

# Couchiching Child Care Centre

## Parent Handbook



Revised November 20, 2025

## **Program Statement of Couchiching Child Care Centre**

Our belief at the Couchiching Child Care Centre is that our children are gifts from the Creator, therefore entrusting us with the responsibility of guiding and nurturing the over-all well being of our future leaders.

At Couchiching Child Care Centre, we believe that the children are competent and capable individuals. We do acknowledge that positive experiences in a Childs' early childhood will set the foundation for lifelong learning, behaviour, health and well being. With this in mind; we are focused on a rich environment to create optimal experiences for the children.

We focus on our traditional Anishinaabe culture. We understand the importance of the identity within our heritage and the importance of improving our cultural beliefs.

Couchiching Child Care Centre follows "How Does Learning Happen?" Ontario's Pedagogy of the Early Years (2014) as a guiding document under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014.

### **Hours of Operation**

The Child Care Centre will be open from 7:45 a.m. – 4:45 p.m.

The Child Care Centre will be closed on the following days in accordance with the Couchiching First Nation Band Policy:

Treaty Day	Native Solidarity Day
Good Friday	Labour Day
Easter Monday	Thanksgiving Day
Victoria Day	Civic Holiday
Dominion Day	Band Employee Staff Days

\* Christmas Holidays coincide with the school holidays.

\*Professional Development Days coincide with the school Professional Development Days.

\*Sufficient Notice will be given to parent (s)/Guardians regarding Band Employee Staff Days.

When a holiday coincides with a weekend, the Friday prior to the holiday shall be taken as a holiday.

### **Age Groups**

Child Care Services will be available for the following groups:

Infant – Birth to 18 months  
Toddler – 18 months – 30 months  
Preschool – 30 months – 6 years old

### **Admission Policy**

An interview will be arranged to familiarize you and your child with the surrounds, to answer any questions you may have to make sure your admission forms are complete prior to enrollment. An incomplete file will not be accepted.

Due to the limited number of spaces, the Couchiching Child Care Centre cannot always guarantee that spaces will be available for your child to move from program to program. However, the manager will make every effort to move children into the next program.

The Manager will be following the Conditions of Enrollment as stated in our Parent handbook. The parent(s)/guardians are responsible to keep the contact information current and updated at all times. This is for the safety of your child and to avoid termination of child care services.

### **Conditions of Full-Time Enrollment**

Parent(s)/guardians have to be paid employees or going to school at least 4 hours per day between the hours of 7:45AM – 4:45PM in order for a child to hold a spot in the Couchiching Child Care Centre.

In the event of a waiting list and the high demand for child care, the following criteria will be used for enrolling children in the Couchiching Child Care Centre.

- Band Employees
- Band Members who are working or attending school
- Date of application submitted

Parent(s)/Guardians attending school will be given two (2) weeks to gain employment for the summer once their schooling is finished for the year. Parent(s)/Guardians are to notify the Centre immediately once school is finished.

### **Procedure for Students**

- Notify the Centre once school is finished for the year
- Two (2) weeks will be given to gain employment to avoid disruption of child care services
- End of two (2) weeks and no employment a Letter of Termination of Services will be issued.

**\*\*Exceptions will be made in the Socialization and other Community Programs. Please see Manager for further details.**

If you are using a Socialization spot you are required to pick up your child by 3:30PM, unless requested by the Manager that day.

If you are off work for the day, your child may attend, but you are required to pick them up by 3:30PM.

### **Employment Verification**

Employment Verification forms shall be filled out by parent(s)/guardians and must be updated if there are any changes regarding employment or school.

If parent(s)/guardians are attending school a timetable must be submitted each semester; failure to do so can result in termination of child care services. This will be the sole responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian.

### **Couchiching Child Care Centre Program Enhancement Fee Policy**

The Couchiching Child Care Centre Program Enhancement Fee Policy fee for each child will be \$5.00 per day. Monies collected will be used for Program Enhancement for the Couchiching Child Care Centre.

\*\*\*\*\*No monies will be kept in the building\*\*\*\*\*

#### **Attendance**

In the event that your child has to be picked up from the Centre the parent(s)/guardians will be charged a full day. There will be NO partial fee.

Regular attendance is not mandatory; the Couchiching Child Care Centre encourages parent(s)/guardians to spend quality time with your child on your days off or not attending school.

#### **Refunds**

There will be no refunds.

#### **Payment Schedule**

Invoices will be issued to parent(s)/guardians on the 8th of each month. Cash payments are required in full on or before the 20th of each month. If the 20th falls on a Saturday or Sunday payment will have to be made on the Friday prior. We will NOT be accepting any personal checks.

#### **Failure to Pay Procedure**

- Billed the 8<sup>th</sup> of every month
- Due the 20<sup>th</sup> of every month
- On the 5<sup>th</sup> day of non-payment, a Late Payment letter will be issued along with a \$20.00 administration fee; this will also have to be paid.
- Letter of Termination of Child Care Services will be issued if non-payment after 2 days of Late Payment Letter.

You will then be required to pay monies owing before your application for re-admission for your child is even considered and then you will be put on the waiting list.

It is the parent(s)/guardian responsibility to follow the policy to ensure payment is made and to avoid disruption of their childcare services.

### **Four C's Waitlist Policy**

Childs names will be placed on the waitlist and dated the day that the supervisor receives the application. Families must have all information requested from application form including up to date immunization record and previous child care account in good standing in order to secure a position on the waitlist. If information changes before enrollment such as acquired employment, then it is up to the families to update information for consideration.

The Wait List will be reviewed and families contacted when a position becomes available. As well as factors outlined in the Priority Allocation and Special Consideration Section, a child's age and position on the list will be considered at the time of space availability. The supervisor will give parents the best approximation date and this shall be in no way considered a guarantee of enrolment.

In the event that a family is offered a spot and they refuse, they will have the option of removing their name from the wait list or to be repositioned to the date of refusal. If we are unable to contact families within 2 business days then the name will remain the same till another spot becomes available and the next child on the list will be offered the spot. Children already enrolled in the Child Care Centre will take priority for placement.

### **Priority Allocation**

#### **Priority Allocation**

1. Children already enrolled (program to program)
2. Child with membership (student/working parents)
3. Band members non-status child (student/working parents)
4. Band Employee children
5. Date of application
6. Non-band member children (student/working parents)
7. OW Client Referrals
8. Community Care Program Referrals
9. Socialization

## **Couchiching Child Care Centre**

### **Behavior Management Policy for Parent(s) / Guardians / Visitors**

In order to ensure the safety, security and respectful atmosphere for our children, staff and others in the Couchiching Child Care Centre, the following policy is in effect:

- There will be no verbal, physical or abuse in any manner to be used in the presence of any child, staff member, or persons in the Couchiching Child Care Centre.
- There will be zero tolerance of any foul language, racial slurs, physical abuse, yelling at any persons in the presence of any child or staff at the Couchiching Child Care Centre.
- Any infractions of these guidelines will result in the immediate corrective action. Depending on the severity of actions an immediate permanent discharge from the Child Care Centre may be involved.
- All facts and remarks made during the incident will be kept on file.
- The appropriate authorities will be given a statement regarding the incident.

### **Arrival and Departure**

In order to provide quality service to children, the Infant, Toddler and Preschool Programs require that you have your children here by 9:00 AM. Failure to do so will result in the disruption of your childcare services for that day.

Young children depend on regular routine for their own sense of security. We recommend that you establish fixed hours to pick up and drop off your child.

For the safety of the children, we have a Sign in/Sign Out sheet. It is the parent(s)/guardians' responsibility to record the time and initial the sheet daily. It is also the parent(s)/guardians' responsibility to make direct contact with the teachers if they are busy with other children upon arrival and departure. This ensures that staff is aware of the child entering/exiting the program. Please make an effort to ensure your child is safe. This will also contribute to parent(s)/teacher relationship.

The Infant Program also requires an information sheet that needs to be filled out by parent(s)/guardians on a daily basis. Departure time is a must due to the early shift leaving at 3:45 PM and staffing may be an issue.

Children will not be released to any other persons other than those specified on the admission forms. Please notify the centre if there will be a change regarding pick-up to avoid a phone call from the Centre for permission to release your child.

If you are late picking up your child past 4:45PM there will be a charge of \$3.00/minute. This will have to be paid before your child is allowed back into the program. No exceptions.

**\*\* Persons under the age of 16 years old will NOT be accepted on the Authorization for pick up.**

## **Staff**

The Child Care Centre Staff welcomes and encourages discussion on your children.

- Informal parent/teacher interviews will be held when requested by parents(s)/guardians
- All ECE staff are registered with the College of Early Childhood Educators

According to the Child Care and Early Years Act, we are required by law to report any suspicions of child abuse.

## **Prohibited Practices**

The Child Care Centre Staff do not use the following methods of handling children:

1. Any form of corporal punishment
2. Physical restraint of a child, such as confining to a stroller, car seat, chair for the purpose of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself or someone else and it is as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent
3. Locking the exits of the child care centre for the purpose of confining the child, or confining a child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures. locked room, closet.
4. Use of harsh or degrading measures, 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.
5. Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding
6. Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

In the event where the child is having difficulty expressing his/her needs the Child Care Centre staff/ Manager may contact the parent(s)/guardians to assist in the problem.

## **Integrated Services**

The Couchiching Child Care Centre is an approved integrated centre for children with Special Needs. A qualified resource teacher is available to assess, develop and implement programs for children enrolled in the Special Needs Program. Program Staff is also available to implement individual program plans.

In addition to participating in the daily routine, individual programs for a child with developmental needs are conducted by the Resource Teacher.

**\*\*Development Screening is available upon request.**



### **Infant/Toddler Programs**

Parent(s)/Guardians are to supply all diapers, diapering supplies, formulas, bottles and also ensure that there is an adequate supply on hand.

Parent(s)/Guardians who require creams to be used on their child must supply the creams in the original containers. They should be labeled with their child's name. If the cream is prescribed by a doctor a Medical Authorization form must be filled out. All non-medication products supplied by the parent(s)/guardians will require a non-medicated administration form what will outline when the product is to be administered.

**Toilet Training** – During the toilet training 3 or 4 changes of underwear, socks, pants and extra pair of shoes may be required. Program Staff may discuss with parent(s)/guardians if they see signs that their child is ready to be toilet trained and / or sufficient time will be given when your child is to transition into the Preschool Program and the toilet training needs to be started. Program Staff are willing to help with the toilet training process for 2 weeks. If your child is NOT able to be trained within the 2 weeks and is set to move into the Preschool program then it is the sole responsibility of the parent to train your child. The child will be removed from the program and can return once fully trained. There will be no loss to the childcare spot during this time.

### **Preschool Program**

Children are required to be fully trained upon entry into this program.

Ex. Infrequent accidents.

### Infant Schedule

7:45 – 8:30	Arrivals / Free Play
8:45 – 9:15	Morning Snack
9:15 – 9:30	Diapering
9:15 – 10:00	Belly Time / Play Time
10:15 – 11:30	Nap Time / Outdoor Activity (awake infants)
11:30 – 12:00	Lunch
12:00 – 12:15	Diapering
12:15 – 2:00	Nap Time / Reading (awake infants)
2:30 – 3:00	Afternoon Snack
3:00 – 4:00	Outdoor Activity
4:00 – 4:15	Diapering
4:15 – 4:45	Free play / Departure

\*Outdoor is weather permitting

\*Naptime is determined for individual infants daily

### Toddler Schedule

7:45 – 9:00	Arrivals / Free Play
9:00 – 9:15	Wash / Snack
9:15 – 9:45	Diapering
9:45 – 10:00	Circle Time
10:00 – 11:00	Outdoor Play
11:00 – 11:30	Story Time / Diapering
11:30 – 12:00	Lunch
12:15 – 2:00	Nap Time/Craft (once awake 2:15)
2:15 – 2:45	Diapering
2:45 – 3:15	Snack
3:15 – 4:15	Free play (outdoors)
4:15 – 4:45	Free play / Departure

\*Outdoor play is weather permitting

### Preschool Schedule

7:45 – 9:00	Arrivals / Free Play
9:00 – 9:30	Wash / Snack
9:30 – 9:45	Circle Time
9:45 – 10:00	Washroom Routine
10:00 – 11:00	Outdoor Time
11:00 – 11:30	Story Time / Quiet Time
11:30 – 12:00	Lunch Time
12:00 – 2:00	Rest Time
2:00 – 2:30	Craft
2:30 – 2:45	Washroom Routine
2:45– 3:15	Snack
3:15 – 4:15	Outdoor Play
4:15 – 4:45	Free Play / Departure

\*Outdoor play is weather permitting

\*Rest Period Children do not have to sleep. After 30 minutes children will be given a quiet activity for remainder of period

### **Emergencies**

If there are any changes in the contact point for the parent(s)/guardian the Child Care Supervisor must be notified immediately, i.e. change of address, home or work phone numbers etc.

In case of an emergency, it is vital that the person named to pick up a child where the parent(s)/guardian cannot be reached be in the area of Couchiching / Fort Frances area to ensure prompt pick up.

### **Clothing**

Due to the Child Care Early Years Act, the children will be outside for play 1 hour in the morning and 1 hour in the afternoon. Children should come dressed in the appropriate clothing to meet the weather conditions. Also, a second set of clothing should be left in your child's locker in case of accidents.

### **Parent(s)/Guardians Involvement**

There are opportunities for parent(s)/guardians' involvement which may consist of Mother's Day and Father's Day dinners, preschool graduation etc. We encourage all parent(s)/guardians to participate in these events.

### **Cultural Programming**

Special events held by elders / community members regarding cultural activities will be scheduled throughout the year. These events will be implemented in the programs.

### **Community Involvement**

The Child Care Centre has involvement with the following services:

- Couchiching Toy Lending Library
- Couchiching Fire Department
- Couchiching Seniors Home
- Couchiching Recreation
- Treaty Police

### **Field Trips**

Numerous field trips are taken throughout the year that is within walking distance of the Child Care Centre.

### **Health Care**

Each child is given a toothbrush and face cloth, so the children can learn self-help skills and to promote proper hygiene.

The CHR (Community Health Representative) periodically visits the Child Care Centre and upon request. The CHR will assist staff to update the immunization records as per the Child Care and Early Years Act.

When a child requires medication a Medical Authorization Form must be filled out by the parent(s)/guardian. If medication is required more than 3 months a new Medical Authorization Form must be resubmitted.

**\*\*All medication prescribed by a doctor must have prescription labels intact.**

### **Illness of a Child**

If during the day a child becomes ill, the Child Care Manager will be notified immediately. The child will then be separated from the other children to protect the health of the children in the Child Care Centre until the parent(s)/guardian arrives to pick up the child.

Policy requires you pick up your child as soon as possible. This means right away. Staffing becomes an issue having to separate the ill child from the rest of the children. If we have repeated issues with pick-ups, we will take further action to address this issue directly.

### **Illness includes:**

- Temperature of 100.4 F
- Any viral / bacterial infections including rashes of any kind
- Vomiting due to illness
- Two (2) consecutive diarrhea

**Procedure when a child is sent home**

The Child Care Manager will call the parent(s)/guardians to pick up child as soon as possible. If parent(s)/guardians cannot be reached, the next step person on the list will be called

The staff member will fill out necessary forms to be signed by the parent(s)/guardians upon pick up

Signed forms will then be filed in the child individual file.

Depending on the illness; the Child Care Manager can request a doctors' note before the child is allowed back into the program. Please notify the Centre after the doctors visit to avoid disruption of child care services.

**\*\*Due to severe allergies in the building no food or outside drink is allowed in the building**

### **Conflict Resolution**

Parent(s)/guardians have the opportunity to express their concerns and complaints to staff without fear of retribution. The parent(s)/guardians concerns are important and are a natural step in providing an inclusive environment which meets the needs of the children and families. Building and maintaining positive relationships with parents is valued at our centre.

This policy is to support open communication between parent(s)/guardians. Communication is essential in preventing conflict. Parent(s)/guardians and staff who openly communicate with one another regarding the care of their child (children) can potentially avoid dissatisfaction with parent(s)/guardians.

Families are composed of individuals who are competent and capable, curious and rich in experience. Families love their children and want the best for them. Families are experts on their children. They are the first and most powerful influence on children's learning, development, health and well-being. Families bring diverse social, cultural and linguistic perspectives. Families should feel that they belong, are valuable contributors to their children's learning and deserve to be engaged in a meaningful way.

Fostering good relationships with children and their families is the single most important priority of education in early years' program. The ability to establish constructive relationships with children and families is a requirement for Registered Early Childhood Educators in Ontario, as set out in the College of Early Childhood Educators Code of Ethics and Standard of Practice.

### **Procedure**

All concerns will be addressed in a professional manner and kept confidential, documented and filed.

Staff will provide clear and consistent messaging to ensure concerns received are addressed in a transparent and timely manner. Staff will provide information collected from policies and procedures to align with the concern.

The first line of communication for parents is with their child's classroom teacher.

If the concern is not program related and cannot be handled by the child's classroom teacher, then the parent or staff member will inform the program supervisor.

All concerns will be handled in the following manner:

1. If the concern is a matter solely concerning the parent whom had the concern, the supervisor will handle it one-on-one with the parent.
2. If the concern is in regards to another parent or staff member, the supervisor will decide whether or not that parent or staff needs to be involved and shall act accordingly.
3. If the concern is in regards to more than one other parent or staff member, then the supervisor will arrange for a special meeting with the persons involved, either individually or as a collective group, according to which will be most beneficial to that particular situation.



4. If the concern cannot be addressed by the program supervisor, then the program supervisor may take the concern to the Director of Operations and the concern will be addressed following the same manner.
5. If the concern is not addressed to the parents' satisfaction, the parent and Director of Operations may take the concern to License (Chief and Council).

# Emergency Management Policy and Procedures

Name of Child Care Centre: Couchiching Child Care Centre

Date Policy and Procedures Established: September 18, 2018

Date Policy and Procedures Updated: May 30, 2022

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear direction for staff and licensees to follow to deal with emergency situations. The procedures set out steps for staff to follow to support the safety and well-being of everyone involved.

Clear policies and procedures will support all individuals to manage responses and responsibilities during an emergency, resulting in the safest outcomes possible.

## Definitions

*All-Clear:* A notification from an authority that a threat and/or disaster no longer pose a danger and it is deemed safe to return to the child care premises and/or resume normal operations.

*Authority:* A person or entity responsible for providing direction during an emergency situation (e.g. emergency services personnel, the licensee).

*Emergency:* An urgent or pressing situation where immediate action is required to ensure the safety of children and adults in attendance. These include situations that may not affect the whole child care centre (e.g. child-specific incidents) and where 911 is called.

*Emergency Services Personnel:* persons responsible for ensuring public safety and mitigating activities in an emergency (e.g. law enforcement, fire departments, emergency medical services, rescue services).

*Evacuation Site:* the designated off-site location where shelter is obtained during an emergency. The evacuation site is used when it is deemed unsafe to be at or return to the child care centre.

*Licensee:* The individual or agency licensed by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of each child care centre it operates (i.e. the operator).

*Meeting Place:* the designated safe place near the child care centre where everyone is to initially gather before proceeding to the evacuation site, or returning to the child care centre if evacuation is not necessary.

*Staff:* Individual employed by the licensee (e.g. program staff, supervisor).

*Unsafe to Return:* A notification from an authority that a threat and/or disaster continue to pose a danger and it is unsafe to return to the child care premises.

## Policy

Staff will follow the emergency response procedures outlined in this document by following these three phases:

1. Immediate Emergency Response;
2. Next Steps during an Emergency; and
3. Recovery.

Staff will ensure that children are kept safe, are accounted for and are supervised at all times during an emergency situation.

For situations that require evacuation of the child care centre, the **meeting place** to gather immediately will be located at: Toy Library.

If it is deemed 'unsafe to return' to the child care centre, the **evacuation site** to proceed to is located at: Couchiching Recreation Centre

**Note: all directions given by emergency services personnel will be followed under all circumstances, including directions to evacuate to locations different than those listed above.**

For any emergency situations involving a child with an individualized plan in place, the procedures in the child's individualized plan will be followed.

If any emergency situations happen that are not described in this document, Couchiching Band Office, will provide direction to staff for the immediate response and next steps. Staff will follow the direction given.

If any emergency situations result in a serious occurrence, the serious occurrence policy and procedures will also be followed.

All emergency situations will be documented in detail by the Supervisor/Designate in the daily written record.

## **Procedures**

### **Phase 1: Immediate Emergency Response**

Emergency Situation	Roles and Responsibilities
<p><b>Lockdown</b> When a threat is on, very near, or inside the child care centre. E.g. a suspicious individual in the building who is posing a threat.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The staff member who becomes aware of the threat must inform all other staff of the threat as quickly and safely as possible.</li> <li>2) Staff members who are outdoors must ensure everyone who is outdoors proceeds to a safe location.</li> <li>3) Staff inside the child care centre must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• remain calm;</li> <li>• gather all children and move them away from doors and windows;</li> <li>• take children's attendance to confirm all children are accounted for;</li> <li>• take shelter in closets and/or under furniture with the children, if appropriate;</li> <li>• keep children calm;</li> <li>• ensure children remain in the sheltered space;</li> <li>• turn off/mute all cellular phones; and</li> <li>• wait for further instructions.</li> </ul> </li> <li>4) If possible, staff inside the program room(s) should also: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• close all window coverings and doors;</li> <li>• barricade the room door;</li> <li>• gather emergency medication; and</li> <li>• join the rest of the group for shelter.</li> </ul> </li> <li>5) The Supervisor/Designate will immediately: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• close and lock all child care centre entrance/exit doors, if possible; and</li> <li>• take shelter.</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p><b>Note: only emergency service personnel are allowed to enter or exit the child care centre during a lockdown.</b></p>

<p><b>Hold &amp; Secure</b></p> <p>When a threat is in the general vicinity of the child care centre, but not on or inside the child care premises. E.g. a shooting at a nearby building.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The staff member who becomes aware of the external threat must inform all other staff of the threat as quickly and safely as possible.</li> <li>2) Staff members who are outdoors must ensure everyone returns to their program room(s) immediately.</li> <li>3) Staff in the program room must immediately: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• remain calm;</li> <li>• take children's attendance to confirm all children are accounted for;</li> <li>• close all window coverings and windows in the program room;</li> <li>• continue normal operations of the program; and</li> <li>• wait for further instructions.</li> </ul> </li> <li>4) Supervisor/Designate must immediately: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• close and lock all entrances/exits of the child care centre;</li> <li>• close all blinds and windows outside of the program rooms; and</li> <li>• place a note on the external doors with instructions that no one may enter or exit the child care centre.</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p><b>Note: only emergency services personnel are allowed to enter or exit the centre during a hold and secure.</b></p>
<p><b>Bomb Threat</b></p> <p>A threat to detonate an explosive device to cause property damage, death, or injuries E.g. phone call bomb threat, receipt of a suspicious package.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The staff member who becomes aware of the threat or Supervisor/Designate must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• remain calm;</li> <li>• call 911 if emergency services is not yet aware of the situation;</li> <li>• follow the directions of emergency services personnel; and</li> <li>• take children's attendance to confirm all children are accounted for.</li> </ul> </li> <li>A. Where the threat is received by telephone, the person on the phone should try to keep the suspect on the line as long as possible while another individual calls 911 and communicates with emergency services personnel.</li> <li>B. Where the threat is received in the form of a suspicious package, staff must ensure that no one approaches or touches the package at any time.</li> </ol>

**Disaster  
Requiring  
Evacuation**

A serious incident that affects the physical building and requires everyone to leave the premises. E.g. fire, flood, power failure.

1) The staff member who becomes aware of the disaster must inform all other staff of the incident and that the centre must be evacuated, as quickly and safely as possible. If the disaster is a fire, the fire alarm pull station must be used and staff must follow the centre's fire evacuation procedures.

2) Staff must immediately:

- remain calm;
- gather all children, the attendance record, children's emergency contact information any emergency medication;
- exit the building with the children using the nearest safe exit, bringing children's outdoor clothing (if possible) according to weather conditions;
- escort children to the meeting place; and
- take children's attendance to confirm all children are accounted for;
- keep children calm; and
- wait for further instructions.

3) If possible, staff should also:

- take a first aid kit; and
- gather all non-emergency medications.

4) Designated staff will:

- help any individuals with medical and/or special needs who need assistance to go to the meeting place (in accordance with the procedure in a child's individualized plan, if the individual is a child); and
- in doing so, follow the instructions posted on special needs equipment or assistive devices during the evacuation.
- If individuals cannot be safely assisted to exit the building, the designated staff will assist them to their program room and ensure their required medication is accessible, if applicable; and
- wait for further instructions.

5) If possible, the site designate must conduct a walk-through of the child care centre to verify that everyone has exited the building and secure any windows or doors, unless otherwise directed by emergency services personnel.

<p><b>Disaster – External Environmental Threat</b></p> <p>An incident outside of the building that may have adverse effects on persons in the child care centre. E.g. gas leak, oil spill, chemical release, forest fire, nuclear emergency.</p>	<p>1) The staff member who becomes aware of the external environmental threat must inform all other staff of the threat as quickly and safely as possible and, according to directions from emergency services personnel, advise whether to remain on site or evacuate the premises.</p> <p><b>If remaining on site:</b></p> <p>1) Staff members who are outdoors with children must ensure everyone who is outdoors returns to their program room immediately.</p> <p>2) Staff must immediately:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• remain calm;</li> <li>• take children's attendance to confirm all children are accounted for;</li> <li>• close all program room windows and all doors that lead outside (where applicable);</li> <li>• seal off external air entryways located in the program rooms (where applicable);</li> <li>• continue with normal operations of the program; and</li> <li>• wait for further instructions.</li> </ul> <p>3) Supervisor/Designate must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• seal off external air entryways not located in program rooms (where applicable);</li> <li>• place a note on all external doors with instructions that no one may enter or exit the child care centre until further notice; and</li> <li>• turn off all air handling equipment (i.e. heating, ventilation and/or air conditioning, where applicable).</li> </ul> <p><b>If emergency services personnel otherwise direct the child care centre to evacuate, follow the procedures outlined in the "Disaster Requiring Evacuation" section of this policy.</b></p>
<p><b>Natural Disaster: Tornado / Tornado Warning</b></p>	<p>1) <i>The staff member who becomes aware of the tornado or tornado warning must inform all other staff as quickly and safely as possible.</i></p> <p>2) Staff members who are outdoors with children must ensure everyone who is outdoors returns to their program room(s) immediately.</p> <p>3) <i>Staff must immediately:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• remain calm;</li> <li>• <i>gather all children;</i></li> <li>• <i>go to the basement or take shelter in small interior ground floor rooms such as washrooms, closets or hallways;</i></li> <li>• take children's attendance to confirm all children are accounted for;</li> <li>• <i>remain and keep children away from windows, doors and exterior walls;</i></li> <li>• keep children calm;</li> <li>• conduct ongoing visual checks of the children; and</li> <li>• wait for further instructions.</li> </ul>



**Train Derailment:**

- 1) Staff in the program room must immediately:
  - remain calm;
  - ensure that everyone is away from windows and outer walls;  
*gather all children, attendance record, emergency contact information*
  - *exit the building with the children using the nearest safe exit, bringing children's outdoor clothing (if possible) according to weather conditions;*
  - *escort children to the meeting place; and*
  - *take children's attendance to confirm all children are accounted for;*
  - *keep children calm; and*
  - *wait for further instructions.*
- 2) Staff members who are outdoors with children must immediately ensure that everyone outdoors stays away from buildings, power lines, trees, and other tall structures that may collapse, and wait for the shaking to stop.
- 3) Once the shaking stops, staff must:
  - gather the children, their emergency cards and emergency medication; and
  - exit the building through the nearest safe exit, where possible, in case of aftershock or damage to the building.
- 4) If possible, prior to exiting the building, staff should also:
  - take a first aid kit; and
  - gather all non-emergency medications.
- 5) Individuals who have exited the building must gather at the meeting place and wait for further instructions.
- 6) Designated staff will:
  - help any individuals with medical and/or special needs who need assistance to go to the meeting place (in accordance with the procedure in a child's individualized plan, if the individual is a child); and
  - in doing so, follow the instructions posted on special needs equipment or assistive devices during the evacuation.
  - If individuals cannot be safely assisted to exit the building, the designated staff will assist them to their program room and ensure their required medication is accessible, if applicable; and
  - wait for further instructions.
- 7) The site designate must conduct a walkthrough of the child care centre to ensure all individuals have evacuated, where possible.

## **Additional Procedures for Immediate Emergency Response**

All staff will assist in the evacuation of all program rooms such as;

Administrator will help with infant room  
Resource Teacher will help with Toddler room  
Float will help with Preschool room  
Supervisor will struct all rooms of further instruction during evacuation period, and identify where help is needed

## **Phase 2: Next Steps During the Emergency**

- 1) Where emergency services personnel are not already aware of the situation, Supervisor and or designate must notify emergency services personnel (911) of the emergency as soon as possible.
- 2) Where the child care centre has been evacuated, emergency services must be notified of individuals remaining inside the building, where applicable.
- 3) If the licensee is not already on site, the site designate must contact the licensee to inform them of the emergency situation and the current status, once it is possible and safe to do so.

### **List of Emergency Contact Persons:**

Local Police Department: 807- 274-1565

Ambulance: 911

Local Fire Services: 911

Site Supervisor: Wanda McCabe - 807-276-2597

Licensee Contact(s): 1-807-468-2411

Child Care Centre Site Designate: Lori Yerxa – 807-271-4156

Couchiching Administration Building: Acting Band Manager – Lucille Morrisseau - 1-807-274-3228

- 4) Where any staff, students and/or volunteers are not on site, the Supervisor and or Designate must notify these individuals of the situation, and instruct them to proceed directly to the evacuation site if it is not safe or practical for them return to the child care centre.
- 5) The Supervisor/Designate must wait for further instructions from emergency services personnel. Once instructions are received, they must communicate the instructions to staff and ensure they are followed.
- 6) Throughout the emergency, staff will:
  - help keep children calm;
  - take attendance to ensure that all children are accounted for;
  - conduct ongoing visual checks and head counts of children;
  - maintain constant supervision of the children; and
  - engage children in activities, where possible.

- 7) In situations where injuries have been sustained, staff with first aid training will assist with administering first aid. Staff must inform emergency personnel of severe injuries requiring immediate attention and assistance.

<b>8a) Procedures to Follow When "All-Clear" Notification is Given</b>	
<b>Procedures</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) The individual who receives the 'all-clear' from an authority must inform all staff that the 'all-clear' has been given and that it is safe to return to the child care centre.</li><li>2) Designated staff who have assisted individuals with medical and/or special needs with exiting the building will assist and accompany these individuals with returning to the child care centre.</li><li>3) Staff must:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• take attendance to ensure all children are accounted for;</li><li>• escort children back to their program room(s), where applicable;</li><li>• take attendance upon returning to the program room(s) to ensure that all children are accounted for; where applicable; and</li><li>• re-open closed/sealed blinds, windows and doors.</li></ul></li><li>4) The Supervisor/Designate will determine if operations will resume and communicate this decision to staff.</li></ol>
<b>Communication with parents/guardians</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) As soon as possible, the Supervisor/Designate must notify parents/guardians of the emergency situation and that the all-clear has been given.</li><li>2) Where disasters have occurred that did not require evacuation of the child care centre, Supervisor/Designate must provide a notice of the incident to parents/guardians by phone.</li><li>3) If normal operations do not resume the same day that an emergency situation has taken place, the Supervisor/Designate must provide parents/guardians with information as to when and how normal operations will resume as soon as this is determined.</li></ol>

<b>8b) Procedures to Follow When “Unsafe to Return” Notification is Given</b>	
<b>Procedures</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The individual who receives the ‘unsafe to return’ notification from an authority must inform all staff of this direction and instruct them to proceed from the meeting place to the evacuation site, or the site determined by emergency services personnel.</li> <li>2) Staff must take attendance to confirm that all children are accounted for, and escort children to the evacuation site.</li> <li>3) Designated staff who have assisted individuals with medical and/or special needs with exiting the building will assist and accompany these individuals to the evacuation site.</li> <li>4) The administrator will post a note for parents/guardians on the child care centre entrance with information on the evacuation site, where it is possible and safe to do so.</li> <li>5) Upon arrival at the evacuation site, staff must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• remain calm;</li> <li>• take attendance to ensure all children are accounted for;</li> <li>• help keep children calm;</li> <li>• engage children in activities, where possible;</li> <li>• conduct ongoing visual checks and head counts of children;</li> <li>• maintain constant supervision of the children;</li> <li>• keep attendance as children are picked up by their parents, guardians or authorized pick-up persons; and</li> <li>• remain at the evacuation site until all children have been picked up.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
<b>Communication with parents/guardians</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Upon arrival at the emergency evacuation site, the Supervisor/Designate will notify parents/guardians of the emergency situation, evacuation and the location to pick up their children.</li> <li>2) Where possible, the Supervisor will update the child care centre’s voicemail box as soon as possible to inform parents/guardians that the child care centre has been evacuated, and include the details of the evacuation site location and contact information in the message.</li> </ol>

### **Additional Procedures for Next Steps During an Emergency**

E.g. documenting children’s accidents/injuries, providing water and/or snacks, etc.

All injuries sustained during emergency must be documented and reported in accordance with Ministry standards. If food and drink are available, staff may provide children with snacks during waiting periods where applicable.

### Phase 3: Recovery (After an Emergency Situation has Ended)

<p><b>Procedures for Resuming Normal Operations</b> E.g. where, applicable, reopening the child care centre, contacting the Ministry of Education Program Advisor, responding to media and community inquiries, contacting the insurance company, informing the caterer, temporarily relocating, etc.</p>	<p>Once deemed by emergency personnel and the Supervisor that it is safe to return to the child care facility, parents will be notified by phone that an emergency occurred and that their child is safe. The ministry will be called and given a full report of the situation by the Supervisor/Designate. Program teachers will resume their program schedule.</p>
<p><b>Procedures for Providing Support to Children and Staff who Experience Distress</b></p>	<p>All children experiencing emotional distress will be taken to the Supervisors office while the Supervisor contacts the child's parents for possible pickup, and will wait with available staff.</p>
<p><b>Procedures for Debriefing Staff, Children and Parents/Guardians</b> Include, where, applicable, details about when and how the debrief(s) will take place, etc.</p>	<p>Supervisor must debrief staff, children and parents/guardians after the emergency.</p> <p>All parents and guardians will be notified via: phone call, if immediate caregiver can not be reached, the next primary person will be notified as to each child's emergency contact information.</p>

#### Regulatory Requirements: Ontario Regulation 137/15

##### Emergency management

**68.1 (1)** In this section,

"emergency" at a child care centre means an urgent or pressing situation in which immediate action is required to ensure the safety of children and adults in the child care centre. O. Reg. 126/16, s. 42.

(2) Subject to subsection (3), every licensee shall ensure that each child care centre it operates has written policies and procedures regarding the management of emergencies that,

- (a) set out the roles and responsibilities of staff in case of an emergency;
- (b) require that additional support, including consideration of special medical needs, be provided in respect of any child or adult who needs it in case of an emergency;
- (c) identify the location of a safe and appropriate off-site meeting place, in case of evacuation;
- (d) set out the procedures that will be followed to ensure children's safety and maintain appropriate levels of supervision;

- (e) set out requirements regarding communications with parents;
  - (f) set out requirements regarding contacting appropriate local emergency response agencies; and
  - (g) address recovery from an emergency, including,
    - (i) requiring that staff, children and parents be debriefed after the emergency,
    - (ii) setting out how to resume normal operations of the child care centre, and
    - (iii) setting out how to support children and staff who may have experienced distress during the emergency. O. Reg. 126/16, s. 42.
- (3) Despite subsection (2), a licensee is not required to have emergency management policies and procedures described in that subsection if,
- (a) the child care centre is located in a school, the licensee uses or adopts the school's emergency management policies and procedures and those policies and procedures address the same matters as described in subsection (2); or
  - (b) the licensee is otherwise required to have a plan that addresses the same matters as described in subsection (2). O. Reg. 126/16, s. 42.

**Intent**

The intent of this provision is to require licensees to have policies and procedures that protect the health and safety of children and staff in the event of an emergency.

The provision requires that staff roles and responsibilities be clearly outlined in the event of an emergency.

**Disclaimer:** This document is a sample of a policy and procedure that has been prepared to assist licensees in understanding their obligations under the CCEYA and O. Reg. 137/15. It is the responsibility of the licensee to ensure that the information included in this document is appropriately modified to reflect the individual circumstances and needs of each child care centre it operates.

Please be advised that this document does not constitute legal advice and should not be relied on as such. The information provided in this document does not impact the Ministry's authority to enforce the CCEYA and its regulations. Ministry staff will continue to enforce such legislation based on the facts as they may find them at the time of any inspection or investigation.

It is the responsibility of the licensee to ensure compliance with all applicable legislation. If the licensee requires assistance with respect to the interpretation of the legislation and its application, the licensee may wish to consult legal counsel.

## **Couchiching Child Care Centre**

### **Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy and Procedure**

Name of Centre: Couchiching Child Care Centre

Date Policy and Procedure Established: January 1, 2024

Date Policy and Procedure Updated: November 20, 2025

#### **Purpose**

This policy and the procedures within help support the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care.

This policy will provide staff, students and volunteers with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for ensuring the safe arrival and dismissal of children, receiving care, including what steps are to be taken when a child does not arrive at the child care centre as expected, as well as steps to follow to ensure the safe dismissal of children.

This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for policies and procedures regarding the safe arrival and dismissal of children in care.

Note: definitions for terms used throughout this policy are provided in a Glossary at the end of the document.

#### **Policy**

##### **General**

- Couchiching Child Care Centre will ensure that any child receiving child care at the centre is only released to the child's parent/guardian or an individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization to.
- Couchiching Child Care Centre will only dismiss children into the care of their parent/guardian or another authorized individual. The centre will NOT release any children from care without supervision.
- Where a child does not arrive in care as expected or is not picked up as expected, staff must follow the safe arrival and dismissal procedures.

#### **Procedures**

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

1. When accepting a child into care at the time of drop-off, program staff in the room must:
  - Greet the parent/guardian and child.
  - Ask the parent/guardian how the child's evening/morning has been and if there are any changes to the child's pick-up procedure (i.e. someone other than the parent/guardian picking up). Where the parent/guardian has indicated that someone other than the child's parent/guardians will be picking

up, the staff must confirm that the person is listed on the Authorization to Pick Up List or where the individual is not listed, ask the parent/guardian to provide authorization for pick-up in writing (e.g. note).

- Document the change in the pick-up procedure in the daily written record.
- Parent/guardian to sign child in on the classroom attendance record.

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

1. Where a child does not arrive at the child care centre and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off (e.g. left a voice message or advised the closing staff at pick-up) the staff in the classroom must:
  - Inform the administrator and the administrator must commence contacting the child's parent/guardian no later than 10:00 AM. Administrator shall contact the parent/guardian via telephone/ and or text message until a response is received from the parent/guardian. This will continue until a response is received from the parent/guardian to confirm the absence of the child.
2. Once the child's absence has been confirmed, program staff shall document the child's absence on the attendance record and any additional information about the child's absence in the daily written record.

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

1. The staff who is releasing the child at the time of pick-up shall only release the child to the child's parent/guardian or individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization that the child may be released to.
2. Where the staff does not know the individual picking up the child (i.e. parent/guardian or authorized individual).
  - Confirm with another staff member that the individual picking up is the child's parent/guardian/authorized individual.
  - Where the above is not possible, ask the parent/guardian/authorized individual for photo identification and confirm the individual's information against the parent/guardian/authorized individual's name on the child's file or written authorization.
3. Children will not be released to a parent or authorized individual if they seem to be intoxicated or under the influence of narcotics. The staff will contact listed emergency contacts, if no one is available, then Weechi-it-te-win Family Services will be contacted.

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

1. Where a parent/guardian or authorized individual has previously communicated with the staff a specific time or timeframe that their child is to be picked up from care and the child has not been picked up the administrator will immediately proceed to contact the parent/guardian via telephone/ and or text message and advise the parent that the child is still in care and has not been picked up.
  - Where the administrator/manager is unable to reach the parent/guardian, the administrator/manager will continue to call/ and or text with parent/guardian and leave a message. Where the individual picking up the child is an authorized individual and their contact



- information is available, the staff shall proceed with contacting the individual to confirm pick-up as per the parent/guardian's instructions or leave a voice message to contact the centre.
- Where the administrator/manager has not heard back from the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was to pick up the child the administrator/manager will continue to contact the emergency contacts, wait until 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**

1. Where a parent/guardian or authorized individual who was supposed to pick up a child from care and has not arrived by 4:45 PM, staff shall ensure that the child is given a snack and activity, while they await their pick-up.
2. One staff shall stay with the child, while a second staff proceeds with calling the parent/guardian to advise that the child is still in care and inquire about their pick-up time. In the case where the person picking up the child is an authorized individual; the staff shall contact the parent/guardian first then proceed to contact the authorized individual responsible for pick-up if unable to reach the parent/guardian.
3. If the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized individual listed on the child's file (e.g. emergency contacts) by 5PM the staff shall proceed with contacting Weechi-it-te-win Family Services (807) 274-3201. Staff shall follow the Weechi-it-te-win 's direction with respect to next steps.

#### **Dismissing a child 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.

#### **Glossary**

*Individual authorized to pick-up/authorized individual:* a person that the parent/guardian has advised the child care program staff in writing can pick-up their child from care.

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

*Parent/guardian:* A person having lawful custody of a child or a person who has demonstrated a settled intention to treat a child as a child of his or her family.

#### **Additional Definitions**

**Regulatory Requirements:** Ontario Regulation 137/15

#### **Safe arrival and dismissal policy**

50. Every licensee shall ensure that each child care centre it operates and each premises where it oversees the provision of home child care has a policy respecting the safe arrival and dismissal of children that,

- a) Provides that a child may only be released from the child care centre or home child care premises,
  - i. To individual indicated by a child's parent, or
  - ii. In accordance with written permission from a child's parent to release the child from the program at a specified time without supervision; and
- b) Sets out the steps that must be taken if,
  - i. A child does not arrive as expected at the centre or home care premises, or
  - ii. A child is not picked up as expected from the centre or home child care premises