

**Creative Minds Children Services, Inc.**  
**Parent Handbook**  
**Brantford, ON**  
**(519) 754-0811**

**Our Philosophy**

Creative Minds Children Services, Inc. believes in providing a safe and secure, happy, enriching, and loving environment to suit each child's individual needs. Our center responds to today's growing need of an excellent childcare facility and fosters peace of mind for working parents with children aged 18 months to 4 years old.

We will work to make each day a happy learning experience for your child, which includes opportunities for socialization, group play, reading, and arts/crafts. Every effort will be taken to facilitate field trips.

The goals of Creative Minds Children Services, Inc. are to:

- Provide a warm, nurturing, and safe environment
- Provide an educational emergent based curriculum for each child to develop in the areas of physical, social, emotional, cognitive, creative and moral growth
- Provide an inclusive program to enhance the children's awareness, understanding, and respect for cultural differences and similarities
- Value each child as an individual with unique capabilities and interests
- Provide qualified, caring, and enthusiastic educators who will nurture each child's learning, thinking and development
- Provide a friendly and caring environment for parents and families
- Be open and flexible for families and their individual needs

**Staff**

Creative Minds employs full-time Registered Early Childhood Educators (R.E.C.E.), part-time R.E.C.E.s as well as experienced non-E.C.E.s. All employees of the centre, including the cook, are fully certified in First Aid/CPR and have a satisfactory police criminal record check. All staff must adhere to many policies within the centre including our Health Policy, Program Statement Implementation Policy, Child Abuse Policy, Playground Supervision Policy, etc.

**Canada-Wide Early Learning Child Care System**

As of November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, Creative Minds opted into the Canada-Wide Early Learning Child Care System (CWELCC). The CWELCC System will:

- Give families access to more affordable and high-quality child care options
- Help lower child care fees for parents of children under the age of six
- Increase child care spaces
- Support the child care workforce
- Support inclusive child care

CWELCC system will lower average fees for participating licensed child care programs through a phased approach:

1. Reduce child care fees by an average of 25% for children under the age of six, retroactive to April 1, 2022.
2. By the end of December 2022, further reduce child care fees by 50% on average.
3. By September 2025, lower licensed child care fees to an average of \$10 per day.

Parents of children under the age of six do not have to apply to receive a child care fee reduction. Parents may be eligible for reduced fees if:

- They pay more than \$12 per day for their child's care
- Their child is under six, or
- Turns six but is enrolled in a licensed preschool, kindergarten or family age group or a licensed home child care premises, until June 30<sup>th</sup>.

Child care fees will be broken down into two categories:

- Base fees: everything considered to be a mandatory charge to a parent for providing child care, including everything a licensee is required to provide under the Child Care Early Years Act (CCEYA).
  - Creative Minds requires no other mandatory charges for providing child care except for regular child care fees which will be covered by CWELCC
- Non-base fees: fees charged for optional services (i.e. field trips, transportation) or any fees where a parent fails to meet agreement terms (i.e. fees for late pick up). These fees are not covered by CWELCC:
  - Field trip cost: \$0.00 - \$15.00
  - Late pick-up: \$1 per minute per child
  - Late payment: \$10.00 added to fees owing
  - Administrative fee: \$80.00 for bounced cheques

### **Orientation**

Before their child can be enrolled, parents will be given the opportunity to tour the center between 9:30am-11:00am during the week, by appointment only. During the tour, parents can visit the rooms, staff, and view the menus and the program. After the tour, parents will be given a registration package and an overview of its contents. It is optional for parents to bring their child with them during the tour; however, the center encourages the child to come for another visit before their first scheduled day, to ease the transition into the daycare.

### **Wait List Policy**

Creative Minds Children Services waitlist works in conjunction with the OneList, supplied by the City of Brantford. For families to be considered for a spot in our program, they must first be registered with the OneList and then registered on the centre waitlist. As spots become available, families will be chosen based on the type of spot available and where they are on the centre list. Families will be called to come and tour the centre when they are at the top of the list. If the family and centre are agreeable to each other, the family will then proceed to the registration process. Please see our Registration section for a detailed description of the process.

## **Registration Procedure**

If a parent is interested in enrolling their child, they need to first register online with the OneList. When the child's name is next on the list for a spot at Creative Minds, and their schedule fits the needs of the spot available, they will be contacted and given a tour and a registration package. The forms are due before the child is to start at the centre. A child will not be considered enrolled until a complete registration package is brought to the center.

If the child has special needs, the parent shall give the center all pertinent information, so the child has the best possible program. If the child needs extra assistance, the center will work with the parents to ensure that this is in place before the child attends the center (i.e. Lansdowne support).

## **Custody Arrangements**

The childcare staff will not get involved in the marital or custody issues of our families. Our professional role demands we stay completely impartial, as we often work closely with both sets of separated parents. If you are divorced, separated or going through custody negotiations, please inform the staff of the relevant custody and parental access details. If there are any restrictions on parental access, such as no visits or pick-ups, we will require official documentation to that effect, such as a court order or a restraining order. Without proper documentation, we cannot deny a parent access to their child. **The childcare staff will only be accountable to the enrolling parent**, who will provide the daycare with all relevant information and documentation. If there are parents who require an official letter for their lawyer or court proceedings, Creative Minds will only state information regarding the child's enrollment (i.e. date, attendance, fees, etc.) and **NOT** information about the other parent or the well-being of the child. If an unauthorized parent comes to visit or pick up their child, we will request that he or she leave. In the case of any unfortunate and difficult situation, we will call 911 and have that parent accompanied away from the premises. The safety of the staff and children of the centre is our top priority.

**\*If parents/guardians are unable to remain neutral about their shared custody arrangements and continue to place staff in uncomfortable situations due to their animosity towards each other, parents/guardians will be subject to a meeting with the owner and the child may be discharged from the centre.\***

## Payment and fees

Invoices are handed out the 1<sup>st</sup> of every month and are expected to be paid by the end of business day. Parent/guardians are responsible to pay for every available day of the month. This can range between 21 and 23 days a month. Payments and fees will be subject to a late fee of \$50 every day they are late. Payments can be made by cash, cheque or e-transfer.

	✓	5<9 Hours/Day	✓
CWELCC Toddler		\$20.98	
CWELCC Preschool		\$20.01	

## Fee Reimbursement

Families may be reimbursed, either through a refund or a credit under the following circumstances:

- There is an error in billing
- The family becomes eligible for fee subsidy or is no longer receiving subsidy

Both of these situations will be settled through a credit on next month's payment.

## Late Fee Policy

The center closes promptly at 5:00pm. Parents are required to notify the center as soon as possible if they are unable to arrive by closing time. **A late fee of \$1.00 for every minute that a child remains in the center after 5:00pm will be charged.** Time will be calculated using the clocks at the center. The dollar amount will be added to your fees and paid out to the staff who were required to watch your child after closing.

**Violation of the late fee policy may result in termination of childcare services.**

## Vacation/Illness

Parents are required to give two weeks' notice of their intent to take holidays. **Parents are still expected to pay for their holiday time.** If your child is not here on their regularly scheduled day, either vacation or due to illness, you will still be responsible to pay for those days. This policy applies to both private and subsidized parents.

## Hours of Operation/Holidays

The center is open from 7:00am – 5:00pm, Monday – Friday. As for statutory holidays, the center will be closed on the following days:

Good Friday	Labour Day	Family Day
Thanksgiving Day	Christmas Day	Boxing Day
New Year's Day	Civic Holidays	Canada Day
Professional Development Days		

On Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve, the center will close at 12pm.

## **Class Ratios**

In accordance with the Child Care and Early Years Act, the following ratio will exist in each of the program rooms:

Toddler	1:5
Preschool	1:8

## **Withdrawal from the Child Care Centre**

If, for any reason, you decide to withdraw your child from the centre, we require a four week written notice to be submitted to the office or on Lillio.

Any outstanding fees must be paid before your child's last day.

## **Discontinuation of Childcare Services**

Discontinuation of childcare services may occur if:

- Staff are unable to meet the behavioural, developmental, or physical needs of a child within the resources of our program, despite reasonable efforts and accommodations
- A child's behavior consistently poses a risk to themselves, peers, or staff, and interventions have not been successful in reducing the risk.
- Every reasonable effort has been made to accommodate children with special needs, but the program setting cannot adequately support the child's ongoing needs.
- Parents/guardians are unwilling or unable to work collaboratively with staff in addressing challenging behaviors, safety issues, or program requirements.
- Accounts that are more than 30 days in arrears without an approved payment arrangement.
- Failure to pick up a child on time on three or more occasions without extenuating circumstances
- Repeated disregard of center policies and procedures (e.g., health and safety requirements, attendance expectations, communication protocols).
- Parents/guardians fail to follow health regulations (e.g., sending a child to care while ill, not providing required medical information, or not complying with immunization or medication policies).
- Any form of harassment, threats, or abusive behavior toward staff, children, or families in the program.

## **Curriculum**

Creative Minds aims to create a welcoming, nurturing and home-like environment. Bringing natural elements into the classroom provides an infinite number of possibilities and conveys a sense of calmness and tranquility for both the children and teachers. Teachers bring in natural materials to provide opportunities for investigation, experimentation, and observation. The environment is set-up to encourage interactions among the children and the teachers and to build relationships.

Creative Minds believes in giving children the opportunity to experience various learning environments and teaching styles. The toddler and preschool programs offer a tiered learning environment based on their age and development. This will ensure the children meet their developmental milestones while at the same time being challenged.

### **J/K Prep Program**

Children who are eligible for kindergarten (turning 4 years old on or before December 31<sup>st</sup> of the following year) will be placed into our J/K Prep Program. This program is designed to help children build the skills and confidence they need to make a smooth and successful transition into kindergarten.

We understand that some families may feel their child is not ready for school, but once a child becomes school-aged, they can no longer remain at the centre. The J/K Prep Program was created specifically for this in-between stage – to provide added support and preparation for kindergarten.

In the J/K Prep Program, children focus on independence, emotional regulation, communication, cooperation, and foundational academic skills. The environment and routines mirror those of a kindergarten classroom while still providing the nurturing support of an early learning setting.

If you have questions about your child's readiness for kindergarten or how the J/K Prep Program works, we are here to support you through the process.

**Please note: Children who are eligible for kindergarten (will turn 4 years old on or before December 31<sup>st</sup>, will NOT be able to continue at Creative Minds and services will end August 31<sup>st</sup>).**

### **Observation and Documentation of Child's Development**

Observation is a way for the teachers to gain insight into how the children are thinking, feeling, and making sense of their world. Documentation is a tool the teachers will use to track your child's development. The screening tool used at the centre is Ages & Stages, and the areas of development covered include vision, hearing, emotional, fine motor, gross motor, social, self-help, communication, and learning and thinking. The screens coincide with key developmental stages up to age 6. Periodically, teachers will use the Ages & Stages Developmental Screening Tool to:

- Assess new children moving into their classroom
- Assess children moving out of their room to another
- Assess children who may be experiencing difficulty in a particular area of development

If a parent wishes to view and discuss their child's development, they can decide with their child's teacher to go over the teacher's observations and documentation.

Documentation of the children's efforts is a huge element in the classrooms. Each classroom uses many forms of documentation such as: photo albums, murals,

scrapbooks, and written observations to post around the room. This allows the children to reflect and extend their work.

### **Behaviour Guidance & Support**

At Creative Minds, we use positive strategies such as redirection, modeling, and teaching problem-solving skills to help children develop self-regulation, empathy, and social skills. Challenging behaviours are approached with patience, consistency, and understanding, and families are kept informed and involved in creating solutions. Our goal is always to support every child and family; however, if behaviours place the safety or well-being of another child or staff at risk — and all available strategies and supports have been exhausted — the centre may need to discontinue care. This step is taken only as a last resort.

### **Parking**

Parking is available in the centre parking lot behind the building. Please be conscious of others, as there may be children, parents, staff or visitors walking.

### **Entrance and Exit**

The entrance doors will be unlocked from 7:00am – 9:30am and again at 2:00pm – 5:00pm. Parents with children on the first level of the centre will use the back buzzer door (off Simpson St.) parents with children on the second and third level of the centre will use the small front door (off Wade Ave) between the two playgrounds.

### **Nutrition**

Creative Minds is committed to providing well-balanced meals and snacks according to Canada's Food Guide. We will support parents whose children require special nutritional adjustments to the meals and snacks; however, we do have children with allergies we must keep in mind. A morning snack is served between 7:00am and 8:30am, lunch between 11:00am and 11:45am, and an afternoon snack between 2:00pm and 3:00pm. Menus are posted outside of the kitchen and on Lillio. As milk is no longer a requirement in the Canada's Food Guide, we will only be serving milk on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

**Due to allergy concerns, please be aware there may be children with severe allergies in the center. Unless otherwise discussed with the Supervisor, please refrain from bringing any food or drink into the center. Everything will be provided for your child.**

### **Safety**

The centre is locked during the hours of 9:30am and 2:00pm. Parents or visitors wishing to gain entry into the centre during this time must "buzz in" at the entrance door off Simpson St. to gain entry into the building.

## **Rest and Reflection**

All children under the age of five are required, by the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*, to have rest time. Beds will be provided. The rest and reflection period is for two hours a day. The lights are turned off and calming music played to help children relax and rest. Those children who do not sleep or whose parents only want them to sleep for a specified amount of time, are provided with a 'Busy Bag' which contains quiet toys, such as: puzzles, books, small toys etc. Parents are also encouraged to provide any 'quiet' rest time activities for their child to use during this time.

## **Inclement Weather**

All children in attendance at the centre for 6 hours or more are required to play outdoors for up to 2 hours a day, weather permitting. Inclement weather is described as being temperatures lower or higher than the set temperature (at the discretion of the supervisor and the Brant County Health Unit). Weather situations, such as blizzards, freezing rain, blowing snow, thunderstorms etc., will also require the children to stay indoors.

Although Creative Minds understands children may feel under the weather or parents may feel the weather is too hot, too cold, too windy, etc., if you do NOT want your child to go outside during their scheduled outdoor time, your child, unfortunately, will not be able to attend the centre that day. Creative Minds is not equipped with extra staff to watch the children who are unable to go outside.

If outdoor play is not possible, the centre will ensure appropriate gross motor activities are planned.

Creative Minds uses The Weather Network, the Health Unit and government weather page for up-to-date weather information to make decisions concerning outdoor play, including air quality and the UV Index.

In the event the centre needs to close, due to inclement weather, during center hours, a combination of phone calls, emails and messages (using HiMama) will be used to contact parents. If the centre will not be opening, due to inclement weather, parents are to listen to CKPC 92.1 radio and watch for a message from HiMama for closure updates.

## **Clothing**

Please label your child's clothing. This will ensure that your child or staff will not have difficulty finding clothes. Please provide play clothes for painting and water play (i.e. plain t-shirt), an extra set of clothing in case of accidents, and inside shoes. Please bring in a sleep toy and blanket for rest time to give your child a sense of home and security, should your child require them.

Toddlers need to bring in a labeled cup, diapers, wipes, and lotions that may be required at diaper change, extra clothing, and a sleep toy/blanket.

***Creative Minds takes no responsibility for lost, broken, or stained items. Be mindful of what you send in with your child.***

### **Children's Belongings**

Parents are encouraged to bring in blankets for their child to use at rest time, as well as any stuffed toy that will help their child feel safe and secure while they sleep. If your child does not nap any longer, you are also welcomed to put together a "sleep bag" which will accompany your child on their cot. "Sleep Bags" can contain such items as books, puzzles, crayons and colouring books, and hand held games. Once rest time is over, these bags will be placed in your child's cubby until the next time your child is at the center. Although we are permitting handheld electronics, Creative Minds takes no responsibility over them. Also, if your child is being disruptive with the handheld device, their teachers may take the device away for the duration of rest time.

Parents are discouraged from letting their children bring toys for play time from home as they may cause conflict in the classroom and we will not be held responsible for them being lost, misplaced, stolen, or broken.

### **Field Trips**

Throughout the year, various off-site excursions will be planned to special places of interest that add an educational benefit to the children. A signed field trip form will be required for your child to go on these trips. The field trip form will include information on the destination, time, and date. A minimal charge may be required to partially cover transportation and entrance fees. If you wish your child not to go on a certain field trip, please inform staff ahead of time. You may be asked to find alternative care for your child on that day if the center cannot accommodate them while their class is on the field trip. You are invited and encouraged to join us; however, we do ask for all parents in attendance to give their full attention to the children. Please, no cell phones or any other hand-held device which may take your attention off the children. Parents wishing to attend field trips will be required to present a cleared police check with a vulnerable sector.

Throughout the year, the centre will use the neighborhood for walking-field trips. These trips may be used for nature observations, material collection, and fun!

### **Health Policy**

Staff will observe the arrival of each child to determine if they have any possible symptoms of illness. When a child becomes ill, the parent will be notified to pick up the child within an hour. **If a child has been sent home with fever, diarrhea, or vomiting, they may not return for 24 hours after their fever broke and/or last bout of diarrhea and/or vomiting. If a child requires antibiotics, they may not return for 48 hours after the first dose.** If the parent cannot be reached, we will contact the next person indicated by you on your child's emergency care form.

A parent will be contacted to pick up a sick child when the child exhibits any of the following symptoms at the centre:

**Fever** – 100f/37.8c or higher

**Diarrhea** - 2 loose stools in a 24-hour period

**Vomiting** - 1 episode

**Runny nose with yellow/green discharge** – must go home for 24-hours and may return if the discharge has improved or not gotten any worse with no new symptom.

**Rash** – only if the rash is accompanied by another symptom i.e. fever, discharge and or behaviour not consistent with the child's regular temperament.

**Yellow/Opaque Discharge from eyes or ears** - must go home and check with their doctor.

**Lice** - child needs to be treated and nits removed before they return. The child will be checked upon return to centre. If there are nits found, the child will not be able to stay.

**Irritability** - or listlessness, which is not consistent with the child's temperament, will be noted by the room teacher, who will call the parent. The child does not have to leave the centre unless their behaviour is disruptive, distracting other children from the program, or impedes their ability to participate in program activities.

**Cough:** consistent, dry cough, croupy/barking cough, phlegmy/congested cough. Must go home for 24 hours and can return if cough improves OR does not worsen and is not accompanied by additional symptoms.

**Mixture of Symptoms:** If there are two or more symptoms present at the same time (i.e. runny nose and a cough, low fever – under 100f – and a rash, etc.), the child will need to be sent home as a precaution. OR, if a child has returned 24 hours after being sent home for a cough that has gotten better but then develops a new symptom when they return, they will be required to be sent home again for another 24 hours.

**Please note:**

- ***If your child has a fever/diarrhea or vomits at home, after being picked up from the centre, they will not be able to attend the centre the following day.***
- ***Any doctor's notes testifying to underlying conditions which present the same as outbreak symptoms will NOT be used during an outbreak. As we are unable to decipher if a symptom is due to illness or an underlying condition, all children will be treated the same.***

Your child is more than welcome to come to the center when they have a mild cold (runny nose, slight cough) but are still able to participate **fully** in the daily programming. If, however, your child's mild symptoms change and become worse throughout the day, they will need to go home.

### **During an Outbreak:**

The Brant County Health Unit (BCHU) decides whether to declare an outbreak based on the number of children and/or staff presenting with the same symptoms at the same time. Once an outbreak has been declared, a notice will be sent out to all the parents along with the outbreak policy. An updated symptom check will be given to the BCHU daily until the outbreak is declared over. The Health Policy changes somewhat to:

**Fever:** 100f/37.8c or higher

**Diarrhea:** 1 loose stool

**Vomiting** – 1 episode

During an outbreak, any child sent home with any (or all) of the symptoms listed above, will be excluded for 48 hours since their last fever, vomiting and/or diarrhea episode without the use of any medication.

If an outbreak is declared, all children with medical notes on file will be required to follow the same outbreak exclusion of symptoms, due to not knowing whether the symptoms are from their medical condition or due to the illness.

### **Pandemic Protocols:**

Creative Minds reserves the right to invoke parts of the COVID-19 Parent Pandemic Handbook during times of high illness (i.e. outbreak, pandemic, etc.) or to use as illness prevention methods. At this time, Creative Minds will be invoking and continuing the following policies from the COVID-19 Parent Pandemic Handbook:

- **Cohorting:** partial cohorting by combining the toddler rooms, P2&3, the second-floor rooms, and the third-floor rooms
- **Exclusion temperature of 100f/37.8c:** we have maintained 100f/37.8c as the fever cut off to send children home. We do not see this changing in the foreseeable future; however, we will be amending this policy to allow for exceptions, which include but are not limited to:
  - The child receives a vaccination 24 hours prior to a fever - unless we are in outbreak status. The child will still be sent home, however, if their fever breaks (with no other symptoms emerging) they will be able to return the following day.
- **Fever reducing medications:** we have maintained no fever reducing medications (i.e. Tylenol, Advil, etc.) at the centre; however, we will be amending this policy to allow for:
  - toddlers who are teething may have a pain reliever on site for pain and discomfort; however, if a teething child develops a fever over 100f/37.8c, they will be sent home

Once the teething period is finished, the pain reducing medication will be sent home and will not remain at the centre.

- **Hours of Operation:** we have no plans to return to pre-COVID-19 hours

- **Administrative paperwork:** we have maintained our COVID-19 cleaning and disinfecting sheets and symptom tracking sheets to help control any increases of illness in the classrooms.
- **Sibling exclusion:** we have maintained sending a child home if their sibling becomes ill at the centre (or if anyone in the household is ill) until the sibling is well enough to return; however, we will be amending this policy to allow for exceptions, which include but are not limited to:
  - If the ill family member is not actively sick anymore (i.e. no fever, vomiting, diarrhea, etc.) and is taking a rest day before returning, their sibling is able to return to the centre.
  - **Although this policy excludes siblings from entering the centre, we reserve the right to review individual cases as there may be extenuating circumstances which need to be considered.**
- **COVID-19 positive test:** we have maintained our COVID-19 policy of excluding those who have tested positive, or are living in a household with someone who has tested positive, for 5 days; however, we will be amending this policy to:
  - If a staff/child tests positive, they are to stay home for 48 hours to assess their symptoms (if any). If after 48 hours, their symptoms do not worsen, they do not develop any new symptoms, and they feel well enough to participate in the program, they may return to the centre with a mask.
  - If someone in the household tests positive, the staff/child must remain at home for 48 hours. If they do not develop any symptoms, they may return to the centre with a mask.

### **Medication**

Any medication brought into the center that needs to be administered **MUST** be in the original container and labeled with the child's name, doctor's name, name of medication, date and expiration date, dosage, and when to be taken. A medication form will also have to be signed for the staff to administer the medication. In accordance with Ministry legislation, all medication will be in a locked container.

If your child is prescribed an antibiotic, they must stay home for 48 hours before returning to the centre. This is to ensure no allergic reactions or adverse effects from the medication.

Creative Minds no longer allows fever reducing medication to be left at the centre; however, if your child is teething, a pain reliever may be brought in for the duration of a teething period. The pain reliever will not be used for reducing fever, only to help the comfort of the child. If the child has a fever, they will need to be picked up, regardless of whether they are teething or not.

### **Anaphylaxis Policy**

Prior to enrolment, or as soon as an allergy is diagnosed, an Individual Anaphylaxis Health Care Plan will be developed with the center, the parents and appropriate health care professionals. At the time of enrolment, parents will be asked to identify any

special dietary needs their child has. Whenever a child with severe allergies is enrolled, or newly diagnosed, all staff will be informed of:

- The child's name and room
- Where the child's Action Plan will be located
- Where the child's EpiPen is located

All information on the child's Individual Anaphylaxis Health Care Plan will be reviewed annually with the parents to ensure that information is current to the child's developmental level. It is the responsibility of the parents to supply the EpiPen and ensuring that the medication has not expired.

For children requiring a special diet in which parents will need to bring in special diet foods (i.e. vegan, gluten free, etc.), they will be required to make sure the food is prepackaged and peanut/tree nut free. **Parents will NOT be allowed to bring in foods already prepared and cooked.** All foods must be cooked on the premises. Food ingredients will be left in the kitchen with the child's name clearly labeled on the packages.

### **Teething Policy**

Upon arrival, please inform your child's teacher if your child is teething. Parents may bring a pain reliever for the duration of their child's teething period; however, once their child has stopped teething, the pain reliever will need to be taken home. The pain reliever will not be used to reduce fevers. If a teething child has a fever of 100f/37.8c, they will need to go home until they are fever-free for 24 hours without the aid of a fever reducing medication.

### **Accidents**

Whether indoors, on the playground, or on a trip outside the center, the children are watched carefully; however, accidents that do occur will be reported to the parent.

If emergency medical care is necessary, we will:

- Attempt to contact the parent or guardian through the list of persons on the emergency information form
- Call ambulance
- Have child taken to the nearest hospital in the company of a staff member

Emergency medical care will be considered but not limited to:

- Child with no history of asthma or breathing related conditions have sudden onset labored breathing, or child with a history of breathing related conditions are unable to control their breathing with puffers supplied by their parent/guardian
- Child loses consciousness
- Child has a seizure
- Child has broken a long bone (i.e. leg, arm, etc.)
- Child has excessive blood loss
- Staff were required to use an emergency EpiPen

- Staff were required to follow instructions on a medical plan

Any situations not listed above will be up to the discretion of the Supervisor onsite.

Any of the expenses incurred will be the responsibility of the child's parents or guardians.

Situations not requiring emergency medical care will still be documented with an accident report. The report will detail what happened, first aid used (if any), and all monitoring of the injury until the child is picked up. Parents will be required to sign the report and a copy of the report will be given to the parents, if requested.

### **Policy for Impaired Parent/Guardian**

- The staff will try to persuade the parent/guardian to call their emergency contact person to come pick up the child instead
- If unsuccessful, the staff will offer to call a cab for the parent/guardian and arrange for an alternate pick-up from the child's emergency list
- If the parent decides to drive home, the staff is to get the license plate number and description of the car and call the police
- If the parent decides to walk or take the bus, a staff is to call the Brant Family and Children's Services.

### **Injuries and Other Emergencies**

Minor cuts and abrasions suffered while at the center will receive proper care -- specifically, they will be washed with soap and warm water and properly bandaged. Treatment will be reported, and we will tell you how and when the injury occurred. We are also required to log any injuries we observe on your child which have occurred outside of our care, for liability purposes as well as for the well-being of the child. All Accident Reports will be either photocopied or sent through email for your record.

Creative Minds Children Services, Inc. has an Emergency Management Policy and Procedure Manual to follow in emergency situations. In the event of an emergency, parents will be notified by phone when it is safe to do so. If parents desire to review the entire policy, please see the office.

If the Emergency Evacuation Procedure must be implemented, all staff are aware of all designated emergency exits and procedures. The following steps will be followed:

- Children are informed to stop playing and line up by emergency exit located in the classroom
- Staff will ensure that all children are present and lead children to designated location
- Once at the emergency location, staff will re-call children's name to ensure all is present

## **Lockdown Procedures**

In the event of a lockdown situation, the centre and classroom doors will be locked and windows covered. Children and teachers will remain in their classrooms until such time as the lockdown has been lifted. For a more detail explanation of the lockdown procedures, please see the centre office for a more detailed description of the procedure.

## **Respect**

We will instill two patterns of behavior in the children: respect for other people and respect for property. There will be no hitting or shoving other children or verbal abuse towards each other. If a child is in a situation where this is occurring, they will be redirected to another activity. If the behaviour persists, there will be a conversation with the family of the child.

Creative Minds also believes in the respect between teachers and families. Even though there may be times when an upsetting situation occurs or something has happened in our individual lives, we need to maintain a certain level of respect with each other. We all serve as role models for these children and, therefore, we must hold ourselves to a higher standard. If there is a conflict between families and/or teachers, please refer to the Parent Complaint Policy or come to the office.

## **Program Statement Implementation Policy**

- Guidance is used to teach children through love, consistency and firmness.
- Children will be treated with understanding, respect, and with consideration of their development and age.
- Corporal punishment will never be used.
- The rules at the center are frequently explained.
- Positive reinforcement, redirection will be used to guide the children.

## **Suspected Child Abuse Policy**

Any staff member or person who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected must report the suspected abuse to the appropriate Children's Aid Society (CAS). It must be reported to CAS by the staff member on the day the suspicion is noticed. The supervisor will also be notified of the action taken. The Children's Aid Society will then commence an investigation and will contact the family, usually within 24 hours. In accordance with CAS guidelines, the center will not inform the parents that a report has been made.

## **Serious Occurrence Posting:**

If a serious occurrence occurs at the centre, notification will be posted outside the room of occurrence within 24 hours of occurrence. The notification will be posted for a period of 10 days.

### **Compliance of Policies of the Centre**

All parents are expected to be familiar with and adhere to the center's policies and procedures. If a parent fails to comply with the center's policies and procedures, the following will apply:

- A Verbal warning by the Supervisor
- Written warning by the Supervisor
- A discussion as to whether their child should be discharged from the center

### **Supervision of Students and Volunteers**

Parents will be notified of any students or volunteers at the centre. Parents need to know and understand these students and/or volunteers could be male or female and that they have gone through an orientation before entering the classroom. Volunteers and students are not permitted to take children out of the classroom, or away from the center; nor are they alone with children at any time. They will be assigned a teacher in the classroom, in which they are to stay with at all times.

Students, volunteers and new hires receive an orientation which covers the following:

- Review of their Police Vulnerable Sector Check
- Job Descriptions
- Behavior Management
- Philosophy of daycare and policy and procedures.
- Playground policies and procedures
- Responsibilities

### **Complaint Resolution Procedures**

If there are any concerns or complaints regarding your child or the day care program in general, please contact your child's teachers to discuss the issue. If the issue cannot be resolved completely then contact the centre supervisor. We can only improve our service if you let us know of any concerns. Our office is always open to communicate with parents about their child's care. Please see Parent Complaint Policy for more detail.

### **Prohibited Practices**

As per the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, no licensee shall permit, with respect to a child receiving child care at a child care centre it operates or at a premises where it oversees the provision of child care,

1. There shall be no corporal punishment of a child by an employee or by another child or group of children;
2. There shall be no physical restraint of a 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 themselves, or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until risk of injury is no longer imminent;

3. There shall be no locking of the exits of the child care centre for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures;
4. There shall be no use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame, or frighten the child or undermine their self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
5. There shall be no depriving a child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding;
6. There shall be no inflicting any bodily harm on children, including making children eat or drink against their will.

The following policies and procedures are attached. If parents/guardians would like to review any of the centre's other policies and procedures, please come to the office and ask to view the Policy and Procedure Manual.

Policies and Procedures attached:

- Parent Concern Policy
- Program Statement
- Arrival and Departure Policy
- Waitlist Policy

# Parent Concern Policy

Creative Minds understands the trust parents put into the teachers when they drop their child off at the centre. Although parents receive and are given as much information as possible about their child's teachers, classrooms, and program, it is natural for parents to have doubts or concerns about the care their child is receiving. On occasion, there may even be a serious concern in which they may need to approach the teacher or the supervisor. The parent-teacher relationship is the most beneficial when each party views the other as a valuable partner and resource.

Upon enrolment, the supervisor shares with parents the relevant policies, rules, and schedules so that parents will know what to expect and to ensure the parents understand and are comfortable; however, situations arise, and a concern may present itself.

## General Overview

When addressing concerns and complaints, Creative Minds expects all parents and teachers to:

1. Maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.
2. Acknowledge their common goal is to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties.
3. Act in good faith and in a calm and courteous manner.
4. Show respect and understanding of each other's point of view and value difference, rather than judge and blame.
5. Understand that all parties have rights and responsibilities which must be balanced.
6. Ensure all parties are aware of their right to advocacy when communicating the issues involved in the complaint and in negotiating an outcome.
7. If at any point a parent/guardian or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused, or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the supervisor.

In addition to the expectations stated above, all parties will be expected to address complaints:

- Courteously
- Efficiently
- Fairly
- Promptly, within timelines agreed upon with the parent

It is Creative Minds intention to:

- Be open and have frequent communication with parents – parents should feel well-informed about the day-to-day experiences and care of their child
- Have an open-door policy, where parents are welcomed to drop in and see their children at play
- Have a healthy and safe environment, where children are well supervised
- Ensure the teachers and supervisor is willing to work with the parents on problems or limitations
- Ensure parents receive notification of any changes to their child's programming
- Ensure all teaches and supervisor are non-judgmental and respect family background and values

- Ensure teachers are warm and loving with the children in their care and have both training and experience in childcare

## Parents

To promote positive, open communication, parents should keep in mind:

- To be mindful of the other person's perspective.
- The teacher(s) have chosen this profession because of their genuine interest and love for caring for children – they are making decisions based on what they feel is best for the children in their care.
- Early Childhood Educators are much more than babysitters – they are committed, educated professionals.

Before approaching the teacher(s):

- Clearly identify the point of friction and its cause – are there underlying issues that are causing their distress?
- Have a concrete solution or resolution in mind

## Teachers

If a parent comes to a teacher with a concern, observation, or complaint, the teacher will:

- Not procrastinate – teachers will meet or call a parent right away as this is the most direct method of coming to a successful resolution as soon as possible. The longer the teacher waits, the more likely the small event will fester and color all future contact with the parent.
- Acknowledge the parent's concern – teachers will confirm/affirm the parent's perception of the problem before offering their own explanation of the situation. Some complaints are obvious and direct, and others are masking underlying circumstances or conditions.
  - Use active listening practices
    - Be present in the conversation
    - Show interest through eye contact
    - Ask open-ended questions
    - Paraphrase what is being said
    - Withhold judgements
- Be assertive but not abrasive – If the issue is a breach of Creative Minds policies and procedures, the teacher will clearly state that the protocols apply to all children and parents, with no exceptions; however, the teacher will make a conscious effort to not:
  - Cross their arms
  - Roll their eyes
  - Furrow their brow
  - Frown
  - Use a negative tone or statements
- Document all efforts – teachers will document all and any communication they have with parents about any kind of complaint. Documentation is useful in establishing a timeline of events, if necessary.

- Although Creative Minds uses a parent communication app, all teachers will document difficult messages or conversations with parents in their program room logbook.

### Supervisor

If, after meeting with the teacher(s), a parent is not satisfied with the outcome of their communication with their child's teacher(s), the parent may set up a meeting with the supervisor. The supervisor will:

- Collect all relevant information from the teacher(s) involved, as well as
- Collect all relevant information from the parent
- Set-up a meeting with both parents and teacher(s) in attendance
- During the meeting:
  - The parent will present their concern
  - The teacher will present their assessment of the situation/circumstances
  - The supervisor will decide based on what is best for the child in 2 business days

### Procedures

<b>Nature of Issue or Concern:</b>	<b>Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:</b>	<b>Steps for Staff/Supervisor in Responding to Issue/Concern:</b>
<p><b>Program Room Related</b></p> <p>E.g.: schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements</p> <p>etc.</p>	<p>If a parent/guardian has a concern with their child's classroom, they are to first bring their concerns to their child's teachers.</p> <p>If a resolution cannot be made and/or the parent/guardian feel the situation has not been resolved, they may report their concerns to the supervisor.</p> <p>We encourage all our parents/guardians to communicate with their teachers before including the supervisor. We believe in building strong family ties with the centre, and this can only be done through communication among the parents/guardians and staff.</p>	<p>Upon receiving a complaint concerning their program room, the teacher(s) will receive the complaint, in writing, and a meeting will be arranged with the parent/guardian within 2 business days. This will allow for the teacher to collect documentation or supporting reports, as well as allow the teacher(s) and the parent/guardian to reflect on the concern and come up with solutions, without the pressure of a face-to-face confrontation,</p> <p>especially during classroom hours.</p> <p><b>Staff will:</b></p>

<p><b>General, Centre or Operations Related</b></p> <p>E.g.: childcare fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus etc.</p>	<p>All concerns or issues related to the daily operations, policies, staffing or licensing of the centre must be reported to the supervisor.</p> <p>Although the centre has its policies that can be updated and changed to reflect the demands of the families, there are many policies that were created to adhere to certain standards created by the Ministry, Health Department, Fire Department, etc.</p>	<p>Document the concern/issue in detail. The documentation should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The date and time the issue/concern was received.</li> <li>● The name of the person who received the issue/concern.</li> <li>● The name of the person reporting the issue/concern.</li> <li>● The details of the issue/concern; and</li> <li>● Any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Staff, Parent, Supervisor Related</b></p>	<p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, parents/guardians, 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.</p> <p>If a parent/guardian has an issue/concern with a specific employee of the centre, they are to raise their concern with that employee first. If, for whatever reason, a reasonable solution cannot be reached, the parent/guardian is expected to report to the supervisor.</p>	<p><b>Supervisor</b></p> <p>The supervisor will ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party with 2 business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Reasons for the delay will be documented in writing.</p> <p><b>Resolution</b></p> <p>The teacher(s) will provide a resolution or outcome to the parent/guardian who raised the issue/concern.</p>
<p><b>Student/Volunteer Related</b></p>	<p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, parents/guardians, etc., that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians</p>	<p>If the parent/guardian is not satisfied with the outcome or resolution, they may report to the supervisor to conduct their own investigation.</p>

	<p>become aware of the situation.</p> <p>If a parent/guardian as a concern/issue with a student or volunteer, they are to report to the staff responsible for supervising the student/volunteer. If the staff is unable to come to a solution with the parent/guardian concerning the student/volunteer, the parent/guardian will report to the supervisor.</p>	
--	---	--

**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 Supervisor, Vicki McNabb

Issues/concerns related to compliance with requirements set out in the *Child Care and Early Years Act., 2014* and Ontario Regulation 137/15 should be reported to the Ministry of Education’s Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch.

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

**Contacts:**

**Owner/Operator: Vicki McNabb 519-209-7485**

**Supervisor: Caitlin Reansbury 519-771-2831**

**Assistant Supervisor: Ashley Lavallee 709-660-9190**

**Health and Safety Representative:**

**Child and Family Services of Grand Erie: 519-753-8681**

**Ministry of Education: Marie-Josée Baril RECE (365) 822-1023**

**Health Unit: 519-753-4937**

**City of Brantford: 519-759-4150**

**Fire Department: 519-752-4336**

**Landlord: Richard Kun 1-905-510-9424**

## **Concerns about Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a Child**

Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, is required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent/guardian will be advised to contact the Children's Aid Society directly.

Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to CAS as per the "Duty to Report" requirement under the *Child and Family Services Act*.

# Program Statement

## Goals

The goals of Creative Minds Children Services Inc. are to:

- Provide a warm, nurturing, and safe environment
- Provide an educational and emergent based curriculum for each child to develop in the areas of physical, social, emotional, cognitive, creative, and moral growth
- Provide an inclusive program to enhance the children's awareness, understanding, and respect for cultural differences and similarities
- Value each child as an individual with unique capabilities and interests
- Provide qualified, caring, and enthusiastic educators who will nurture each child's learning, thinking and development
- Provide a friendly and caring environment for parents and families
- Be open and flexible for families and their individual needs

## Program

Creative Minds Children Services, Inc. offers half day and full day programs for children aged 18 months to 4 years. The license capacity is for 174 children.

Creative Mind Children Services, Inc. uses a child-centred approach and ensures that each child is given an opportunity to learn based on their interests, abilities, and learning styles. The educators use a variety of hands-on materials, so learning is fun and exciting as well as educational. The children have many opportunities to explore a wide variety of activities, both teacher and child oriented, to promote their motor, cognitive, social-emotional, and communication development. Children are competent, capable, curious and rich in potential. The curriculum is balanced between indoor and outdoor play, as well as a variety of small and large group activities.

Our Program Statement is based around the 4 Foundations from *How Does Learning Happen?*: Belonging, Well-Being, Engagement, and Expression. *How Does Learning Happen?* includes goals for children, expectations for programs and provides a starting point for teachers to reflect on the types of environments, experiences and interactions which can bring out the best in children, parents, and the teachers.

**Belonging: "Every child has a sense of belonging when he or she is connected to others and contributes to their world." (HDLH p.12)**

(B) Our program will strive to ensure all families establish caring and nurturing relationships with the teachers, so the children will be able to make connections between their home and the centre. The classroom atmosphere will promote a warm, inviting, and inclusive environment for all children and families who attend the centre. Creative Minds will provide many opportunities for children to play and learn together, as well as to interact with children in other classrooms. Creative Minds will ensure

teachers greet each child when they are dropped off into the classroom with a smile and kind word. Teachers will get down to the children's level and offer validation to ensure to foster the children's positive self-esteem. We will offer an "Open Door Policy" where parents are encouraged to visit and 'pop' in when they can, as well as to provide positive interactions with parents at drop-off and pick-up times.

(H) Effective communication with parents is essential to a centre's success. Creative Minds will maintain an up-to-date Parent Handbook, designed to answer any questions parents may have about the generalities of the program. And, every month, each classroom will create a newsletter and calendar, containing information about upcoming events in the classrooms and the centre. The centre will use the Lillio App to communicate with parents and to gain their feedback on the quality of care their children are receiving. The Parent Concern Policy will guide parents and teachers in addressing any concerns may either parent or teachers may have. Through the organization of special days like a Mother's Tea Party or a Father's BBQ, Creative Minds will be able to present parents/guardians the opportunity to come into their child's classroom and the centre and explore what their child is learning, as well as interact with their teachers. The use of documentation boards and binders, Parent-Teacher Nights, and the Parent Board will provide parents the opportunity to view what activities and opportunities their children are experiencing at the centre.

(I) Creative Minds believes in creating a network of local support which supports play as an important role in encouraging children to feel a part of their community and in supporting families by providing access to community resources. Creative Minds will provide the opportunity for the children to experience and explore their community and make connections to the real world. The teachers will organize field trips, encourage organizations to share their specialties, as well as participate on community walks. Children will be able to connect with local authorities, such as the Fire Department, Police Department, Ambulance, etc., during Community Week. Creative Minds will also provide support for co-op students from local high-schools, colleges, and universities offering placements and mentorship opportunities.

**Well-being: "Every child is developing a sense of self, health, and well-being." (HDLH pg. 12), which includes physical and mental wellness, and developing self-care, self-regulation, and self-awareness.**

(A) Creative Minds is committed to nurturing the body with carefully planned, well-balanced, and diversified meals and snacks in accordance with the Canada's Food Guide. Our menu will be ever evolving to meet the individual needs of the children, along with children who have allergies and/or dietary restrictions. We will encourage physical exercise and activities, which promote a healthy living style, through a variety of indoor and outdoor activities. We will promote the self-regulation of the children through each teacher getting to know the children individually to identify and work towards proactively lessening stressors, and to help the children become more self-aware. Teachers will work closely with the children and model problem solving skills

and behaviours, as well as help them identify their feelings, the feelings of other children, as well as collaborate with the children to come up with possible solutions to a problem. The teachers will practice modelling and co-regulating skills.

(G) In accordance with the Childcare and Early Years Act, 2014, the Creative Minds daily routine consists of morning and afternoon outdoor opportunities, as well as active play and rest and reflection times; however, we understand some parents may have requests which differ from the centre's daily routines and we try our best to accommodate. The daily schedule will be flexible to meet the individual needs of the children, within the allowable space and ratio requirements. Creative Minds will stress the importance and value behind listening to the children's behavioural cues and verbal requests as an indicator of when to shift to another part of the daily routine - except rest and eating times. Materials for both gross motor and quiet activities will always be available inside and outside and, weather permitting, the children will spend at least 2 hours a day engaging in outdoor activities.

**Engagement: "Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind, and senses." (HDLH pg. 12).**

(D) Our classroom schedules, routines and in-classroom bathroom facilities will allow for the children to have long, uninterrupted periods of play, in which there will be a variety of materials to stimulate different kinds of play; blocks, sensory, dress-up etc. The materials will be 'open-ended' and encourage further exploration. The teachers will provide various materials such as loose parts and natural elements to encourage imagination and creative play. Items from the real world will be brought into the classrooms, such as dishes, lamps, utensils, plants, rocks, fish, etc., to promote the learning of the natural world. Creative Minds will encourage the children to take the lead in their own learning, as well as inspire the children to develop their own activities to share with the other children. Teachers will aspire to engage in more discussions and open-ended questions with the children and their activities, to help create more opportunities to observe what the children's interests are. The teachers will take the children's interests and build the program around them.

(E) As Creative Minds teachers are creating, preparing, and executing activities, they will also be alert and ready to be a part of any free play and to recognize, value and respond to spontaneous teachable moments. The teachers will understand their role as co-learners with the children and promote active, creative, and meaningful exploration and inquiry. The teachers will spend time looking at the world through the eyes of the children and putting themselves in their shoes, to understand the world as the children see it. By observing, documenting, and engaging in open-ended conversations with the children, the teachers will gain knowledge of the children's interests and will plan for and provide materials and activities to support their interests. The teachers will plan for and invite the children to participate in various activities, such as planting a garden, cooking pizza for lunch, etc. Creating a supportive environment, through child-initiated and

adult-initiated experiences, will promote the empowerment and the courage for children to take ownership over their own learning.

(F) The space, design, and arrangement of the program room are important components in creating a positive learning environment for the children. Creative Minds will create a safe environment where the children are free to explore without fear of failure. The children will be taught to be respectful of other ideas. The classroom environment will incorporate the feelings of 'home' through items like lamps, area rugs, natural lighting, picture frames, etc., which will create a warm and natural home-like setting. The teachers will ensure all items in the program room, at the children's level, can be utilized by the children, and to change the environment based on the needs and interests of the children. The teachers understand the importance of the environment being a third teacher.

(J) Creative Minds will encourage the continuous growth of its teachers. Creative Minds will encourage all teachers, RECEs and EAs, to engage in continuous professional learning through a variety of workshops, training, and other various activities and opportunities. On a regular basis, teachers will be given the opportunity to take part in staff meetings and team meetings with their room partners and/or age grouping. The College of Early Childhood Education requires RECEs to fulfill their expectations to maintain their registry with the college. Workshops and training opportunities provided by Lansdowne Children Centre, Ontario Early Years Centre, or any other early year's resource centre, will be made available for teachers to continue their professional development.

**Expression: "Every child is a capable communicator who expresses himself or herself in many ways." (HDLH pg. 12).**

(C) The teachers will understand their role as educators in helping the children interact and communicate in positive ways to support their ability to self-regulate. The teachers will create environments in which they can observe the physical and emotional states of the children and respond to them in a warm and caring manner. As there are many ways a child can express themselves, the environment will provide ample amounts of opportunities for the children to explore and express themselves in whichever way they want. For the children to learn and understand how to positively interact with their peers, the teachers will speak to the children using positive words and a positive tone. They will model appropriate behaviours, empathy, and use self-regulation out loud for the children to hear. The teachers will also have discussions and use open-ended questions to talk about emotions and to help the children develop their own calming techniques and strategies. The teachers will promote problem-solving by helping the children to listen to others, express their emotions, and help them to think of how others may be affected by their actions and words.

## **Program Statement Review**

(K) Throughout the year, Creative Minds will continuously document and review the impact of the strategies set out in this program statement on the children and their families. The supervisor observes the classroom environments monthly and documents the interactions between the teachers and children, activities, and experiences which the children are exploring, and an overall sense of the classroom. Each teacher is observed monthly on their interactions with children, parents, other staff, and the supervisor. They are also assessed on their knowledge of the program statement and the policies and procedures.

Creative Minds will hold a committee once a year to assess the strategies, set out in this Program Statement, on the children and their families. This committee will assemble, evaluate, and assess the goals and determine if any of the goals have been reached. If goals have been reached, the committee will then generate new goals for the centre. The new goals will be added to the Program Statement and a copy will be handed out to all staff and families.

## **Arrival and Departure Policy**

To help support the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care at Creative Minds, all parents, staff, and volunteers and students will follow the procedures stated below. This policy will make clear the roles and responsibilities for ensuring the safe arrival and dismissal of the children, including what steps are to be taken when a child does not arrive at the centre as expected.

### **Accepting a child into care**

When accepting a child into care at the time of drop-off, staff in the room must:

- Greet the parent/guardian and child
- Inquire into the state of the child, such as:
  - Did they sleep well?
  - Did they eat breakfast?
  - Special events that they may be excited about, or
  - Any event that may influence the child's well-being
- Ask the parent/guardian if there are any changes to the child's pick-up procedure (i.e. someone other than the parent/guardian picking up). If the parent/guardian indicates that someone other than the child's parent/guardians will be picking up, the staff must confirm that the person is listed on the authorized pick-up list or if the individual is not listed, ask the parent/guardian to provide authorization for pick-up in writing (i.e. a note, email, communication app, etc.)
- Document the changes in the log book
- Sign the child into the attendance record.

When accepting a child into care, staff are to ensure parents are accompanying their child into the classroom and informing their teacher of their arrival. It is also the responsibility of the parent/guardian to inform their child's teacher of their arrival. This not only ensures the safety of the children but also allows for a smoother transition for the child, parent, and teacher. Parents will be reminded to call the centre if their child will be late or absent, or to message on the parent/teacher communication app.

### **Where a child has not arrived in care as expected**

Where a child does not arrive at the centre and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off (i.e. leave a voice message, communication app, etc.), the staff in the classroom will inform the Supervisor and they will:

- Contact the parent/guardians via communication app or phone call and leave a message.

Once the child's absence has been confirmed, program staff shall document the child's absence on the attendance and any additional information about the child's absence in the daily log.

### **Releasing a child from care**

The staff who is supervising the child at the time of pick-up shall only release the child to the child's parent/guardian or person that the parent/guardian as provided written authorization for, either through adding the person to the child's emergency contact information or written communication to the child's teachers (i.e. email, communication app, etc.). Where the staff are unaware of the person picking the child up (i.e. parent/guardian or authorized person):

- Confirm with another staff member that the person picking up the child is the child's parent/guardian/authorized person
- Where the above is not possible, the parent/guardian/authorized person will be asked for photo identification and confirm the person's information against the parent/guardian/authorized person's name on the child's file or written authorization.

### **Where a child has not been picked up as expected (before centre closes)**

Where a parent/guardian has previously communicated with the staff a specific time or timeframe that their child is to be picked up from the centre and the child has not been picked up by within 30 minutes of the pick up time, the Supervisor will contact the parent/guardian either via the communication app or by phone and advise that the child is still in care and has not been picked up.

- Where the Supervisor is not able to reach the parent/guardian, the Supervisor will leave a message and try to message and/or call again within 15 minutes. Where the person picking up the child is an unauthorized person and their contact information is available, the Supervisor will proceed with contacting the person to confirm pick-up as per the parent/guardian's instructions or leave a voice message to contact the centre.
- Where the Supervisor has not heard back from the parent/guardian or unauthorized person who was to pick up the child, the Supervisor will begin contacting the child's emergency contacts.
- In the event neither parent/guardian/unauthorized or emergency contacts have been reached, the Supervisor will wait until the program closes and then refer to procedures under "where a child has not been picked up and program is closed."

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

The procedure below will be followed should there be a child not picked up by the time the centre closes:

- Where a parent/guardian or unauthorized person who was supposed to pick up a child from the centre and has not arrived by 5:00pm, staff will ensure the child is given a snack and an activity, while they await their pick up
- One closing staff will stay with the child, while the Supervisor proceeds with calling the parent/guardian to advise the child is still at the centre and inquire their pick-up time. In the case where the person picking up the child is an authorized person, the staff will contact the parent/guardian first and then proceed to contact the authorized person responsible for pick-up, if unable to reach the parent/guardian.
- If the Supervisor is unable to reach the parent/guardian or authorized person who was responsible for picking up the child, the Supervisor will proceed calling all the emergency contacts listed in the child's file.
- Where the Supervisor is unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized person listed in the child's file by 5:30pm, the Supervisor will proceed with contacting Child and Family Services of Grand Erie at (519) 753-8681. The closing staff and Supervisor will follow the Child and Family Services of Grand Erie's direction with respect to next steps.

### **Dismissing a child from care without supervision procedures**

Staff will only release children from care to the parent/guardian or other authorized adult. Under no circumstances will children be released from care to walk home alone.

## Waitlist Policy

Creative Minds Children Services tries to accommodate all children and families; however, there are times when the centre will be at full capacity. During this time, families will be added to a waitlist until such time as a space for their child is made available. There is NO fee to be placed on the waitlist; however, to secure a spot on the waitlist, parents/guardians must:

- Register with the Brantford OneList with the following information:
  - Parent's/Guardian's first and last names
  - Best contact phone numbers and/or email address
  - Expected start date
  - Child's name
  - Child's date of birth (unborn children may be added to the list with expected month and year of birth)
- Contact the office with your intent to enroll at the centre, either through email or phone call

### How does the waitlist work?

- All parents wanting to be placed on the Creative Minds Waitlist must register with the Brantford OneList. Only those registered will be looked at.
- If there are no spots currently available for their child, a parent is asked to provide the required information for their file on the waitlist
  - Parents are asked to be mindful and strategic of their expected start date - they may state the earliest month their child can start as well as the month they need the space for (this will increase the chances of gaining a spot as they become available)
- Parents are required to maintain up-to-date contact information and report any changes to the centre
- Each age group has their own waitlist
- There is no specific amount of time a family may be on the waitlist before being offered a spot at the centre
- Spaces are created when a family or child leaves the centre. Spaces can be available at any point during the year and at any point during the month
- The centre will be able to contact families within 2 weeks before any given space is available, as a 2-week notice is required for notice of a child's withdrawal. Only once the withdrawal is in writing will the centre contact the next family on the waitlist.
- All families waiting for a particular month are contacted when the spaces are available. Even if the month has passed, if the child is still within the age group of the room, the parents will be offered the space.
- Once a family has been contacted from the waitlist, they are given a specified amount of time to return the call and express continued interest in the space available. If they do not respond within the specified amount of time, they will not

be considered for the space and the centre will continue with the next family in line.

- From the families who return the call from the centre, within the specified amount of time, the family with the highest seniority date will have first official refusal of the available space.
- For the families who expressed continued interest in a spot, they will be contacted to let them know that another family has filled the space.
- If a family is called for a space and they do not wish to take the spot at that time, their place/seniority on the waitlist will remain the same.
- Parents/Guardians may call at any time and change the information on their file with no consequences i.e. moving from the Infant list to the Toddler list.
- Families will remain on the wait list until they ask the centre to take them off.
- Only families who have been offered a space will be able to tour the centre.

### **Subsidy Requirement and How It Affects the Waitlist**

The City of Brantford requires that at least 20% of the centre's enrollment be comprised of subsidized families.

#### **When the Centre Has *Not Yet Met* the 20% Subsidized Requirement:**

- The centre may only offer available spaces to families who require subsidy
- Families may be pre-screened by a Child Care Representative to determine their eligibility
- Only families likely to qualify for subsidy will be considered
- Families contacted during this time are **not guaranteed a space** and must complete the subsidy application process to move forward

#### **When the Centre *Has Met* the 20% Requirement:**

- The centre may offer spaces to both private pay and subsidized families
- Families will be contacted in order of priority based on the regular Waitlist Policy

#### **Waitlist Priority will be given to:**

- Those with siblings at the centre
- Children currently enrolled and needing to move up to the next age group
- Friends/family/coworkers of current families
- Past families
- Child's birthday range
- Children registered on the Brantford OneList
- Children of teachers or students of Laurier University

For confidentiality, the waitlist will be kept in the centre office. Parents can contact the office at any point to ask where they are on the waitlist. As there are many factors when considering offering a family a space, there can be no specific number given to them; however, the date of enrollment on the Brantford OneList (with all other factors being equal) will be the official waitlist number.

Creative Minds Children Services, Inc. reserves the right to make changes, without notice, to the waitlist policy in the best interest of the centre.