approach
- In supporting ongoing professional development of Centre employees

The Centre's emergent curriculum programming and process-driven approach to learning will allow children to be engaged and responsive in the learning process, as it has personal meaning and appeals to each child.

Employees will encourage and always aid in the development of a positive concept of self, family and community. In that context, employees of the Centre recognize the diverse ethnic origins of the children. The programs offer a stimulating mix of open-ended challenges, experiences for language enrichment and understanding as well as leisure activities and situations that promote knowledge and understanding of the use and care of the child's environment.

Respect, caring and nurturing are an integral part of all of the Centre's programs, and it is hoped that all children will learn to give, share and receive these qualities. The children are encouraged to verbalize their aggressive feelings rather than resort to physical action.

Parents/Guardians of children enrolled at the Centre are expected to uphold the Centre's *Guiding Principles* of respect, caring, nurturing and equality while on Centre property, during Centre-hosted events and on all Centre outings and to behave in a manner that supports an environment free of discrimination, violence, and harassment. Behaviour that contravenes the Centre's *Guiding Principles* and/or other applicable policies will be addressed with the parent/guardian and may be cause for withdrawal of childcare services and/or termination of membership.

1.5 Board of Directors

The Centre is run by a volunteer Board of Directors comprised of the parents/guardians of enrolled children at the Centre. Election of the Board of Directors occurs at a general meeting of the membership, in accordance with the Centre's bylaws. In total, nine seats comprise the Board of Directors. Four of the elected Directors will assume the roles of Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary, forming the Executive Committee and the remaining five seats are for Directors at Large. The Supervisor and Assistant Supervisor attend all Board Meetings as non-voting members.

The Board of Directors is responsible in overseeing the Centre's financial and legal welfare. Policy development is set by the Board of Directors and it is the responsibility of Management to ensure policies are adhered to by the Centre's employees, families, volunteers, students and visitors.

While the Board of Directors does not oversee the day-to-day operations and management of the Centre (except in its role to oversee the Supervisor), it is responsible for development of short-term and long-term goals to ensure continued and consistent operation of the Centre.

Ad-hoc committees are formed as required each term to manage specific projects, development of services and other Centre business. Standing committees such as the Finance Committee and Personnel Committee focus on setting annual operating budgets, setting programs fees, human resource policy development, etc.

Meetings are held monthly at the Centre and parents/guardians are always welcome to attend. Any matters or concerns that a parent/guardian has and would like to discuss at a Board Meeting should be brought to the attention of the Supervisor and Chair of the Board of Directors two weeks in advance of the meeting. Time will be allotted in the Board Meeting Agenda to allow the parent's/guardian's subject matter to be addressed.

1.6 Administration and Governance

As mentioned in section 1.5 – Board of Directors, the Supervisor is accountable for the day-to-day operations and overall management of the Centre. An integral part of governance requires the Supervisor to ensure the Centre follows and maintains standards stipulated by a variety of governing bodies. Regulatory compliance set by the federal, provincial and municipal governments requires the Centre to meet on-going criteria from the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour, Toronto Public Health and Children Services, City of Toronto and other governing bodies at all levels of government.

1.7 Staffing

Each of the Centre's programs employs a Registered Early Childhood Educator (RECE) and/or an Early Childhood Assistant (if required) in each program. All potential employees must undergo and provide a clear police reference check before final offer of employment is issued. The Supervisor is responsible to ensure staffing ratios are met as mandated by the *Child Care Early Years Act*. The staffing compliment of the Centre includes a Supervisor, Assistant Supervisor, Registered Early Childhood Educators, Early Childhood Assistants and a Cook.

Based on the current programs offered, employee to child ratios is maintained as follows:

- Preschool 1:8
- Kindergarten (Annex building) 1:12
- Full-Day Kindergarten (Main building) 1:13
- School Age (grades 1-3) (Annex building) 1:15
- School Age (grades 4-6) 1:15 & 1:20

The Centre requires all employees to complete 10 hours of professional development each year to stay current in early childhood trends, research, programming techniques, etc. Employees hired as a RECE are required to be a member of and in good standing with the *College of Early Childhood Educators (CECE)* as a condition of their employment.

Every employee of the Centre is also required to complete First Aid and Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) training and certification on an annual basis.

1.8 Hours of Operation and Holiday Closures

Dandylion Daycare Centre operates Monday to Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. daily on regular business days. The Centre closes on the following statutory holidays:

- New Year's Day January 1
- Family Day Third Monday in February
- Good Friday March or April
- Victoria Day Monday before the 25th of May
- Canada Day July 1
- Civic Holiday First Monday in August
- Labour Day First Monday in September
- Thanksgiving Day Second Monday in October
- Christmas Day December 25
- Boxing Day December 26

Please note the Centre closes at 4:00 p.m. on Christmas Eve each year. In the event the Centre closes on days other from the days listed above (except in the case of an emergency), the Board of Directors must approve the closure and the Supervisor will communicate to all families as early as possible.

Section 2 – Admissions and Withdrawals

2.1 Wait List

The Centre maintains an extensive wait list of children eligible for enrolment in any of the Centre's programs. Families are encouraged to place their child(ren) on the wait list as soon as possible and to ensure contact information is current and up to date. The demand for childcare exceeds availability at all times.

As the onsite childcare centre for Wilkinson Junior Public School, the Centre has worked diligently to support the school by enrolling children within the school catchment area as per the recommendations of the Toronto District School Board (TDSB). The Centre, however, does also accept children from outside the school's catchment area. As per the Centre's *Access, Equity and Inclusion Policy* and other applicable policies, childcare spaces will be offered to families whenever possible, regardless of home address, family composition, creed, sexual orientation, etc.

In an effort to assist families' needs to accommodate their children and whenever possible, priority is only given to families that have a child (ren) already enrolled at the Centre (i.e., siblings).

Families eligible to enrol their child (ren) will be notified by the Supervisor. In an effort to respect the time a family has waited for a spot and to be fair to those still awaiting, the eligible family will be given a timeframe in which to call the Centre and confirm or decline acceptance. If a call is not returned within this timeframe, the family will remain on the list and the next eligible family will be contacted.

While most enrollments occur in September, as this is the time when children transition into new school grades and new childcares. The Centre will enrol children at any time throughout the year should a spot become available.

2.2 Admission Procedures

Initial offers for a childcare spot are communicated to eligible families. Upon acceptance of the childcare spot at the Centre, the parents/guardians are asked to set up a time to meet with the Supervisor to receive a *Letter of Confirmation, Registration Package, Family Handbook* and other pertinent forms and documents.

Prior to admittance, the parents/guardians are expected to complete required forms accurately and in full. A deposit of 50% of the monthly program fee is required for each child within 30 days of the initial offer. (Families in receipt of subsidy from Children's Services are not required to provide a deposit). Incomplete forms may lead to loss of the childcare spot.

2.3 Escorting Children to and from School

Only Employees of the Centre escort children **to and from** Wilkinson Junior Public School.

Children attending kindergarten and enrolled with the JK/SK program within the Annex building (Earlybirds) are escorted to school, back to the Centre for lunch, and back to school after lunch. This group of kindergarten children will also be picked up at the end of the day and brought back to the Annex building.

Children enrolled in the before-and-after kindergarten programs within the school (Hummingbirds and Mockingbirds) will be escorted to their classrooms and/or kindergarten playground in the morning and back to the program after school.

Enrolled children in the school age programs (All Stars and Rock Stars) are escorted to school in the morning and picked up directly from school at 3:20 p.m. The All Stars meet program staff in a designated

spot in the main school building upon dismissal for lunch and after school and are then escorted to the Annex building. Children enrolled in the Centre's After-School-Age-Program (ASAP) meet the program's staff at the entrance of the Annex building daily after school. This group is not escorted, as the program does not offer a morning or a lunch program. Children enrolled in the Coolagers program go directly to the Coolagers program upon dismissal for lunch and after school.

If children attend a school other than Wilkinson Junior Public School, school bus transportation must be pre-arranged by the child's parents/guardians. Parents/guardians are required to arrange for pick-up and/or drop off of the child at the Centre. Due to specific ratios that the Centre must maintain (as mentioned in section 1.7 Staffing), Centre staff may not be available to pick children up from the main building entrance at Wilkinson Junior Public School.

2.4 Withdrawal Procedures

Should parents/guardians wish to permanently withdraw their child (ren) from the Centre, thirty (30) days' notice is required in writing (email is acceptable).

In lieu of the required thirty days' written notice, an appropriate portion of the initial deposit will be used to cover the cost of the program fees and the difference will be refunded or the family will be invoiced for the outstanding amount due.

Requests for temporary withdrawal cannot be accommodated. If a family withdraws their child (ren) and wishes to be placed on the waitlist, the waitlisted date will be the date the child was withdrawn, not the date used for initial enrolment into the Centre.

The Centre does not permit families to sublet their child's childcare spot at the Centre. In the event a family has extended time away from the Centre (e.g. extended vacation, etc.) timely payment of fees is still required.

Section 3 – Working with Families

3.1 Preparing for Childcare at Dandyllion Daycare Centre

Communication

Introducing childcare to a child of any age can be an exciting, anxious or difficult transition. Many children will experience an adjustment period that may last for a couple of weeks and in some cases longer. Parents/guardians may notice changes in their child during this time such as trouble eating or sleeping, increased separation anxiety, heightened sensitivity, etc.

Parents/guardians may also feel anxiety with this new transition. We strongly encourage all parents/guardians to speak with the staff during this time and to share their thoughts, tips and concerns with each other that will help the entire family with the adjustment period.

Centre Visits

Prior to enrolment, planned visits to the Centre with the children are highly recommended. Stopping by to join in on the program throughout the day, sitting with the group for lunch or even accompanying the child's new class on a field trip, are excellent ways to show the children some of the routines of the program. It will provide the child an opportunity to become familiar and more comfortable with the new environment, the children and his/her future program staff.

Daily Essentials

Just like adults, children need to have with them some essentials from home to help them throughout the day. For children of any age, it is strongly recommended that an extra set of seasonal items be left in the child's cubby or on his/her hook:

- Mittens, boots, indoor shoes, hat, scarf, snow pants for the winter
- Sun hat, labeled bottle of sunscreen, bathing suit, water bottle and towel for the summer months
- Socks, underwear, shirt, pants, shorts, (extra diapers and wipes for preschoolers) should be available throughout the year
- Appropriate footwear is highly recommended. Closed-toe sandals and running shoes are examples of footwear that are suitable for all indoor and outdoor activities.

Additional suggestions and tips for successful transition and preparation are available in each program's *Transitional Package*.

3.2 Family Involvement

The Centre strives to provide an environment that will develop children's social, emotional, cognitive, physical and intellectual skills to the fullest. This learning experience can be heightened for each child when his/her family is here to be a part of it. Volunteering time at the Centre with your child and his/her peers enriches the program, brings joy to the children's day and provides the family with fond memories. (See Classroom Guidelines below)

We encourage families to join the Centre's programs throughout the year. Sharing special skills in the programs such as cooking, yoga, playing an instrument, woodworking or even story telling are just a few of the many examples of how families can participate in their child's program. We ask families take the time to speak with the program employees to determine dates and times best suited to share special skills in the programs throughout the year.

Classroom Guidelines

- Always confirm with the Centre employee of your child's program when you are available to volunteer in the classroom
- If you would like to facilitate an arts and crafts session, dance lessons, gross motor activities, or any other type of program please speak to the Centre employees in advance to arrange for materials, equipment, schedules, etc.

- If you would like to arrange for a cooking session, please bring your ideas forth to the Centre employees in advance. The Centre must ensure the items that will be consumed and used are in accordance with the allergy/food and dietary restriction list of the Centre
- Volunteers will not be given unsupervised access to children
- Volunteers are not a part of the staffing ratio
- Only Centre employees will handle disciplinary action that may be required for a challenging situation with a child. Volunteers are asked to bring issues to the Centre employees directly so that the situation can be handled quickly and efficiently
- The Centre employees will monitor washroom routines and lunches while volunteers are expected to assist during these times as needed. If unsure, please seek direction from a Centre employee.

3.3 Volunteering at the Centre

Volunteering at the Centre can take on many forms. Parents/guardians are encouraged to become members of the Board of Directors through the election process held during the Centre's Annual General Meeting (AGM). Information regarding the AGM is communicated to the membership in advance including distribution of nomination forms for the annual election. (See section 1.5 - Board of Directors for more information on roles and responsibilities of the Board of Directors).

Alternatively, parents/guardians interested in volunteering in the programs, Centre-hosted events or field trips are encouraged to speak with the program employees and/or the Supervisor. Guidelines surrounding expectations are distributed as a reminder before such events and available upon request for review. Any participating parent/guardian that volunteers is expected to understand and abide by the Centre's *Volunteer Guidelines* as outlined below:

Volunteer Guidelines

Volunteers must sign up for a trip within the child's program. Employees of the Centre will determine in advance the number of volunteers needed per trip in each of the programs. Volunteer sign-up forms will be available in every program and will participation will be on a first-come, first-serve basis.

- Volunteers will not be given unsupervised access to children
- Volunteers are not a part of the staffing ratio
- As per the *Child Care and Early Years Act*, both students and volunteers are required to provide a clear criminal reference check
- Dress for comfort, the weather conditions, and trip activity requirements. Trips include visits to places such as farms, indoor studios, theatres, swimming pools, parks, etc.
- Volunteers must arrive at least 15 minutes before departure
- The Centre employees will assign volunteers to a specific group. A list of names will be provided to each volunteer before departure. During the trip, volunteers and their assigned groups must stay with the Centre employee of that designated group at all times.
- The Centre will provide a Centre logo T-shirt for each volunteer (this must be worn for the duration of the trip)
- Volunteers are responsible for admissions costs to all outings
- Volunteers are responsible for costs associated with use of the Toronto Transit Commission

- If a volunteer is attending an outing that requires joining the group on a chartered bus, the Centre will cover the cost of transportation for the volunteer
- It is recommended that volunteers bring their own meals for lunch and/or snack. The Centre can only provide meals for the children with respect to their dietary needs, allergies and/or other restrictions
- Only Centre employees will handle disciplinary action that may be required for a challenging situation with a child. Volunteers are asked to bring issues to the Centre employees directly so that the situation can be handled quickly and efficiently.
- The Centre employees will monitor washroom routines and lunches while volunteers are expected to assist during these times as needed. If unsure, please seek direction from a Centre employee.
- If a volunteer needs personal or individual time for a short period away from the children, they must inform the designated Centre employee of the group
- If the event you have been separated from your assigned group, please contact the Centre immediately at the main line 416.469.0091. The Supervisor will assist you in relocating your group.

3.4 Parent/Guardian Communication

Open and frequent communication with your child's program staff is essential in maintaining a solid partnership. Information is a valuable tool in addressing concerns from parents/guardians and the staff, identifying the needs of the child and ultimately benefiting the child's experience at the Centre.

Each program has a *Communication Book*. Parents/guardians are asked to use this book for the purpose of non-confidential notes such as the name of authorized individuals picking their child up that day, reminders for school, upcoming absences, etc. Parents/guardians can also call or email the Centre with information that can be relayed to the program.

On occasion staff may need to have private conversations with the child's parents/guardians and vice versa. Whenever possible and in an effort to maintain confidentiality, conversations must take place in an area that is not within earshot of other children and families. Alternatively, time can be scheduled between the staff and parents/guardians that allow for time to speak in private and away from the programs.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to speak with the program staff to determine the best time throughout the day to have a telephone conversation and vice versa. Every effort will be made to accommodate times to communicate throughout the day.

3.5 Parent/Guardian Separation and Custody Agreements

In the event of separation of the child's parents/guardians, Centre employees will continue to accept either parental/guardian authority until a direction signed by both parents/guardians or a court order is submitted to the Supervisor.

Parents/guardians who are separated or divorced are required to provide the Supervisor a copy of the custody order/agreement. It is imperative Centre employees understand fully the terms and conditions in relation to custody of the child, accessibility terms for each parent/guardian, etc.

Without a copy of custody order/agreement, Centre employees will not deny the child's parent/guardian access to the child. Copies of the custody order/agreement will be contained within the child's file and locked in the Supervisor's office at all times.

3.6 Arrivals and Departures

Regular routines provide children with a sense of security and stability. It is highly recommended that whenever possible, parents/guardians of preschool children aim to arrive by 9:00 a.m. to allow time for the whole family to smoothly transition into the program. This arrival time also provides the child an opportunity to fully participate in planned activities with his/her peers from the beginning of the day.

The safe arrival of every child is the responsibility of the parent/guardian. **Children must be accompanied by his/her parents/guardians directly to the program.** The child's parents/guardians are responsible to sign the child in daily on the program's attendance form and to ensure the child's program staff are aware of the child's arrival. **The Centre is not responsible for any enrolled child until he/she is signed in.** Once a child is signed in, parents/guardians are asked to make a timely departure from the Centre, allowing the children to transition in their program and begin their daily routine.

Parents/guardians of school-aged children who take their children directly to school are asked to contact the Centre so program staff can expect them for lunch and/or after school.

Parents/guardians are also responsible to sign their children out at the end of the day and to ensure the child's program staff are aware of the child's departure. This is particularly important if the departure time is during a transition period (e.g. bathroom routines, return from school, etc.) or during periods of gross motor play while outdoors.

3.7 Vacations and Absenteeism

Parents/guardians are responsible to contact the Centre directly or inform Centre staff in person of their child's absence. This may include absences due to illness, school trips, family vacations, etc. This is particularly important for school-aged children. Your child's school is not responsible and will not relay a child's absence to the Centre.

At times, children may be absent for an extended period of time. During this time, the parents/guardians are required to continue prompt monthly payments for their child's program fees. Temporary withdrawal of services or subletting the child's spot is not permitted at the Centre.

In the event of an extended period away from the Centre, parents/guardians are required to inform the Supervisor in advance. Parents/guardians receiving subsidized care are required to inform the subsidy office of their child's extended absence.

3.8 Late Pick-Ups

The Centre's hours of operation are from 7:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. (with the exception of Christmas Eve). Children will not be admitted to the Centre prior to 7:30 a.m. and must be picked up by 6:00 p.m.

In the event a child is picked up past 6:00 p.m. by his/her parents/guardians or authorized individual, a late charge of **\$1.00 per minute** will apply. Late fees are payable **directly and immediately** (in cash) to the closing staff on duty. Fees are allocated directly to the staff that has been required to stay past the end of their shift, to compensate them for their unpaid time.

In the event a child is not picked up by 6:30 p.m., if no information regarding a possible late pick-up is communicated to the Centre by the child's parents/guardians, and lastly if no emergency/authorized individuals listed can be contacted, the Centre is required to notify *Children's Aid Society*.

3.9 Updated Child Records

Parents/guardians are responsible to communicate any changes to their child's records, particularly medical information and parental/guardian contact information. It is imperative information is kept up to date at all times, as parents/guardians must be reachable in the unfortunate event of an emergency such as the hospitalization of a child, fire, emergency evacuation, outbreak of illness, etc.

3.10 Releasing Children (Other than to Parents/Guardians)

Upon enrolment to the Centre, parents/guardians must complete a *Registration Package* for each child. Authorized and emergency contact information of individuals other than the parents/guardians is listed in each child's *Registration Package* and subsequently on the child's emergency card. Children will only be released to authorized and emergency contacts if the parents/guardians are not able to pick up their children. Parents/guardians are responsible to contact the Centre directly (via telephone or email) or to speak with the program staff directly in regards to individuals picking up their children other than themselves. Alternatively, parents/guardians can leave a written message in the *Communication Book* within the child's program.

Individuals allowed to pick up children that are not on the list of authorized and/or emergency contacts but approved of by the child's parents/guardians must present the program Centre employees with photo identification. Names and contact information must be supplied by the parents/guardians in writing (in the program's *Communication Book* or via email) or by leaving a voicemail on the Centre's voicemail.

No child will be released unless the conditions listed above are met.

Authorized and emergency contacts must be 16 years of age or older. Parents/guardians wishing to have their child (ren) picked by an individual under the age of 16 will be approved by the Supervisor, provided the parent/guardian submits notice in writing and in advance of the day of pickup.

3.11 Releasing Children - Alone (Unescorted by an Adult)

The Centre will **only** permit children to leave unescorted from the Centre if:

- The child is 10 years of age or older
- Written permission is submitted to the Centre detailing days and times that the child is permitted to do so by the parents/guardians

The Supervisor will prohibit unescorted departure of a child 10 years old or older if written permission/schedules are not submitted in advance and/or if the child does not consistently contact the Centre to confirm safe arrival **after each and every** departure from Centre property.

Re-entry to the Centre on the same day is permitted, provided the child is signed in by an individual 16 years of age or older.

Walk Home Alone Program (School Aged Children)

As older school aged children near graduation from the Centre and elementary school, the Centre will work closely with the child and his/her parents to prepare a walk home alone program to help the child gain independence as he/she prepares for middle school. Children living within close proximity of the Centre and with pre-approved parental/guardian consent will be permitted to walk home alone. The Centre will assist in making this transition successful if the following requirements are met:

- The child is 10 years of age or older
- Prior written consent is given by the parent/guardian to the Supervisor or program staff
- A schedule detailing the days of the week and the times of departure is established and submitted along with the written consent
- The child understands that he/she is expected to call both the Centre and his/her parent/guardian upon arrival at home
- If both the Centre and the parents/guardians feel comfortable and agree to begin the walk home alone program

3.12 Taxi Services

Enrolled children **are not** permitted to leave the Centre and to be picked up by a taxi unless accompanied by his/her parent/guardian, authorized/emergency contact as listed on emergency card or other authorized individual by the parent/guardian. Centre employees shall under **no circumstances** place an unaccompanied child in a taxi.

Section 4 – Program Information

4.1 Program Offerings

The Centre's licensing capacity permits 197 children to attend in one of its 8 programs within the Annex and main school buildings. Program offerings are for children 2.5 – 12 years of age. Currently, the Centre has the following programs:

Annex Building – 108 Strathmore Boulevard

Dandycubs – Full time preschool program for children 2.5 years of age to approximately 5 years old (not attending kindergarten); available to subsidized and full-fee paying families

Earlybirds – Before-and-after kindergarten program with lunch for children 4 years of age to approximately 6 years of age (attending kindergarten); available to full-fee paying families only

All Stars – Full time school-age program for children approximately 5 years of age to 8 years of age (children in this program are in grades 1, 2 or 3); available to subsidized and full-fee paying families

Rock Stars – Before-and-after school-age program for children approximately 5 years of age to 8 years of age (children in this program are in grades 1, 2 or 3); available to subsidized and full-fee paying families

After-School-Age-Program (ASAP) – Part-time program for children approximately 9 years of age to 12 years of age (children enrolled in this program are in grades 4, 5 and 6); available to full-fee paying families

Wilkinson Junior Public School – 53 Donlands Avenue

Hummingbirds – Kindergarten before-and-after school program for children attending full day junior and senior kindergarten; available to subsidized and full-fee paying families

Mockingbirds – Kindergarten before-and-after school program for children attending full day junior and senior kindergarten; available to subsidized and full-fee paying families

Coolagers – Full time school-age program for children approximately 9 years of age to 12 years of age (children in this program are in grades 4, 5 and 6); available to subsidized and full-fee paying families

With the exception of ASAP, all Centre programs are full time programs. Childcare services are available on all instructional school days, on school Professional Activity days (P.A. days), March Break, Winter Break and during the summer months.

The only part time program currently offered at the Centre is ASAP. This program is offered to children after school (3:20 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.) on instructional days only. The program is not available on P.A. days, March Break, Winter Break, or during the summer months. Since this program is a shared space within the Toronto District School Board, childcare services do not include before school care and lunch.

Placement of the programs within the two buildings is subject to change to meet licensing requirements, Toronto Public Health directives and/or operational needs as deemed necessary.

4.2 Curriculum

As mentioned in section *1.3 – Philosophy Statement*, the aim of Dandy Lion Daycare Centre is to provide a stimulating environment that enables the child to develop emotionally, socially, intellectually, creatively and physically. The Centre's programs are designed to provide this stimulation by using an *Emergent Curriculum* approach to learning.

Emergent Curriculum allows planning for learning based on children's interests and the interactions and experiences they share with each other and educators around them. Children's external experiences and their prior knowledge base will also enhance their learning experiences in that it offers opportunities to expand on this knowledge base intellectually and socially.

The Centre's program staff will be responsible to introduce learning concepts based on the children's interests and not to pre-plan on what they believe the children will want to learn more about. Emergent Curriculum will encourage focus on connecting experiences with learning. Emphasis will be on a process-driven curriculum and will not revolve around product-driven programming. Facilitating process-driven concepts will allow all children to be engaged and responsive in the learning process, as it will have personal meaning and appeal.

4.3 Trips and Outings

Trips are an important part of the Centre's programs. Age-appropriate trips enhance a child's childcare experience and allow the child the opportunity to explore their community and engage in a variety of activities. These include trips to farms, local libraries, swimming and wading pools, neighbourhood establishments, theatres, art studios and many other local attractions.

Parents/guardians are required to sign a *Trip Permission Form* for all trips outside of the immediate neighbourhood which require transportation before the child can attend the trip. Local neighbourhood walks and walking trips to a local store, library, etc., do not require prior consent.

All children are required to wear a Centre tee shirt for the duration of the outing. Each shirt displays the Centre's logo as well as the Centre's name, site address and telephone number.

Prior to departure for every field trip, the child's program staff will take a picture of each child. Additionally, a master list of each child enrolled in the program will be brought along that will include a description of each child. Information regarding, height, weight, hair colour, eye colour, visible marks or scars, etc., will be listed. This information is important in the event the police are contacted in the unlikely event of a lost child.

Should a parent/guardian choose not to have their child participate in a field trip, they will be required to find alternate care for the day.

During field trips, the Centre's employees are responsible for maintaining the staff to child ratio required for that age group as per the *Child Care Early Years Act*. Head counts of the children are always taken before departure from the Centre, upon arrival at the destination, during various times while at the final destination, before departure and upon returning to the Centre.

It is important that each child understands that he/she must be considerate of others and show respect for public and private property on all Centre outings. Parents/guardians are expected to explain to their children the importance of proper behaviour and safety while on Centre excursions. Disregard and/or repeated disregard for inappropriate behaviour, safety and public and private property may result in loss of future field trip privileges.

4.4 Rest Periods

As per *Ontario Regulation 137/15 47(2)*, children in attendance within a childcare program for more than 6 hours in Ontario are offered a rest period. The act states:

- *“...each child in a licensed toddler or preschool group who receives child care for six hours or more in a day has a rest period not exceeding two hours in length; and;*
- *a child in a licensed toddler, preschool or kindergarten group is permitted to sleep, rest or engage in quiet activities based on the child's needs”*

Rest periods are typically between 12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. for children in the Dandycubs program. The children are provided with a cot and bed sheet. Parents/guardians are required to provide a blanket and/or and if desired by the child, a sleep toy. All bedding is laundered onsite on a weekly basis.

As the Centre has children who regularly sleep during scheduled rest periods, it has a responsibility to maintain safe sleep practices to reduce the risk of harm or injury of a child, and will do so by providing proactive supervision to recognize the distress of a child during these sleep times.

In order to maintain safe sleep practices, the employees will be present and monitor the children when sleeping by performing direct visual checks to ensure the health and safety of the children.

Children in the Earlybirds, Hummingbirds and Mockingbirds also have time set aside for rest on non-instructional days. Each child has a designated mat along with a bed sheet for this time period. Although kindergarten children typically do not have a nap, children who do fall asleep will be allowed to do so for up to 2 hours.

Children enrolled in a school age program are also required to have a rest period. During non-instructional days, 30 minutes of rest time is available. If a child wishes to lie down, mats and floor cushions are available. Even though school aged children do not have a daily nap, quiet time is practiced and encouraged with quiet activities within the program. Quiet activities such as reading, colouring, puzzles, etc. are provided during this time.

4.5 External Resources (Program/Family Support)

As mentioned in section *7.30 – Suspension and Withdrawal Policy*, the family of an enrolled child or the Centre may feel that the program may no longer be benefiting the child. When necessary, the Centre may seek external resources (with parental/guardian consent) to assist the child and family in an effort to meet the needs of the child.

With the assistance of external organizations, resources and support services can be provided at the Centre (and in some cases in school and at home) to assist a child with language development, speech impediments, anxiety, bereavement counselling, separation/divorce, self-regulation, referrals for assessments, etc. These services may also be available to the child's parents/guardians as well in an effort to support the entire family at home and in the child's school classroom.

Section 5 – Nutrition

5.1 Meal Planning

In childcare settings, the children's food intake largely reflects food choices provided by the childcare provider. For children in licenced care, childcare providers have a major responsibility to provide meals that meet the children's nutritional requirements for growth and development as mandated by municipal and provincial levels of government. An accredited nutritionist reviews the Centre's menus annually to ensure all meals and snacks meet the nutritional requirements of young, growing children.

The Centre has developed nutrition guidelines to compliment the *Canada Food Guide*, the requirements of the *Child Care Early Years Act* and the City of Toronto's evaluation tool, *Assessment for Quality Improvement* for all meals and snacks that are prepared daily by the Centre's Cook. The following criteria have been included in the Centre's menus:

Meal/Menu Planning

- Children are offered meals in proportion to their time in the programs
- A child in care longer than 6 hours is offered 3 snacks and lunch daily
- Descriptive menus are posted in all programs, office and kitchen
- Fresh fruits and vegetables are served daily
- Water is available all day
- Vegetarian meals are offered twice per week
- Substitutions and meal replacements are available to accommodate children's food intake needs

Meal Requirements

- The main meal (lunch) consists of 1 serving of grain products, 2 servings from fruit/vegetables food group, 1 serving from the milk & alternatives group and 1 serving from the meat & alternatives group
- Extra servings are available upon request
- All menus are reviewed by a registered dietician annually

Snack Requirements

- All snacks include 3 food groups (as outlined in the Canada Food Guide)
- Snacks are served to meet the needs of the children
- All snacks offered contribute and promote a children's nutritional needs
- Extra servings are available upon request

Menu Adaptations & Substitutions

- Food offered respects children's individual needs
- Substitutions and meal replacements are available
- Whenever possible, substitutions appear similar to the food that is served to other children

5.2 Allergies, Dietary Needs and Food Restrictions

Upon enrolment, parents/guardians complete a *Registration Package* for each child. Details regarding any food or beverage allergies and/or restrictions can be detailed within the package.

Parents/guardians are asked to provide information regarding symptoms after exposure or consumption of a restricted food or beverage as well as any action to be taken by the Centre's employees. This may include medication (i.e., an Epi-pen for anaphylactic children, topical creams, liquid medication, etc.), immediate hospitalization or simply an update upon pick-up at the end of day. (See 7.20 – Medication Policy regarding medicinal administration)

5.3 Special Occasions

On special occasions such as a child's birthday, graduation, good-bye party, etc., parents/guardians may wish to bring in a treat to celebrate. Parents/guardians are asked to provide 48 hours' notice and the name of the treat that will be served. A written notice will be posted in the child's program so all families are aware of the treat that will be served.

It is important that the list of ingredients is provided on the day the treat is brought in so that the Centre employees can review the ingredients closely and determine if the treat is safe for consumption by all the children within the program.

All home-baked or purchased treats **must be nut-free**. Purchased products must be processed in nut-free facilities and must not contain traces of nuts or nut products such as nut oils. Parents/guardians are asked to contact the Centre if they have any questions or are unsure of treat ideas.

Section 6 – Financial Information

6.1 Enrolment Fees

Upon enrolment to the Centre, parents/guardians are required to provide a refundable deposit of 50% of the program's fees for each child enrolled. The Supervisor will detail the amount due for each child, the due date along with other pertinent details in the confirmation letter. Families receiving subsidy from Children's Services from the City of Toronto are not required to provide a deposit. A registration fee of \$35.00 applies to all families upon enrolment and is non-refundable.

6.2 Program Fees

As outlined in the Centre's *Financial Management Policy*, parents/guardians are expected to elect to pay on the 1st or the 15th of every month during the enrolment process. If required, and in an effort to assist with timely payments, fees can be paid in 2 installments monthly (i.e., half on the 1st of each month and half on the 15th). Fees are set by the Board of Directors annually for the fiscal year that runs from January 1st – December 31st.

Parents/guardians approved for subsidized care are also required to elect the 1st of every month or the 15th of each month for the year (if any fees are due from the family based on the assessed rates). Subsidized daily rates are determined by Children's Services of the City of Toronto.

6.3 Methods of Payment

Parents/guardians have the option to enrol in a pre-authorized debit agreement (PAD) with the Centre. The completed PAD form must accompany a void cheque prior to enrolment of their child (ren). Alternatively, post-dated cheques can be submitted for the year.

All cheques and PAD must be dated for the 1st or the 15th of each month.

Cash is discouraged as a form of payment but accepted. Exact payment is required as the Centre does not maintain a cash float onsite. If a payment is made with cash, a receipt will be given to the parent/guardian detailing date, amount paid, balance due (if any), reason for payment and the Supervisor's signature.

As per federal guidelines established in the *Economic Action Plan 2012*, guidelines were introduced to clarify cash, debit, cheque and electronic transactions. For all cash payments, families can expect:

- **No change** if enrolled in the pre-authorized debit agreement (Full fee-paying families and subsidized families will continue to pay exact amounts for all electronic transactions – to the cent)
- **No change** if payments are made with personal cheques, certified cheques and/or money orders (Full fee-paying families and subsidized families will continue to pay exact amounts – to the cent)
- **Cash payments** for fees will be rounded up or rounded down if the amount due ends with a 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, or 9 (usually the case for subsidized fees). For example, if the monthly fees due are \$180.56, the total will be rounded down to \$180.55. If the amount due is \$180.58, it will be round up to \$180.60.

Additional information regarding cash, debit, cheque and electronic transactions is available at <http://www.fin.gc.ca/1cent/index-eng.asp>

6.4 Subsidized Childcare

Parents/guardians eligible for subsidized care are expected to comply with the subsidy office's terms and conditions. Some families will be required to pay a portion of the monthly fees and the City of Toronto will pay the difference directly to the Centre, while others will qualify for full payment being issued by the City of Toronto. As mentioned in section *4.1 – Program Offerings*, childcare services for families receiving subsidy are available in certain programs when availability permits.

In the event that a family is no longer eligible for subsidy from the City of Toronto, the family is required to pay full price for their child's program. If the family cannot afford the full price of the child's program and wishes to discontinue childcare services, **thirty days' (30) written notice** is required by the parents/guardians prior to withdrawal. Parents/guardians will be responsible to pay for the remaining 30 days of care for each child enrolled.

6.5 Arrears

As noted in the *Financial Management Policy*, the Centre recognizes that families can experience temporary financial setbacks that make the timely payment of fees a hardship. Under appropriate circumstances, the Supervisor with Board approval will consider requests to defer payment of up to 50% of fees for up to 2 weeks. However, this is strictly a **short-term privilege**.

The amount deferred will be acknowledged in writing by the parents/guardians with a speedy repayment rate. In the case of arrears exceeding one month and where no payment plan has been established by the parents/guardians of the enrolled child, the Supervisor will bring the matter to the attention of the Board of Directors who will determine the appropriate course of action.

If fees for the current month have not been received by mid-month, the Supervisor will advise the Board and send the family a reminder notice asking for payment within a week. If payment is not received by the end of the month, the Board will give the family **thirty days' (30) written** notice that they must either make arrangements to immediately clear all arrears or withdraw from the Centre.

6.6 Non-Sufficient Funds (NSF) Payments

Returned cheques or rejected PAD must be replaced within **five (5) business days**. Bank charges the Centre incurs for NSF payments will be charged back to the parents/guardians.

In the event of repeated returned cheques or rejected PAD transactions (3 per calendar year), the Supervisor may stipulate that the family's future payments to the Centre be in the form of certified cheque or money order.

6.7 Refunds

Upon withdrawal from the Centre parents/guardians will be issued a full refund for the initial deposit made upon enrolment to the Centre. If at the time of withdrawal, the parents/guardians are in arrears, partial refund will be issued, as funds will be held back from the deposit to cover the program fees.

Refunds for program fees are never issued unless parents/guardians have paid for the month in full and choose to withdraw before the end of the paid-for month.

Section 7 - Policies and Procedures

Overview of Policies and Procedures

Federal, provincial and municipal governments mandate the Centre has specific policies in place to ensure rights of the Centre's enrolled children, their families, Centre employees, students, volunteers and visitors are outlined, respected and not violated.

In addition to required policies, the Centre has developed its own policies and procedures that require the aforementioned to abide by in order to provide quality services to its clients in healthy and safe environments for those named above.

All policies and procedures are reviewed and approved annually by the Board of Directors. All employees of the Centre are required to read, understand and sign off on all policies annually. Modifications to existing policies are made to satisfy regulations as set out by the various governing bodies the Centre is required to report to. Updated policies and procedures will be distributed to all parents/guardians and supersede previous versions. The excerpts of the policies and procedures below are available upon request to Management and available in all programs, kitchen and office for viewing.

Policies

7.1 Access, Equity and Inclusion Policy

Accessibility, equity and inclusion serve as a foundation towards childcare services at the Centre for all children and their families without discrimination based on ability, age, ancestry, country of origin, creed, disability, gender, ethnic origin, family composition, marital status, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation and socio-economic status.

Procedural guidelines in human resources, training and development, programming and the environment, confidentiality, partnerships with community agencies, registration and withdrawals embody the principals of accessible, equitable and inclusive practice.

7.2 Accessibility for Ontarians with a Disability Act Policy

The Centre is committed to providing accessible quality services to children and their families, employees, students, volunteers and visitors in a manner that promotes and respects dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity. As a private, non-profit organization, the Centre must meet the requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* ("AODA") in accordance with *Ontario Regulation 429.07 Accessibility Standards for Customer Services*.

Whenever possible, the Centre will provide services to children and their families including those with disabilities. Every effort will be made to ensure the service will be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.

7.3 Anaphylactic Policy

The Centre is a nut-free facility. Food brought to the Centre must be free of peanuts, peanut products, nuts and shellfish. Any food item that is labeled as having possible traces of nut products or by-products or if the products were packaged/prepared in a facility where they might be within close proximity to nuts or nut by-products cannot be used or brought into the Centre. A replacement food item may be brought in provided it meets the criteria mentioned above.

Anaphylaxis is a severe systemic allergic reaction that can be fatal, resulting in circulatory collapse or shock. An allergy could be related to food, insect stings, medicine, latex, exercise, etc. The Centre will take all reasonable steps to avoid allergens. The Centre will aim to reduce risks by:

1. **Identification** - Parents/guardians of anaphylactic children must disclose the child's allergy/allergies in the *Registration Package* and any reactions the child may experience if exposed to the specified allergen. Parents/guardians must also provide to the Centre medications required to treat their child's allergic reactions. An annual Individual Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan must be completed and signed off by a Physician upon enrolment and annually thereafter.
2. **Employee Awareness** - An *Allergy List* identifying all enrolled anaphylactic children, allergens, possible reactions and treatment will be posted in all programs, office and kitchen. It will be reviewed regularly with all employees.
3. **Access to Medications** - Medications relating to the allergen must be provided by the child's parent/guardian and will be locked and out of reach from children at all times.
4. **Outside Food** - Parents/guardians may wish to bring in food throughout the year to celebrate their child's birthday, graduation, cultural celebrations, etc. The Centre requires all parents/guardians to give a minimum of **48 hours' notice** to the Centre. This will allow time to post a notice visible to all the families of the program as to the item that will be served in addition to the planned menu items for the day. Parents/guardians are required to bring in a list of the ingredients of the food that will be served, so that the program employees can ensure that it does not pose a risk for a child and/or other children with allergies.

7.4 Anti-Racism Policy

The Centre will not tolerate any expression of racial or ethno-cultural bias by any persons within its jurisdiction or by any visitors to the centre. As providers of early childhood education, the Centre will take a pro-active approach to providing an environment, which helps to promote confidence and positive self-esteem in children.

The Centre will strive to empower children to not only value their own heritage and ethnicity but also to learn about and respect the heritage, ethnicity and culture of others.

The Centre will through its curriculum, environment, relationships, training, policies and practices promote an inclusive environment that is welcoming to all.

7.5 Behaviour Management Policy

Dandyion Daycare Centre believes in educating and empowering children to deal with their feelings and emotions respectfully during difficult times. All programs aim to provide children with effective tools and communication strategies that are age-appropriate and that assist the child with self-regulation.

Parents/guardians can always expect:

- All children will be treated fairly and with respect
- Inviting and stimulating environments. Each program will offer a variety of age and developmentally appropriate activities geared to the interests of the children
- Children will be encouraged to use verbal statements when disapproving of another child's action
- Employees, students and volunteers to act as positive role models – use of positive and appropriate language at all times
- Children will not be spoken to in a harsh manner and will always know that the behaviour is what is being addressed, not the child him/herself
- Children will be spoken to at their eye level whenever possible
- Children will be encouraged to solve disputes between themselves and another child verbally. If this fails to acquire the desired results, Centre employees will act as a mediator.
- Realistic limits placed on children in regards to safety, health and their physical environment. Where these limits are exceeded, the employees will react appropriately. The employee may redirect the child to another more appropriate activity while offering guidance on the behaviour displayed. Time away from the group will be used only when all other forms of behaviour guidance have been exhausted.
- Logical consequences set for children who have repeated behaviour problems

It is a direct violation of the Centre's *Behaviour Management Policy* and *Child Care Early Years Act*:

- To physically restrain a child in any way that would constitute harsh or abusive treatment
- To engage in corporal punishment
- To deprive children of basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing or bedding
- To use a locked room for children for the purpose of confinement that has been withdrawn from his/her program
- To use food as a method of discipline

It is recognized that in some extreme situations (wherein a child is endangering his/herself or others) another method/strategy to deal with the crisis will be used to de-escalate and/or defuse a volatile situation. (Please refer to section 7.11 - De-escalation Policy)

When a child is involved in a situation which can call into question the safety of themselves and/or the safety of others, the child (ren) will be separated from the group. Parent/guardians may be asked to come and pick up their child from the Centre if the child has difficulty self-regulating.

In the event of ongoing challenges, the Centre will work closely with the parents/guardians in an effort to further develop behaviour management strategies. In some cases, the Centre may need to seek assistance from external agencies. As mentioned in 4.5 - External Resources (Program/Family Support), additional resources are available to the family as a whole, the Centre's programs and in some cases the child's school teacher with parental/guardian consent. The Centre believes in exploring as many options as possible in assisting the child in succeeding in all of his/her environments.

If all options have been explored or if a child's parents/guardians are opposed to external aid, the Centre may be required to follow procedures as outlined in 7.31 Suspension and Withdrawal Policy and other applicable policies.

7.6 Child Abuse Policy

Dandyllion Daycare Centre takes a pro-active stance regarding child abuse, abiding by all legal, ethical and legislative responsibilities and, in turn, holds its employees, students and volunteers accountable for these responsibilities.

The [Child, Youth and Family Services Act](#) states that the most important purpose of this policy is to promote the best interests, protection and well-being of children. Therefore, any employee, student or volunteer of Dandyllion Daycare Centre who has reasonable grounds to suspect that child abuse or neglect has occurred, or if a child is at risk of abuse, he/she is legally obligated to report to the appropriate Children's Aid Society (CAS). The responsibility to report cannot be delegated to anyone else.

The investigation of suspected child abuse is the responsibility of the CAS Protection Workers and the police, not the Centre's employees. Discussing any information with others related to a situation of suspected child abuse outside the designated individuals is a breach of confidentiality and a direct violation of this policy.

7.7 Cleaning and Sanitary Practices Policy

The purpose of the *Cleaning and Sanitary Practices Policy* is to ensure that all physical aspects of the Centre are cleaned and sanitized on a regular basis. Employees of the Centre will commit to a cleaning schedule as posted in their classrooms. This schedule will include daily, weekly and monthly cleaning lists in all classrooms, the kitchen and storage areas as outlined by Toronto Public Health and other governing bodies.

7.8 Code of Conduct Policy

The purpose of the *Code of Conduct Policy* is to ensure Dandyllion Daycare Centre ("the Centre") maintains an environment that fosters efficiency and success for its clients and employees and is applicable to all Centre employees, children, parents/guardians (enrolled or waitlisted), members of the Board of Directors, students, volunteers, visitors and contracted service providers.

At Dandyllion Daycare Centre, the commitment to providing a safe, caring and welcoming environment for all whom we serve is of the utmost importance. We believe in equality and respect. We believe in an environment for learning and growth that enhances a child's self-esteem, thus fostering healthy social and emotional development.

To achieve this goal, an atmosphere of mutual respect, collegiality, and fairness and trust that is free of unwanted and unacceptable behaviours is essential. The Centre is committed to establishing and implementing a standard of excellence in every aspect of its operations, while promoting and ensuring ethical and responsible conduct.

All people involved with the Centre are expected to actively promote positive behaviours and interactions by behaving in a manner that is respectful and in compliance with this Policy.

Guiding Principles for Appropriate Behaviour

Be Respectful - We are respectful of ourselves and other people. We are respectful of the ideas and feelings of others. We are respectful of the Centre's environment, equipment and materials.

Be Safe - We work, play and behave safely to help keep others and ourselves from getting hurt.

Be Cooperative - We solve our problems by courteously talking and listening to each other to find a solution. When we cannot solve a problem ourselves, we ask for help.

Be Supportive of Learning - We learn to the best of our abilities and support the learning of others.

Details regarding behaviour management, standards of behaviour, unacceptable behaviours and consequences for inappropriate behaviour are detailed within the *Code of Conduct Policy* available in each program, the kitchen and office.

7.9 Conflict of Interest Policy

The purpose of the *Conflict of Interest Policy* is to ensure that Dandyllion Daycare Centre's (the "Centre") business interests are protected while Directors', Management's and employees' safety and productivity are maintained.

Good judgement of the Centre's Directors, Management and employees is essential, and no list of rules can provide for all of the possible circumstances that arise.

The Centre expects the aforementioned to ensure that their personal interests do not in any way conflict with or appear to conflict with their duties and obligations to the Centre.

7.10 Criminal Reference Check Policy

The purpose of the *Criminal Reference Check Policy* is to ensure that employees, students and volunteers at Dandyllion Daycare Centre possess a clear criminal reference check (CRC) in order to commence employment or volunteer work.

The CRC is intended to be one of the screening processes that the Centre utilizes in recruiting the best possible candidates, but more importantly it will assist the Centre in its fulfilling its legal and moral responsibility towards its clients.

7.11 De-escalation Policy

The purpose of the *De-escalation Policy* is to provide employees of the Centre with procedural guidelines should they find themselves responding to a crisis that may require use of physical guidance.

As mentioned in section 7.5 Behaviour Management Policy, it is recognized that in some extreme situations (where a child is in danger of compromising his/her own safety and/or the safety of others), as a last resort,

Centre employees may use physical guidance as a method to defuse and/or de-escalate a volatile situation.

In the event a Centre employee uses physical guidance, the incident will be treated as a serious occurrence and is therefore reportable to the City of Toronto and the Ministry of Education. The Supervisor is required to follow the reporting procedures as outlined in the *Serious Occurrence Policy and Procedures*.

7.12 Death, Trauma and Bereavement Policy

Respecting and realizing that death, trauma and bereavement can be a difficult and sensitive issue for families, the Centre will always aim to ensure that ongoing support, communication, disclosure, confidentiality and up-to-date resources are addressed and utilized in a timely, sensitive, professional and consistent manner.

The Supervisor is responsible to assess the event in terms of impact on the individual child, family, employees and other enrolled children and families through discussion with employees and immediate family involved. If it is deemed necessary, the Supervisor will send out a general letter and will discuss disclosure and the nature of confidentiality with the family (i.e., do they wish to be named in the letter or not).

Based on the circumstances surrounding trauma and death, the Supervisor is required to report the occurrence as outlined in the *Serious Occurrence and Procedures Policy*. In consultation with the child's family and associated counsellor or consultant, employees, the Board of Directors (if appropriate), and the Supervisor will develop supportive measure/strategies based on individual and/or program needs.

7.13 Enrolment Policy

This policy describes the waitlist and enrolment practices of Dandy Lion Daycare Centre ("the Centre") and efforts to accommodate all children in the event of enrolment challenges.

Within the Centre, children are grouped into programs by age and/or grade. Progression through the programs occurs annually in September, as availability allows. Each spring, projected September program enrolment is assessed, which may lead to expected over-enrolment of certain programs and activates over-enrolment procedures.

Information regarding the waitlist, enrolment and over-enrolment procedures is detailed in the policy and available to all parents/guardians in each of the Centre's programs, the office and kitchen.

7.14 Emergency Management Policy

The purpose of the *Emergency Management Policy* is to ensure human safety, minimize damage to property, and assure rapid and responsive communication to all parties involved.

This policy has been created to address, in a coordinated and systematic manner, all types of emergencies affecting Dandy Lion Daycare Centre ("the Centre"). This policy describes processes and procedures to support all individuals for appropriate responses to major emergencies and assigned roles and

responsibilities for all the implementation and execution of the policy in the event of an emergency or catastrophe.

In the unlikely event of an emergency, incoming and outgoing communication about the emergency shall be managed by the Supervisor.

Outgoing communications may include an initial emergency alert delivered via email to parents, as well as accurate information updates as required. Incoming communication from parents will have to be managed to ensure key messages are conveyed.

7.15 Financial Management Policy

The purpose of the Financial Management Policy is to ensure that Dandyllion Daycare Centre (the "Centre") exercises responsible financial practices in order to maintain continued solvency and financial stability.

Financial management is central to the relationships between Dandyllion Daycare Centre and its members, its suppliers and its regulators. Through prudent financial management, the Centre can reduce the possibilities of fraud and error and correct errors quickly. This will enable the Board and Management to provide a sound basis for planning and decision-making while providing assurance of responsible, efficient operation to those who regulate, supply and entrust the Centre with the members' children and money.

Guidelines as mandated by municipal, provincial and federal regulators are included in this policy to reflect the Centre's policy regarding:

- Internal control and risk management procedures
- Records administration and retention procedures
- Business planning and budgeting procedures
- Cash and banking procedures
- Purchasing and accounts payable procedures
- Revenue and accounts receivable procedures
- Inventory and assets management procedures

Hard copies of the *Financial Management Policy* are available upon request and readily available in all programs, the kitchen and office.

7.16 Fire Safety Policy

In the event of a fire, the Centre aims to prevent injuries, loss of life and damage to property. Preventative measures are in place to avoid such an unfortunate event. At the Centre:

- Every employee is familiar with the locations of fire alarms, portable fire extinguishers, and evacuation points throughout the building
- Evacuation points such as hallways, stairways and exits remain clear at all times and are not used for storage

- We try to avoid usage of long and/or multiple extension cords for electronic devices while children are in the program
- It is forbidden to use electrical devices, appliances and/or equipment with known problems (i.e. frayed electrical cord, or overheating)
- If a gas leak is suspected or if there is knowledge of any damage to building equipment, it is reported immediately to the Supervisor so that corrective action can be put in effect immediately
- All fire alarms and portable fire extinguishers are maintained by authorized personnel of the Toronto District School Board
- Fire drills are held randomly on a monthly basis with **mandatory** participation of the Centre's employees, children and others that may be on the premises during the drill

7.17 Flushing for Lead Policy

The purpose of the *Flushing for Lead Policy* is to ensure Dandyllion Daycare Centre ("the Centre") adheres to the requirements for flushing and testing drinking water under Ontario Regulation 243/07 (O. Reg. 243/07) made under the *Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002*.

Dandyllion Daycare Centre aims to safeguard the children enrolled, its employees, clients and prospective visitors. Ensuring the drinking water is safe for all to consume is of the utmost importance. The Centre flushes the water pipes, daily, and complies with all required testing, reporting and record retention.

7.18 Health and Wellness Policy

The Centre aims to provide a sanitary environment that is safe for all children to participate in on a daily basis. In an effort to sustain this environment, employees of the Centre execute daily observations of all the children in order to deduce possible symptoms of ill health.

The immune systems of growing, young children are more prone to infections and diseases. The Centre expects parents/guardians to communicate any symptoms or changes to their child's health upon arrival. These may include but not limited to: fever, diarrhea, vomiting, discharge from eyes, rashes, difficulty with breathing, unexplained or undiagnosed pain, abdominal cramping, nausea, known or suspected communicable disease, etc.

As per the Toronto Public Health (TPH) regulations and the Centre's *Health and Wellness Policy*:

- Children with a fever of 39 C/102 F must remain home. Re-entry to the Centre is permitted when a child is fever-free for a **minimum of 24 hours**
- Children experiencing diarrhea and vomiting will be sent home and permitted re-entry to the Centre after a child has been symptom-free for a **minimum of 48 hours**
- Children with Pediculosis (head lice) must remain at home; the Centre has a zero-tolerance policy to head lice and nits
- A child displaying symptoms of a communicable disease will not be permitted to attend. Whenever possible the child will be isolated until his/her parents/guardians come to pick the child up from the Centre. A list of communicable and reportable diseases is available in all programs, the office and the kitchen.

Information regarding communicable diseases, their symptoms, treatments, exclusion periods, related immunizations, information hotlines, clinics, public alerts, etc., is available on the TPH website: (http://www.toronto.ca/health/cdc/communicable_disease_surveillance/list_disease.htm)

7.19 Lockout/Tagout Policy

Dandylion Daycare Centre ("the Centre") is committed to the health and safety of all of its employees. The Centre has adopted this policy to prevent accidents, which might otherwise occur during servicing, repair or maintenance of equipment or machinery.

To prevent the accidental release of this energy, the Centre requires that all employees and contractors bring all such equipment to a "zero energy" state before beginning to service or repair the equipment. In this zero-energy state, there is no residual energy that can be released to cause an accident.

7.20 Medication Policy

Promotion of the health, safety and welfare of the children is of great importance for the Centre. Although the primary responsibility for treatment of a medical condition lies with the child's parent/guardian, the Centre's employees that administer prescribed medication act in place of the parent/guardian and not as health professionals.

In order to administer medication, the following criteria must be met:

- Medicine prescribed by a medical practitioner must be in its original packaging
- The original pharmacist's label must be attached to the original package
- The label must indicate the child's name, dosage to be given, frequency of dosage, date of prescription and expiration date
- A doctor's/medical practitioner's note **must** accompany non-prescribed (over-the-counter medication) indicating the information as detailed above. All procedures for administration of non-prescription medications will be followed as outlined above for prescribed medications.
- Medication prescribed to another member of the child's family will not be administered to the enrolled child
- Expired medicine will **never** be administered
- A *Medication Form* must be completed in full and signed by the parent/guardian for every medication that will be administered by an employee of the Centre
- Medication will be stored in a designated location as deemed appropriate by the Supervisor
- Medications requiring refrigeration will be locked and stored in the refrigerator located in the kitchen
- Only permanent employees of the Centre are permitted to administer medication to a child. Casual employees, students and volunteers **are not** permitted to administer medication.

7.21 No Smoking Policy

The purpose of the *No Smoking Policy* is to ensure Dandyllion Daycare Centre (“the Centre”) adheres to the regulations as set out in the *Smoke-Free Ontario Act 9(1), (2), (3)* at all times.

Dandyllion Daycare Centre is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all its clients, employees, students, volunteers and visitors. The Centre is a smoke-free facility. Smoking is prohibited on any of the Centre’s enclosed and public spaces.

7.22 Pandemic Influenza Policy

Everyone is at risk of getting an influenza virus. Typically, young children and the elderly are more at risk due to weaker immune systems. However, influenza will spread more rapidly because very few people are immune to the virus.

Overall, the Centre’s main objective is to reduce morbidity (illness), mortality (death) and disruption of services during a pandemic influenza. In the event of a pandemic influenza outbreak, the Centre’s response plan will include:

- Communication via telephone, email and/or the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) website
- Continuation of routine practices as recommended by Toronto Public Health (TPH)
- Cancellation of Centre tours and new admissions
- Reinforcement of hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
- Modification of programs as required
- Following regulations as outlined by regulatory bodies (i.e., TDSB, TPH, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, Province of Ontario, etc.)

Parents/guardians are encouraged to read the Centre’s *Pandemic Influenza Policy* as well as the TDSB’S *Pandemic Response Plan* located in all programs, the office and kitchen for more information.

7.23 Parent Issues and Concern Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a transparent process for parents/guardians, the licensee and Centre employees to use when parents/guardians bring forward issues/concerns at Dandyllion Daycare Centre (“the Centre”).

Definitions

Licensee: The individual or agency licensed by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of the childcare centre it operates (i.e. the Supervisor).

Centre employee: Individual employed by the licensee (e.g. program room staff).

Policy

General

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in the Centre and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing with our program. As supported by the Centre's Program Statement, positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians are supported by Centre employees, and foster the engagement of ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children. Centre employees are available to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction.

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by employees and Management and will be addressed to the best of their ability. 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 to employee or Management verbally, or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally, or in writing upon request.

An initial response to an issue or concern raised to Management will be provided to parents/guardians within five (5) business days, allowing time for Management to gather insight from the employees. The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process. The only exception are cases where Centre has been asked not to divulge information or contact parties (i.e., as directed by Police).

The Centre will make every effort to investigate issues and concerns in a fair, impartial and respectful manner. If required, the Centre will engage third party organizations to address concerns that are beyond the scope of expertise of Dandyllion Management and Board of Directors.

Confidentiality

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

Conduct

The 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 or Centre employee feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused or belittled, they may report the situation to the Supervisor. If the situation involves the supervisor, then or the Chair of the Board should be contacted.

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 any parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent/guardian will be advised to contact a [local Children's Aid Society](#) (CAS) directly, as outlined in the Centre's Child Abuse Policy.

Procedures

The following steps will be taken to address concerns raised by parents / guardians:

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent/Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Employee and/or Supervisor in responding to issue/concern:
Program/Room-Related I.e., schedule, sleep arrangements, toileting indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.	Raise the issue or concern to the program staff directly or the Supervisor.	Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised or arrange for a meeting, in person or by phone, with the parent/guardian within five (5) business days. Document the issues/concerns in detail. Documentation should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • 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 I.e., child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.	Raise the issue or concern to the Supervisor.	Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.
Employee, parent/guardian or Management - Related	Raise the issue or concern to the individual directly or the Supervisor. All issues or concerns about the conduct of employee, 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. If supervisor is the subject of issue or concern, advise the Chair of the Board of Directors.	Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within five (5) business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing.
Student or Volunteer-Related	Raise the issue or concern to the employee responsible for supervising the volunteer or student or the Supervisor. 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 ensure an opportunity is presented for the parent/guardian to follow up with any questions. Information relating to issue/concern, communication, resolution and other relevant information will be retained in child's file.
Suspicion of Child Abuse or Neglect	Contact Children's Aid Society (CAS) directly (see Child Abuse Policy for detailed Policy and steps)	

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 Chair of the Board of Directors.

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 (i.e., 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.

If an issue or concern has the potential to impact other children or employees at the Centre, communication with the broader Centre Membership may be required as determined by Centre Management. Issues deemed a 'Serious Occurrence' will be communicated as guidelines of communication are outlined in the Serious Occurrence Policy, unless unable to do so by law or enforcement authority.

The Centre will conduct an annual analysis of all parent issues and concerns that take place in the previous year. The analysis must be kept on file at the Centre for the Program Advisor to review during licence renewal inspections.

Third party resources may be used to address any appeals that may be outside the scope of expertise for Management and the Board of Directors.

7.24 Playground Safety and Outdoor Programming Policy

Playground Safety

The Centre is committed to the promotion of gross motor play in safe, child-friendly and physically stimulating environments. Daily, monthly, seasonal and annual inspections are in place to ensure the Centre adheres to the *CSA Standard, CSA Z614-14* as approved by the *National Standard of Canada* by the *Standards Council of Canada*.

Despite efforts of all employees during outdoor activities, children may on occasion, be injured during gross motor play while on the playground. In the unlikely event an injury occurs, employees of the Centre that witness and/or respond first to an injured child are required to complete a *Playground Injury Report Form*. If a child sustains a serious accidental injury or non-accidental injury (including self-inflicted or unexplained) that requires immediate medical attention, it is the employee's responsibility to ensure he/she follows the procedures as outlined in the Centre's *Serious Occurrence Policy and Procedures*.

Injuries deemed serious in nature and resulting in a hospital visit or examination by a medical practitioner require completion of the *Playground Injury Report Form* by the employee that assisted the injured child. The Supervisor is responsible to complete the *Child Care Serious Occurrence Report*, the *Serious Occurrence Notification Form* and in rare, yet specific occasions, a *Child Care Enhanced Serious Occurrence Report* as outlined in the *Serious Occurrence Policy and Procedures*. As per provincial regulation, the *Serious Occurrence Notification Form* must be posted in the Centre for 10 days.

Inclement Weather

On occasion, inclement weather will prohibit the use of the playground structure, field area, soccer court, etc. During the winter months, Environment Canada recommends that children should not go outside when the temperature falls below -13 degrees Celsius and should remain indoors if the wind chill factor is reported as -15 degrees Celsius or greater. Alternatively, summer months may be challenging if temperatures are high, smog advisories have been issued or if Toronto Public Health has issued heat alerts. In the event the weather conditions may prohibit outdoor play for the children, the employees must:

- Verify the temperature by contacting Environment Canada for a daily temperature reading (especially during fall and winter months)
- Refer to the *Sun Safety and Smog Alert Policy* (during the spring and summer months)

Should the temperatures and/or advisories limit and/or prohibit outdoor play, the employees will explore one of the following options (dependent on the season):

- If required, limit time for outdoor play (ex. regularly scheduled hour-long outdoor times may only be up to 30 minutes)
- Engage in outdoor play once advisory has been lifted
- Change outdoor play time to an earlier or later time
- Provide gross motor activities inside the Centre (ex. yoga, aerobics, group games, etc.)
- Use school gymnasium (if available) for group games, organized sports, etc.

Outdoor Curriculum Planning

Planning for a stimulating outdoor experience is an integral part of the Centre's curriculum. Each program is responsible to plan for developmentally appropriate games and activities. During non-instructional days, outdoor programming may include up to three planned outdoor experiences per day (up to 3 hours per day). These experiences may include activities that are an extension of a specific planned or spontaneous indoor activity, require supplies from the classroom or be facilitated by an outside source.

Each program will aim to provide activities that promote cardiovascular endurance, fair play, flexibility, movement skills, muscular endurance and strength, physical activity and fitness and social skills. Planned outdoor experiences will be carefully selected to allow for modification (if required) to include children with varying abilities and skill sets. Examples of modifications include use of smaller ball instead of a large ball, wider boundary lines, increase in timelines, etc.

On occasion, use of picture symbols may be used prior and/or during an outdoor experience. Picture symbols will be available to all children to show a representation of a physical activity movement skill, social skill or ability adaptation such as catching, hopping or balancing or bending.

7.25 Privacy Policy

Two federal privacy laws, the *Privacy Act* and the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act*, limit the use of any private information provided to the Centre. The Centre respects your privacy and wants to ensure the personal information provided remains accurate, confidential and secure.

The Centre will ensure that all personal information gathered about parents/guardians and children are kept securely locked in the Supervisor's office.

The Centre will only collect information that is required to provide childcares services and as mandated by federal, provincial and municipal governments.

The Centre will provide families access to the personal information that is kept about them, and will make every effort to keep personal information accurate and up-to-date. Families will have the opportunity to review, correct and challenge the accuracy of the personal information that is collected, kept and used by the Centre.

The Centre will protect families' information and dispose of it by means of shredding or other permanent methods.

The Centre will only use families' information for the purposes for which consent has been obtained and will only provide families' information to other parties when the family's consent has been obtained and when the Centre is required or permitted to do so by law.

The Centre is required to give access to children's files during annual licensing inspection. Randomly selected files of children in any program are reviewed during the inspection to ensure specific records and forms are completed. These include but are not limited to updated immunization records, medical release forms, signed parent/guardian agreement forms, completed registration packages, etc.

The Centre will respond to a family's request for access to their personal information within 30 days of receipt. Concerns regarding privacy issues should be confidentially addressed in writing to the Supervisor.

7.26 Program Statement

Dandyllion Daycare Centre ("the Centre") aims to provide a stimulating environment which enables the child to develop emotionally, socially, intellectually, creatively and physically.

The Centre's Program Statement reflects children as competent, capable, curious and rich in potential. In accordance with this Statement, the Centre's *Guidance Principles* as well as other applicable policies, management and employees will foster children's growth and development by incorporating the following:

1. Promoting the health, safety, nutrition and wellbeing of all enrolled children

One of the goals of the Centre is to provide an environment that safeguards the children while promoting safe and healthy practices in order to contribute to each child's wellbeing.

A major contributing factor in this area is a menu that meets the nutritional needs of every child. Children are offered meals in proportion to their time in the programs. Our carefully planned menus offer children fresh fruit and vegetables daily, replacement meals to adhere to any food or beverage restrictions and extra servings daily. A licenced dietician reviews the menus annually to ensure all hot lunches and snacks meeting the criteria outlined in the *Canada Health Food Guide*.

The physical environment is maintained to ensure children are free to partake in activities within a setting that is free of clutter, hazards or barriers.

The Centre supports ongoing professional development for all of its employees in areas of health and safety that include but are not limited to areas such as mental health, age-appropriate activities for indoor and outdoor environments, child pedagogy, CPR and First Aid.

Policies and procedures are continuously updated, reviewed and executed within all areas of the programs to promote the health and safety of each and every enrolled child.

2. Supporting positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, Centre employees, students and volunteers

Supporting interactions that promote positive and responsive communication is vital in all of the Centre's relationships. Our employees communicate with parents/guardians on a frequent basis sharing observations, documentation and reflections through regular conversations.

We strive to promote a sense of belonging for children and their families in our programs by creating positive interactions and collaboration with our families. We understand that strong relationships are the foundation for learning and continued development. Parental/guardian involvement is encouraged within all programs as it heightens the experience for the individual child, creates lasting memories of time shared while engaging in activities together and enriches each participant's day.

As outlined in the Centre's *Access, Equity and Inclusion Policy*, core principles that are embedded in the Centre's programs that aid in the development and support positive and responsive interactions include:

- Every child is unique whose individuality will be respected and encouraged
- Every child and their family has the right to privacy and dignity
- All children bring value to the Centre's programs
- Children are supported best through collaboration
- Children learn best when they are able to participate with others who have different goals and abilities
- Parents/guardians are integral to a successful inclusion process
- Strong working relationships between the Centre and families will assist in the growth of children's developmental needs
- Children and their families will be supported by the Centre through working with community partners offering specialized services, if needed
- Program delivery is reflective of changing and varying needs of children and their families
- Programs are delivered by Centre employees that demonstrate flexibility in their approach
- The Centre is supportive of ongoing professional development for all employees

3. Encourage children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate

Encouragement for positive interactions and communications are modeled by the Centre employees in areas of the program throughout each day. Demonstrating appropriate forms of communication allows each child to learn methods that will allow them to express themselves positively.

Employees, students and volunteers are expected to demonstrate positive communication techniques by exploring options daily such as:

- Using a calm tone of voice
- Meeting a child at their eye level
- Using one's own body language to reflect positive tones and voice level
- Articulating feelings through discussion and asking for assistance when required
- Using resources and/or tools to assist with message delivery (i.e., pictorial reference)

Promotion of self-regulation stems from a clear understanding of the individual child's strengths, abilities and communication style. Recognizing a child's specific triggers and de-escalators will allow Centre employees to carefully guide and redirect children as they self-regulate in a safe and trusting environment.

Through daily observation and input from parents/guardians, Centre employees are able to support children in developing and mastering this important skill that is both positive and respectful.

4. Foster and promote children's exploration, play and inquiry

The Centre's play-based curriculum allows planning for learning based on children's interests and the interactions and experiences they share with each other and others around them. Children's external experiences and their prior knowledge base will also enhance their learning experiences in that it offers opportunities to expand on this knowledge base intellectually and socially.

Promotion of exploration stems from continued communication between the children and the Centre employees (and when applicable, students and volunteers). Open-ended questions from the Centre employees (and when applicable, students and volunteers), opportunities to introduce new materials, flexibility in programming are just a few ways children will feel that exploration, play and inquiry are natural and embraced.

Emphasis on a process-driven curriculum offers children time to inquire about all elements of the activity in hand. Exploration of each element introduced allows children participating an opportunity to question, probe, feel, manipulate and observe while being supporting and facilitated by the Centre's employees.

Process-driven concepts allow all children to be engaged and responsive in the learning process, as it will have personal meaning and appeal.

5. Provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences

The Centre's curriculum focuses on child-initiated experiences that the Centre employees will support and facilitate on a daily basis. Planning around children's interests will allow children to grow, learn and explore based on their personal interests fueling their appetite for more knowledge instead of it being pre-planned for them by others.

Experiences in all areas of the curriculum will link the age-appropriate activities with specific learning objectives and outcomes. Skill sets will be further developed and honed through the child-initiated activities and will be noted daily on each program's planning chart.

The Centre employees (and when applicable, students and volunteers) are expected to support the child-initiated experiences by promoting dialogue, introducing other elements pertaining to the experience (i.e., music, food or language links to the experience) and when possible including parental/guardian feedback and participation. The latter is crucial for educators and families as it promotes a strong, positive link for the child in developing skills sets with specific objectives and outcomes.

6. Plan for and create learning environments and experiences that are positive and supportive of children's learning and development

The Centre is committed to the creation and provision of learning environments that are flexible and adaptable as required for all children. Child-initiated activities that allow for process-oriented programming versus product-oriented programming will support children's learning and development as the experiences will be rooted in their personal interests.

Age-appropriate furniture, equipment and activities for indoor and outdoor experience will enhance each child's learning experience as it caters to their individual needs while participating in a stimulating environment.

Availability and accessibility are integral in promoting a creative learning environment. Employees of the Centre take pride in ensuring that sufficient supplies for all activities are available for use by all children. Open shelves that are at a child's level allow for every child to examine closely the variety available and can easily access individual containers or baskets with their desired supplies.

Containers that are transparent, allowing clear view of contents are readily accessible and easily transported from shelves to desired areas within the program and even outdoors. Pictorial guides with wording allow all children to identify contents of each labeled container.

7. Incorporate indoor play, outdoor play, active play, rest and quiet times throughout the day and will respect and give consideration to individual needs of enrolled children

Each program's daily schedule includes a healthy balance of indoor play, outdoor play, active play, rest and quiet times for all children. The daily schedule allows for flexibility and modifications to meet the changing needs of growing children as they enter the school system, spend their non-instructional days with us or participate in day-long excursions.

Rest periods are offered to all preschool children and quiet activities are available to those preschool children transitioning out of their daily naps.

Preschool children receive a minimum of 2 hours of outdoor play daily. School age children (includes before-and-after kindergarten and school age programs) receive a minimum of 2 hours of daily outdoor play on non-instructional days and a minimum of 30 minutes of outdoor play on each instructional day.

Based on observations, a family's request and the child's needs, consideration and/or changes will be made to ensure the child is able to participate at a pace that meets their individual needs.

8. Foster the engagement of ongoing communication with the parents/guardians

Providing any child the opportunity for success begins with strong partnerships between the family and the Centre. The Centre promotes open and honest dialogue amongst its employees and its enrolled families. Sharing of information, tips and strategies provides a solid foundation of understanding of a child's needs. As a collaborative team, Centre employees and parents/guardians can advocate for and support children to set and achieve goals.

Parents/guardians are the first and most crucial influence in a child's development. Open and frequent communication regarding the child's interests, development and individual needs will assist the Centre is developing an environment that promotes the development of children as competent, capable, curious and rich in potential.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to visit their child's program, volunteer on excursions, provide feedback and to ask questions regarding their child's progress. Communication in its many forms (written, in person, electronically) are encourage to respect parental/guardian schedules and requests for their children's wellbeing. Monthly newsletters from the Centre keep all of its membership aware of the learning opportunities experienced, upcoming events and important information.

Participation at Centre-based events, volunteering for the Board of Directors or in programs enhances the Centre as a whole, contributes to frequent communication and produces shared moments for families to cherish.

9. Invite community partners to support children and their families as well as Centre employees as needed

The Centre is committed to providing flexible programming that is adaptable as required for all children. In collaboration with families and if necessary, support agencies and/or community partners, programming will be adapted to meet the needs of the children.

Support agencies, along with specialized training and development, provide the Centre employees with tools and strategies to modify or adapt the program as needed. With parental/guardian consent, individual programming and resources can be made available to assist a child in full participation. Examples of modifications include:

- Pictorial schedules designed for the child to assist him/her with daily routines
- Pictorial symbols to demonstrate an action, feelings, etc.
- Pre-written instructions for activities and routines
- Self-regulation strategies (can be in the form of pictures, portable toolkit, list of exercises, etc.)
- A wide variety of tools for all skill levels and abilities (large and small balls, broad and thin paintbrushes, printed materials in large font and small font, etc.)
- Materials and equipment are placed at children's level to allow for independent access
- Adjusted table and chair heights
- Adjustments to daily schedules, routines and transitions to encourage optimal learning opportunities for all
- Wider pathways between furniture to allow for use of assistive devices if necessary

Community partners range in the types of services they provide. The Centre works closely with our school community, local vendors, libraries and other institutions to enhance our curriculum and each child's experience. Services may be delivered in the form of an enhancement program, resources, information or support for families as needed.

10. Support employee participation in continuous professional learning

As outlined in the Centre's *Professional Training and Development Policy*, the Centre will promote career growth and continuous education among employees.

The Centre supports professional development activities, both inside and outside of the employees' regular duties. Professional development activities include, but are not strictly limited to, professional associations, committees, board of directors, webinars, seminars, and conferences, e-learning and mentoring.

Each employee must participate in standard first aid training and infant and child cardio-pulmonary resuscitation annually.

At its sole discretion, the Supervisor may approve training activities to further support career growth and continuous education to assist in sustaining our diverse workforce.

Any Centre employee that is registered and in good standing with the College of Early Childhood Educators ("CECE") must adhere to the requirements of the CECE with regards to ongoing professional development.

11. Document and review impact of the above strategies on the children and their families

Daily observations and documentation is viewed as an integral part of the curriculum planning process. Documentation of children's interactions, interests, skill set, language and other aspects of their day provides the employees an understanding of the direction that they will facilitate activities on a daily basis.

The Centre conducts an annual survey to receive valuable feedback from its membership. Many aspects of the Centre are reviewed in the survey but most importantly the curriculum is a main focus. Management and the Board of Directors review the results and work within a subcommittee to modify, enhance and improve its childcare services in an effort to reflect overall needs of the membership.

This measure of effectiveness is continuously reviewed to ensure the children receive a well-rounded curriculum while enrolled at the Centre.

The information that is documented and collected from the annual survey provides:

- A way to value children's experiences and help them to reflect back on those experiences and what they have been learning
- An opportunity to make children's learning and understanding of the world visible to themselves, their peers, their parents/guardians
- Reflection on developmental growth over a period of time
- A dialogue with families about children's experience and an invitation for parents/guardians to add their perspective
- A self-reflection opportunity for the Centre employees, as they participate in continuous professional learning

The Program Statement is reviewed with employees prior to commencement of employment, with students prior to their job placement at the Centre, and with volunteers prior to volunteering and annually thereafter. Any changes to Program Statement will be reviewed with the above-named individuals.

7.27 Serious Occurrence Policy

The Centre is accountable to the public and applicable Ontario ministries for delivery of its services. Reporting serious occurrences in a timely manner is also of high importance and practiced at all times. Serious injuries and accidents requiring medical attention, hospitalization, natural disasters, complaints of a serious nature, alleged child abuse, etc., are reportable to the City of Toronto and Ministry of Education.

In the event of a serious occurrence, the Centre is mandated to post a *Serious Occurrence Notification Form* for 10 days within the Centre. Definitions of a serious occurrence and reporting procedures are detailed in the Centre's *Serious Occurrence Policy and Procedures*. Hard copies are available in all programs, the Supervisor's office and the kitchen.

7.28 Sleep Safety Policy

As the Centre has children who regularly sleep during scheduled rest periods, specifically the preschool and kindergarten programs, it has a responsibility to maintain safe sleep practices to reduce the risk of harm or injury of a child, and will do so by providing proactive supervision to recognize the distress of a child during these sleep times.

In order to maintain safe sleep practices, the employees will be present and monitor the children when sleeping by performing direct visual checks to ensure the health and safety of the children.

7.29 Sun Safety and Smog Alert Policy

The Centre is committed to the promotion of physical activity and outdoor playtime while minimizing exposure to poor air quality and extreme heat alerts. Safeguarding against extreme heat and air pollution during outdoor activities is of the utmost importance for the Centre's enrolled children and employees. The Centre will primarily focus on obtaining up to date weather reports from the following sources prior to all outings:

1. Air Quality Index (AQI) Hotline – Smog alerts and daily temperatures
2. Ministry of Environment – Smog advisory updates
3. Medical Officer of Public Health of Toronto – Heat alerts
4. City of Toronto 311 Knowledge Base - Heat alerts, smog advisory, UV Index

The following guidelines are to be followed by all employees prior to engaging in outdoor play and/or activities:

- Employees of the Centre will determine if air quality ratings and the UV Index are safe for outdoor play.
- Prior to engaging in outdoor activities, employees of the Centre employees will ensure children wear a hat and will ask children to reapply sunscreen. Younger children will receive assistance with reapplying sunscreen throughout the day. (Sunscreen with a minimum protection of SPF 15 is recommended); Sunscreen will be reapplied every 2 hours after outdoor water activities.

- Children’s water bottles will be refilled regularly and brought to all outdoor activities. The children will be encouraged to drink plenty of water frequently to prevent dehydration throughout the day.
- While outdoors, the children will be encouraged to participate in low impact and/or water activities, take rest breaks and remain in shaded areas.
- The children’s comfort levels will be monitored closely. All employees will continuously look for warning signals such as difficulty breathing, complaints of chest tightness, headaches, low energy levels and eye and nose and throat irritation.
- Outdoor activities for children who have identified respiratory illnesses, such as asthma or that display difficulty breathing, chest tightness, headaches, low energy levels, or eye, nose and/or throat irritation will be cancelled. Once smog alerts have been lifted, outdoor play will resume. Alternatively, gross motor activities may be offered indoors if smog or heat alerts are not lifted within a reasonable timeframe.

7.30 Supervision of Students and Volunteers Policy

Throughout the year, the Centre welcomes students from colleges and universities to its programs to complete job placements as per their curriculum. As per the Centre’s *Supervision of Students and Volunteers Policy*, students completing job placements at the Centre will not be given unsupervised access to children within the designated program nor within the Centre at any time. Direct access to children enrolled at the Centre is limited only to employees of the Centre. Students will not be counted in the staffing ratios within the designated program nor within the Centre at any time. Staffing ratios will be maintained strictly by employees of the Centre who are 18 years of age or older at all times.

Volunteers are also welcomed into the Centre. Many volunteers are high school students completing required hours of community service as per the current high school curriculum while others volunteer their time to obtain knowledge of the industry and to understand Canadian work practices. Parents/guardians volunteer time within the children’s programs, on field trips or on the Board of Directors. Volunteers are never given unsupervised access to children within the designated program nor within the Centre. Just like students, volunteers will not be counted in the staffing ratios within the designated program nor within the Centre at any time. According to the *Child Care and Early Years Act*, both students and volunteers are required to provide a clear criminal reference check.

7.31 Suspension and Withdrawal Policy

The Centres recognizes that a child’s enrolment at the Centre is of great significance to both the child and his/her family. The importance of uninterrupted child care arrangements cannot be over emphasized. However, if the Centre is not able to continue to offer services that meet the needs of the child and his/her family, suspension and/or withdrawal from the Centre will be explored.

The Centre reserves the right to suspend or terminate childcare services of enrolled children or the membership of the parents/guardians from the Centre or waitlist if:

- Any Centre policy is violated by an enrolled/wait listed child or his/her parents/guardians
- Program fees are in arrears and no plan of payment is in place

- The parents/guardians refuse external support services in assisting the Centre meet the needs of the child
- It is determined (by outside agencies, external support services, medical authorities, etc.) that the child requires specialized care that the Centre is unable to provide
- Observations of the child, discussions with the child's family, modification of program and outside agency aid does not improve or enhance the child's childcare experience

In extreme cases of violence or threatening behaviour from a child, his parents/guardians or from the child's parents/guardians or other family member, the Supervisor (in consultation with and approval from the Board of Directors) will immediately terminate childcare services of the enrolled child. Wait listed children will be immediately removed from the Centre's wait list. In both of the above circumstances, the parents/guardians of the child will be notified in person and/or will be given a termination notice.

7.32 Wait List Policy

The purpose of the *Wait List Policy* is to outline the practices of Dandylion Daycare Centre ("the Centre") for parents/guardians interested in childcare services.

New names are added in chronological order upon receipt of a completed application form, regardless of length of waitlist. One waitlist is maintained for all of the Centre's programs.

Parents/guardians can inquire as to the status of their child on the wait list by directing questions directly to the Supervisor. The wait list will be made available in a manner that maintains the privacy and confidentiality of the children listed on it as well as its parents/guardians.

7.33 Whistleblower Policy

The purpose of the *Whistleblower Policy* is to provide Directors, Management and employees of Dandylion Daycare Centre (the "Centre") a procedure to report observations of ethical, criminal and/or professional violations.

All Directors, Management and employees are expected to practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling their responsibilities while complying with all applicable laws, regulations, and legislation. The Centre is committed to ethical behaviour in the workplace and will foster and maintain an environment where Directors, Management and employees can work safely and appropriately, without fear of retaliation.

7.34 Workplace Anti-Harassment Policy

The Centre is committed to building and preserving a safe, productive and healthy working environment for its employees. In addition, enrolled children and their families, students, volunteers and individuals conducting business on Centre property are entitled to be treated fairly, respectfully and with dignity as per the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, *Ontario Human Rights Code* and *Canadian Human Rights Act*.

This policy applies to all the aforementioned while on Centre property, during all outings and field trips and Centre-hosted work/social-related functions. The Board of Directors and Centre employees are personally accountable and responsible for enforcing this policy and must make every effort to prevent discrimination or harassing behaviour. Violation of the policy is deemed serious regardless of the alleged offender's position within the Centre.

7.35 Workplace Anti-Violence Policy

The Centre aims to provide a work environment that is free from any type of violent behaviour. The Centre maintains a **zero-tolerance** policy for all acts of violence in the workplace, whether they are verbal, written or physical.

This policy applies to all individuals named in section *7.34 – Workplace Anti-Harassment Policy* while on Centre property, during all outings and field trips and Centre-hosted work/social-related functions. The Board of Directors and Centre employees are personally accountable and responsible for enforcing this policy and must make every effort to prevent and eliminate any act of violence. Violation of the policy is deemed serious regardless of the alleged offender's position within the Centre.

7.36 Workplace Occupational Health and Safety Policy

Protection of employees from injury or occupational disease is a major continuing objective for the Centre. Every effort will be made to provide a healthy and safe work environment. Management, the Board of Directors and Centre employees must be dedicated to the continuing objective of reducing risk of injury and illness.

The Centre is ultimately responsible for occupational health and safety and will promote an increasingly healthier, safer work environment. The Centre will take every reasonable precaution possible for the protection of its employees.

The Centre will act in compliance with the municipal, provincial and federal workplace health and safety legislation.

Procedures

7.37 Emergency Closures

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the Centre may face emergency closure and/or use of the facility. These circumstances include but are not limited to power failure, burst piping, severe property damage, etc. In consultation with the Toronto District School Board, Ministry of Education, Toronto Public Health and other relevant parties, the Supervisor and Board of Directors will examine the severity of the situation in an effort to determine how long the Centre may need to remain closed.

As per the Centre's *Accessibility for Ontarians Disability Act Policy* and other applicable policies, notification will be given to the Centre's members if there is a planned, unexpected disruption of the facility or services or emergency closure.

The notice will be posted at the entrance of the applicable premises and will be provided verbally, electronically or in person as applicable. The notice will include the following information:

- That a facility or service is unavailable
- The anticipated duration of the disruption
- The reason for the disruption
- Alternative facilities or services, if available

Program fees **will not** be refunded for brief emergency closures. However, a portion of program fees may be refunded and/or credited for unforeseen closures lasting longer than one week at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

7.38 Notice of Temporary Disruption of Service

Dandyllion Daycare Centre will notify its members if there is a planned or unexpected disruption of services. The notice will be posted at the entrance of the Centre and will be provided verbally, electronically or in person as applicable. The notice will include the following information:

- That a facility or service is unavailable
- The anticipated duration of the disruption
- The reason for the disruption
- Alternative facilities or services, if available

7.39 School Exclusions, Expulsions and Suspensions

In the event an enrolled child of the Centre is suspended from school, the Principal of the school will notify the Supervisor. The Principal will decide if the child's suspension includes denial of access to school property, which includes the Centre and for how long. The child's parents/guardians will be notified of the final decision by the Principal.

7.40 Prohibited Practices

Centre policies and procedures as well as current provincial legislations strictly prohibit the following practices by any employee, volunteer or student:

- 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 childcare 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.

Section 8 – Agreement Form (to be detached)

As a parent/guardian of a child enrolled at Dandyllion Daycare Centre (the “Centre”), I understand that my fees must be paid as per the Centre’s policies, as well as any late fees or other charges. I understand that I must give 30 days’ written notice when withdrawing my child from the program.

I hereby grant permission for my child to use all the play equipment and participate in all of the activities of the Centre, including local neighbourhood walks.

I hereby grant permission for the Centre Supervisor or an employee of the Centre to take whatever steps may be deemed necessary to obtain emergency medical care if warranted.

I hereby grant permission for the designated employee to administer prescription medication to my child after I have signed the *Medication Authorization Form* giving the necessary authorization.

I understand the employees cannot release a child to anyone other than the people I have authorized. I also understand that the employees cannot release any information about my child to anyone unless I have provided the Centre with written authorization.

Dandyllion Daycare Centre will not be responsible for anything that may happen as a result of false information given at the time of enrolment.

I have read and understand the *Dandyllion Daycare Centre Family Handbook* and accept the responsibilities and policies contained therein.

Name of Child	
_____	_____
Parent/Guardian Name	Parent/Guardian Name
_____	_____
Parent/Guardian Signature	Parent/Guardian Signature
_____	_____
Date	Date