



PARENT HANDBOOK

680 York Road, Niagara on the Lake

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289-273-7055

childcare@centralcc.ca

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Welcome to Childcare Central. We are honoured that you have chosen us to care for your child. The information in this handbook is intended to provide you with a better understanding of our programs, philosophy, policies and procedures. It is important to read the entire manual. Please ensure that you understand and acknowledge Childcare Central Parent Handbook and agree to these policies and procedures. By providing payment and engaging in services provided by Childcare Central, you further confirm acceptance, acknowledgement and adherence of the handbook in its entirety. Please contact the office with any questions or comments.

Childcare Central is licensed through the Ministry of Education and operates under Central Community Church. Our program is re-evaluated on a regular basis and is modified as the Child Care Early Years Act (CCEYA) is amended, new information regarding early childhood education is released and/or the staff learns what works best with the children. The program staff are committed to making the activities in the program relevant and suited to the individual learning styles of each child.

Parent Code of Conduct & Respectful Behaviour

At Childcare Central, we are committed to providing and maintaining a safe, respectful, welcoming and supportive environment for all children, staff, families, and visitors. This policy sets clear expectations for parents/guardians' behaviour and supports our legal obligations under Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA), Ontario Human Right Code and Occupation Health and Safety Act (OHSA)

This policy outlines the expected standards of behaviour for all and how we will address harassment, bullying, or inappropriate conduct. This policy applies to all parents/guardians, authorized pick-ups/drop offs and family members when:

- On childcare premises
- Communicating with staff (in person, phone, email, messaging apps)
- Attending centre events or meetings
- Representing the centre in any capacity

Harassment and Discrimination

In accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code, harassment or discrimination based on the following protected grounds will not be tolerated:

- Race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, ethnic origin
- Citizenship
- Creed (religion)
- Sex, pregnancy, breastfeeding
- Gender identity or gender expression
- Sexual orientation
- Family or marital status
- Disability

- Age
- Any other ground protected by law

Harassment can be:

- Verbal
- Physical
- Written or digital (text, email, social media)
- Bullying or intimidating behaviour
- Discriminatory comments
- Sexual harassment

Expected Standards of Behaviour

All parents/guardians, authorized pick-ups and family members are expected to:

- Treat all children, staff, and other families with respect, dignity and courtesy
- Communicate concerns in a calm, respectful and constructive manner
- Follow all centre policies, procedures, and safety rules
- Respect staff roles, boundaries, and program decisions
- Support a positive and inclusive learning environment for all children
- Understand that staff have the right to discontinue any conversation in which they feel uncomfortable

Unacceptable Behaviour

The following behaviours are **not permitted** and may result in action by the centre:

- Verbal abuse, yelling, swearing, insults, intimidation, threatening or aggressive behaviour
- Harassment, discrimination, or bullying of any kind
- Gossip, spreading harmful rumors, or making false allegations
- Recording staff without permission
- Inappropriate, misleading or harmful use of social media related to the centre, staff, or families
- Disrupting daily operations or learning environments
- Repeated failure to follow centre policies or staff direction

Respectful Communication and Raising Concerns

If a parent has concerns about staff behavior, safety, or any aspect of the program, they should follow the Parent Issues & Concerns policy by reporting it to the Office Staff either verbally or in writing. Written submission can be sent to childcare@centralcc.ca or via Lillio and removing teachers from seeing the message. The full policy can be found in the parent handbook.

Abusive, aggressive, or threatening communication will **not be tolerated**, even when concerns are valid.

Breach of Policy

Parent behaviour that impacts staff safety, mental wellbeing, or the safe operation of the program will be addressed promptly. The centre may take one or more of the following actions, depending on severity and frequency:

- Verbal or written warnings
- Formal meeting with centre management
- Restricted communication (e.g., written communication only)
- Limitation of access to the premises
- Requirement for alternate pick-up arrangements
- Termination of the childcare agreement
- Permanent ban from the facility

All actions will be taken with the health, safety and wellbeing of children and staff as the priority.

Zero Tolerance for Violence or Threats

Any threats, physical aggression, stalking, harassment, or behavior that makes staff feel unsafe may result in:

- Immediate removal from the premises
- Termination of the child's enrollment
- Notification to applicable authorities (if necessary)

Policy Review

- This policy will be reviewed annually, as required under OHSA. Parents will be required to review and sign annually or if changes are made to the policy.

Parent Responsibilities

If your child is not going to attend care as per usual, please notify us before 9:00am. Parents can send a message via Lillio or by calling **289-273-7055**. If no one answers the phone, please leave a brief message. When your child does not attend, you must let us know the reason. Staff track sickness in order that parents can be kept well informed should an unusual illness occur and to prevent an outbreak.

It is the responsibility of each parent to make sure that they notify staff of any changes to their contact information. It is important that we have current, up-to-date phone numbers, addresses, and emergency contacts. The changes should be sent via message in Lillio or emailed to the office.

We also have a daily log where we write any information regarding your child you give us during drop off or pick up time. Some examples are, "Auntie will be picking Sophie up today" or "Emily will be late on Thursday due to a doctor's appointment."

Days and Hours of Operation

Childcare is offered between 7:00am and 6:00pm all week long. For toddlers and preschool aged, a minimum of 2 days' attendance per week is required, but children can attend anywhere from two to five days per week. For infants, a full-time spot (4-5 days) is required. We are open 51 weeks each year.

Programs Offered

Childcare Central has the facilities to accommodate the following:

GROUP	AGE	STAFF/CHILD RATIO	MAXIMUM CLASS SIZE
Infant	0-18 months	1:3	10
Toddler	18-30 months	1:5	15
Jr Preschool	2.5 – 5 years	1:8	24
Sr Preschool	2.5 – 5 years	1:8	24

Holidays

Childcare Central observes the following holidays and is closed on:

- New Year's Day (no fee)
- Family Day
- Good Friday
- Victoria Day
- Canada Day
- Civic Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Eve Day (no fee)
- Christmas Day (no fee)
- Boxing Day (no fee)

***plus, any additional days taken in lieu, if a holiday happens to fall on a weekend

Childcare Central is also closed (and no parent fees applied for):

- Easter Monday for staff PD Day
- Last Friday before Labor Day for staff PD Day

Christmas Break starting December 24 and resumes operations on January 2

Fees

Fees are required for all days your child is scheduled to attend. Payments are still required in any case of absence whether due to illness, stat holidays, vacation, inclement weather or emergency closures. For a list of days that parents are not charged fees, please see above.

Canada Wide Early Learning & Child Care

At this time, we are currently enrolled in the Canada Wide Early Learning & Childcare program.

Method of Payment

Childcare tuition fees are paid bi-weekly, with payment needing to be received on Friday before the 2 week billing period (base fees).

Childcare Central processes tuition via credit card or direct withdrawal from a bank account through the Lillio app. All accounts are set to automatic payment to guarantee your tuition is paid on time. Should a family need to have split billing (separated families, someone other than parent making payment, etc), they should speak with the office to set up the details.

You will receive an invoice from Lillio on the Monday prior to the payment due date Friday. If you have any questions or concerns about the amount, please contact the office prior to the payment due date so it can be discussed.

Your tuition fee will automatically be charged to your preferred payment option (credit card or bank account). Please make sure you have sufficient funds before your payments come due. Insufficient funds will incur a \$30 NSF charge (non-based fee).

Enrolment is conditional on full and timely payment of all fees. It is your responsibility to keep your account balance current with timely payments. A late fee of \$50 will be applied if payment is not made after 3 days past due date (non-based fee)

Current fee schedule can be found at the end of this handbook or on our website at www.centralcc.ca/childcare

Subsidized Child Care

Subsidy is available by applying to the Niagara Region Childcare Services. Please note that subsidy approval is a parent/guardian responsibility. Parents are responsible for paying the full fee until subsidy approval is received by the centre. Parents are required to pay any fees not covered by subsidy. Parents/guardians are responsible for renewing their subsidy through the Region prior to their due date.

If you are receiving subsidy, you are given a number of absent days per year for use when your child is ill or away on vacation. Should you use all of the absent days before the end of a 12-month period, you will be charged the daily rate for any further absences.

Late Pick-up Charges

Childcare Central's program closes promptly at 6:00pm. Parents are asked to plan sufficient time to dress their child, collect the child's belongings, speak to staff (if necessary) and leave the centre by 6:00pm. Due to the operational and staffing costs incurred when a parent/guardian is late, a late fee will be charged. Staff on duty will complete a late fee payment form upon arrival to sign and give the reason for being late. By signing the form, the parent/guardian acknowledges that they are late and agrees to the amount due. **CASH** is to be submitted to the office no later than the following attendance day. Failure to comply will result in

suspension of services until the fee is paid. A rate of \$2 per minute, per child will be charged to the family (non-based fee).

Numerous or persistent incidences of late pick up may result in termination of care. It is important for parents to have an alternate person who can pick up your child when you will be late.

Vacation

There are no refunds given for vacation at any time of the year. Payment must continue to be made to hold your spot.

Receipts

Receipts will be issued by February 28 for previous year income tax purposes. Current families will be notified that receipts are ready and can be accessed via Lillio app. For children who leave the program, receipts will be messaged to parents on the child's last day. It is the parents responsibility to save the receipt for tax season

Refunds or Credits

Refunds/Credits **are not** given for:

- ◆ Days in which your child is absent due to illness, vacation or home day
- ◆ Closure due to emergency (power outage, staff shortage, etc)
- ◆ Closure for statutory holidays
- ◆ First day of closure due to inclement weather
- ◆ Paying for an extra day and then your child becomes sick and misses the day

Refunds/Credits **will be** given for:

- ◆ 2nd or more consecutive days of closure due to inclement weather
- ◆ If Region gives us credits for family fees, these will be implemented
- ◆ In a case where staffing shortage could cause room to close, and parents are asked to volunteer to keep child home (this will be written in email)

Termination of Care

BY THE PARENT: When a parent decides to terminate their childcare arrangement, a **one month written notice form** (form located on the parent bulletin board by the entry) is required.

A full-time space cannot change to part-time for the summer only. Should parents decide to withdraw their child(ren) for the summer, they will need to re-create their profile in the Niagara Region Child Care Registry. A spot cannot be guaranteed for after the summer.

BY THE CENTER: Childcare Central reserves the right to terminate services in any or all of the following circumstances, including but not limited to:

- Child's behaviour is severely disruptive or physically threatening to the well-being and safety of other children and staff, and/or additional supports to accommodate the children are unavailable
- If a child is not adjusted well; recorded observations will be discussed with the parent/guardian
- Non-payment for childcare services and/or lack of adherence to the fee payment policies
- Lack of cooperation from parents with the program's efforts to resolve differences and/or meet the child's needs through parent/staff meetings or conferences
- Failure to comply with policies & procedures
- Failure to submit required information or forms
- Abusive behaviours and/or verbal threats by parents toward program staff or other parents (immediate termination)
- Child exhibits special needs or needs related to a serious illness or behaviours that are not possible to meet at the program. In this case, the program staff will make every effort to involve the parents, and possibly a Resource Consultant, in order to decide together on the best course of action for this child, prior to termination.

Safe Arrival and Departure

Young children depend on regular routines for their sense of security. It is recommended that fixed hours be established for arrival & pick up as children feel more secure when their timetable is predictable. Parents must escort their children to a staff member on duty. The Centre's responsibility begins when you inform us that your child has arrived. It is the parent's responsibility to dress and undress your child upon arrival and departure. Children will be assigned a cubby locker for their coats and backpack. We ask that you take your child's artwork home daily.

Arrival and departure times are critical transition times for children. These moments can be stressful for parents and children alike and so it is our policy to make these transitions as short and painless as possible for the sake of those involved as well as other children already in attendance. Be assured that your child is in good hands and that we are trained in dealing with these difficult moments.

In accordance with provincial legislation, Childcare Central has developed a Safe Arrival and Dismissal policy. In order to avoid messages or phone calls, we ask that if your child will be arriving later than 9:30am, you notify us prior to this time. The following policy will be followed by the center:

Childcare Central will ensure that any child receiving care at the centre is only released to the child's parent/guardian or an individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization that the centre may release the child to. Upon registration, parent/guardian will list additional people (outside parent/guardian) who are authorized to pick up children on the registration form. These forms are kept in the classroom & outdoor binders and information is uploaded into Lillio for additional reference. While we appreciate notification from parents, if a listed individual arrives to pick up but no notification was given, the child can still be released to that individual.

Childcare Central acknowledges that, despite our best efforts, errors and omissions may occur in the notifications and follow up process. This could include, but are not limited to, delays, miscommunication, or failure to provide notifications. Notifications of absence are provided on the information available at the time of notification. We do not guarantee the accuracy, completeness or timelines of such notifications. Factors that may affect the implementation of these procedures, the accuracy of the information dispatched include power outage and/or network failure, equipment malfunction, or immediate program needs, and manual oversight.

Procedures

Accepting a child into care:

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

- greet the child and the parent/guardian
- if the parent indicates that there is an alternative pick-up, staff will confirm whether parent has authorized that the specific person has been given previous permission to pick up child. The staff will ask/remind parent to send message in Lillio as written record and for easy reference to any staff working with that child. Staff will remind parent/guardian to ensure the pickup person has appropriate photo ID on hand to ensure child can be released to them. While we appreciate notification from parents, if a listed individual arrives to pick up but no notification was given, the child can still be released to that individual.
- sign the child in on classroom attendance record

When a child has not arrived in care as expected:

When a child does not arrive at Childcare Central and the parent/guardian has not communicated the absence/change in drop off (either by speaking to a staff, leaving a voice message/messaged through Lillio), the staff will:

- ensure the office staff is aware no later than 9:30am.
- upon hearing who is not in attendance at 9:30am, the office staff will then contact child parents via a message through Lillio.
- once the child's absence has been confirmed, program staff will update reason in Lillio & will document the absence (and reason) in the daily communication book. If parent does not respond, a 'no response' will be recorded in the communication book.

Releasing a child from care:

When an individual arrives to pick up a child, the staff:

- shall only release the child to the child's parent/guardian or an individual listed on the registration package as having authorization to pick up. While we appreciate notification from parents, if a listed individual does arrive to pick up but no notification was given, the child can still be released to that individual. Should parent/guardian have a non-listed person picking up their child, they must provide written authorization (through Lillio) with the name of the individual picking up
- where staff does not know the individual picking up the child, they will confirm with another staff member the identity of the individual, or if no staff can confirm the identity, the staff will confirm with photo identification against the written notice from parent

Where a child has not been picked up at centre closure time:

Where a child is still in attendance at 6pm (center closure time):

- staff shall ensure that the child is given an activity, while they await their pickup.

- if the parent has not advised the centre ahead of closing as to the late pick-up, the staff will proceed to call the parent/guardian to advise that the child is still in care and inquire their pick-up time. Staff will leave a voice message with each phone call asking for a call back and informing person as to who has already been contacted and that the next person on the authorized list will be contacted.
- if staff is unable to reach parent/guardian, they will then proceed to contact the emergency contacts. Staff will leave a voice message with each phone call asking for a call back and informing person as to who has already been contacted and that the next person on the authorized list will be contacted.
- Where staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized emergency contacts listed on the child's file by 6:30pm, the staff will proceed to contact the local Children's Aid Society (in Niagara-Family and Children's Services (FACS)). Staff will follow the direction of FACS with respect to next steps.

When picking up your child, you must ensure that the staff member is aware of the departure.

If you cannot pick up your child by 6:00pm, we ask that you make alternate arrangements for your child to be picked up. Reminder that there is a Late Pick-up charge of \$2 per minute per child (non base fee).

The following are measures to ensure your child's safety:

- A copy of custody agreements must be on file to be enforced and access denied. If any changes occur to the custody agreement, notify us immediately. If a prohibited parent attempts to pick up a child, the custodial parent will be notified immediately, and the police will be notified if required. It is your responsibility to advise us of any changes in the status of custody. We can only react to the documentation that is on file.

If a parent, guardian, family member or visitor to the center engages in disruptive or potentially dangerous behaviour, the person will be asked to leave immediately.

In the unlikely event that a parent/caregiver arrives at the preschool to pick up their child while under the influence of drugs or alcohol or is physically/emotionally impaired in any way, the following guidelines will be followed:

- Office staff will be alerted
- Persuade the parent/caregiver to ask if someone else can be called to pick up the child. If the caregiver is the pick-up person whose behaviour is questionable, the parents will be called. If unsuccessful, staff will offer to call a taxi and will pay for the taxi
- If the person becomes agitated and/or confrontational, call 9-1-1 and notify the church office to inform them of the situation.
- Staff will not put themselves or children at risk physically by trying to stop an irate or intoxicated parent from picking up.
- If the parent/caregiver decides to drive home, staff will inform them that the police and Children's Aid Society will be contacted with their home address and car information.

Inclement Weather

In inclement weather conditions, Childcare Central will follow the local school boards (District School Board of Niagara & Niagara Catholic District School Board) school closure policy. If these school boards fully close schools due to inclement weather, our centre will be closed as well. If schools remain open and buses are cancelled, the centre will still be open.

Information about school closures will be available through the local radio station Storm Desk (iheartradio.ca/610cktb/news/stormdesk).

If the weather becomes inclement while children are in care, the Executive Director/Supervisor will make the decision to end the day. The Supervisor is responsible for all phone calls to families for children to be picked up. Staff will remain at the Centre until all the children have been picked up.

***It is always at the parent/guardian discretion as to whether they deem the roads safe to drive. Parents should notify the centre via email or phone call if they will not be attending on any day.

Security

Childcare Central has a secure entrance. Upon registration, parents will be given 1 Key Card for access to the childcare doors. A 2nd card may be requested for \$25 (non base fee). CASH will need to be brought in order to obtain a 2nd card. Families are eligible to have 2 keys and will be required to sign the Key Card Agreement upon receiving their card(s) and are to follow the agreement set out. For people who do not have cards, there is a doorbell to ring for access. When you ring the doorbell, please be patient as staff may be busy with children and can't get to the door system right away. If after a few minutes, no one has opened the door, please ring again.

We would ask that if you are not sure of a person, please do not let them into the building. We would also ask that as a parent you do not get upset if someone doesn't let you in or even asks for you to wait outside. This is for the security of all children, staff and families.

Our facility is monitored by security cameras inside and outside the building to help maintain a safe environment. Please understand that the camera access is restricted to Childcare management and is not available for parent viewing.

Clothing and Possessions

During the day, your child will participate in many different activities, and it is important that they are dressed in appropriate clothing. Remember, children are hard at "work" while they are with us and often the most beneficial learning experiences come from messy play.

Your child should be dressed appropriately for physical activity, all kinds of play and the weather. Dressing in layers is always a good idea. All clothing and footwear must be clearly labelled with your child's name.

Please see the "Children's Belongings-What to Bring" list (Appendix A)

Clothes borrowed from the centre must be cleaned and returned promptly.

Toys/accessories/treats for your child are discouraged from being brought to the center, unless specifically requested by staff. All items brought must be clearly labelled with your child's name.

Staff are not responsible for misplaced, lost or damaged clothing and toys.

Toilet Training

There is a whole psychology that goes along with toilet training a young child. **Communication between teachers and parents is essential in ensuring success for the child. If either party believes a child is ready to be toilet trained, they will speak with each other and work together throughout the entire process.** It is helpful if everyone follows the same procedure for toilet training, so as not to confuse the child. One indication of readiness is your child being able to verbalize the need to use the toilet. Each child will take a different length in this process, and we would ask that once the process has started, that you do not go back. There are better seasons of the year to do toilet training. It is better in late spring, summer and early fall. When timing is of the essence (most children realize they have to use the toilet with little time to get there), there are less layers of clothing (snow gear/splash suits) to deal with, thus making getting to the toilet quicker. If you choose to toilet train during winter months, please note that you are required to bring a 2nd pair of snowpants in case your child has an accident in them-to ensure they have appropriate clothing for outdoor play. It is also important to not plan to toilet train close to big life changes (new sibling, new house, death in family). These times are hard for children already and it may cause more stress, making them less successful.

You may purchase 'big kid' underwear at the beginning of the process. We would suggest you take your child with you and allow them to pick out what kind they want. This will make it tangible for them and will make them part of the process. It is another enticement to pee on the toilet.

STEP ONE: When we start the process of training, we initially place them on the potty every time they are changed to familiarize them with the idea of peeing on the toilet. During this stage, your child will still be asked to wear diapers until they are comfortable and ready to move to Step Two. Please note that we do not have small standalone potties. While our toilets are regular toilets, they are lower to the ground. We do have inner potty seats to make the opening smaller, however, your child should be familiar and comfortable with using a regular toilet.

STEP TWO: Once your child shows a week or more of consistently having dry diapers and is comfortable sitting on the toilet, we ask that you then provide training underwear for your child. These are either plastic lined pants OR thick material so that they feel wet, but the rest of their clothes stay dry. We also require that children wear loose fitting bottoms (no onesies, long/frilly dresses, pants with buttons/zippers, or tights) to make it easy for them to maneuver the pulling down/up. We also require several changes of bottoms-including socks and extra footwear (can be a pair of slippers). If your child has consistent accidents (more than 2/3 in a day), a conversation will be had to determine whether toilet training at this time is best for the child.

STEP THREE: Once your child is comfortable and is consistently dry in their training underwear, and we feel that they are ready for regular 'big kid' underwear, they can begin to wear them regularly. We still request that you send extra clothing in case of accidents.

Hopefully this gives you some insight into one of the bigger milestones for children. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this further, please connect with the office or with your child's teachers. It may sometimes be difficult to have lengthy conversations with teachers, so if you want more time to discuss, please let us know so that we can set up a time to properly speak with you.

Toilet accidents will happen-this is part of the process. Clothing will be bagged & placed in child's cubby. Please take it home, launder it and bring another clean set of clothing the following day. BM underwear/clothing cannot be rinsed in the toilet – only the BM is dumped in the toilet prior to the clothing being bagged.

Illness

If your child becomes ill during the day, you will be contacted and required to make arrangements to have your child *picked up within one hour of being contacted*. Failure to do so may result in termination of services. Fee reductions/refunds are not given for days missed due to illness.

Children cannot attend care if illness prevents their ability to participate in regular routines. All children attending must be able to participate in all parts of the program, including outdoor playtime. We require that families notify us of your child's absence and illness. Families are advised to make alternate care arrangements and/or seek medical attention for the following:

- Elevated temperature (a fever of 100.4F within past 24 hours)
- Excessive drainage (clear or discoloured) from the mouth, nose, eyes or ears
- Red discolouration to the whites of the eye(s)
- A deep hacking cough
- Difficulty breathing or untreated wheezing
- An unusual yellow colouring of the skin or eyes.
- Cuts or openings on the skin that are pus-filled or oozing
- Severe abdominal pain, vomiting and / or diarrhea (within past 48 hours)
- Discharge coming from eyes or ears, red, puffy eyes or crustiness
- Undiagnosed skin or eye rash
- Lack of energy /appetite / unable to participate in program
- Head Lice, children must be treated and nit-free before returning to school

If your child is sent to the center with any of the above listed symptoms or they develop them during the day, you will be contacted and required to make arrangements to have your child picked up. ***Children should never be medicated and then sent to care*** (eg given Tylenol to break a fever). Failure to do so may result in termination of services. A doctor's note may be required for families who are negligent in following this policy.

Niagara Public Health will be notified by the office regarding any significant illnesses. At that time, it will be determined by Public Health if any outbreak controls must be mandated and complied with by families and staff to reduce the illness from spreading. An email will be sent to all families, and a notice will be posted to notify parents of procedures to be followed.

Returning to Care

There are a few things to consider about returning to care after being sick:

- Child's symptoms must be improving for at least 24 hours
- Child must have no new symptoms
- Child must be fever free without the use of medication for at least 24 hours
- For gastrointestinal (abdominal pain, vomiting and/or diarrhea) it must be at least 48 hours since last incident

Children may still attend care with certain light symptoms. So long as they have stayed home for at least 24 hours and the symptoms are not worsening, your child may be permitted to come. If you are unsure if your child should be attending, please contact the office with your questions.

Please remember that if your child was sent home from the center, they need to remain home until they meet the requirements to return. That means that if they are sent home with a fever, they must remain at home the following day, as it wouldn't have been 24 hours fever free yet.

Immunizations

The CCEYA stipulates that each child must be immunized according to the local Medical Officer of Health before admission to the program or an exemption based on parental or MD written objection to the immunizations filed with the program. Therefore, we require a copy of your child's immunization record (either the yellow card or a printout from your physician).

In the event that your child has not been immunized due to conscience or religious beliefs, a form must be filled out and be notarized. Please ask the Office Staff for this form.

Medications

Administration of prescription and non-prescription medicine is tightly controlled and regulated. Our policies are in accordance with the Ministry of Education and Niagara Region Public Health. A complete copy of the policy is available upon request.

It is strongly recommended that the initial dose of any medication is administered by the parents at home, and that the child remains at home for the first 24 hours after a new medication is started, in order to allow medicine time to take effect and in case there is some form of allergic reaction.

In order for our office staff to administer any medication, we require written information from the parent providing permission to administer the medication, as well as information on the name of the medication, the date, time and dosage to be given and signature. **Staff must follow the directions on the pharmacy label as to when to administer the medication.**

It is the parent's responsibility to notify the centre if the child is taking any medications. It is also the responsibility of the parent to give the medication directly to office staff so that it can safely be stored out of reach of children and in accordance with the instructions listed. Parents must also supply the method to administer liquid medication (dropper/syringe/measuring cap).

Childcare Central will only administer prescription drugs to children under the following conditions:

- Medication is in the original container clearly labelled with prescription label containing the child's name, the name of the medication, date of purchase and instructions for storage and administration
- A medical authorization form (provided by the Center) must be fully completed by you upon arrival

Anaphylaxis & Epi-Pens

Anaphylaxis Emergency Plans are posted in the designated classrooms, food prep area and washrooms (if applicable) for any child who has a severe anaphylactic allergy.

Parents/guardians of an anaphylactic child will meet with the Office Staff to develop the Emergency Plan. Staff, supply teachers and volunteers are required to read and review all anaphylaxis emergency plans prior to your child starting the program, and at least annually thereafter or whenever a change is made. Should your child develop a life-threatening allergy after starting, the parent must contact the office to book an appointment to discuss and complete appropriate forms. The child will not be permitted to attend until all forms and plans have been completed and staff have had time to review (at least 24 hours after forms are signed). All staff, supply, volunteers and students will be trained annually on how to use an Epi-Pen. All Epi-Pens must be current and prescribed by a physician, in its original packaging, have the child's full name and the name and dosage of the medication. An Epi-Pen must remain at the center for each child identified with anaphylaxis. Epi-Pens will not be locked but kept accessible to staff, but inaccessible to children. If the Epi-Pen has been forgotten or expired, the child will not be allowed to attend.

In cases where a child has food allergies and the meals/snacks provided by Childcare Central cannot meet the child's needs, the child's parent will be asked to supply snacks/meals for their child. All written instructions for diet provided by the parents will be implemented. Staff/parents must ensure that all food is labeled with the child's full name and the date it was brought in. Parents will provide staff with a list of all ingredients. Where food is provided from home for children, staff will ensure that appropriate supervision of children is maintained so that food is not shared or exchanged.

Medical Conditions

Any child with an acute or chronic medical condition must have a medical needs form completed prior to enrollment. Should your child develop a medical condition after starting, the parent must contact the office to book an appointment to discuss and complete appropriate forms. The child will not be permitted to attend until all forms and plans have been completed and staff have had time to review (at least 24 hours after forms are signed).

Nutrition & Dietary Restrictions

Childcare Central provides a daily nutritious midday meal and 2 snacks (morning and afternoon). Snacks are prepared at our centre and lunch is catered by Little Ones Lunches (www.littleoneslunches.ca). Little Ones Lunches is able to provide food for children with nutritional restrictions (vegan, vegetarian, halal, kosher and food allergies). Milk is served with lunch. Water is served at snack and at any time during the day.

For the safety of children and staff with allergies, we do not allow children or parents to bring food of any type into the building. Please ensure that your child finishes eating breakfast at home so that you do not inadvertently compromise the safety of another child by bringing your child's breakfast into the building. We are a peanut and nut-free centre, and the church is 'nut-aware'. If your child has a nut product for breakfast, please make sure to change their clothing, brush their teeth thoroughly and wash their hands and face before coming to the centre.

Outside food is not to be brought into the Centre unless there are special arrangements made due to dietary restrictions and is discussed with the office to ensure all necessary requirements are met.

Weekly food menus are uploaded in the Lillio menu calendar and posted on the parent board for your convenience. The morning snack is not a substitute or supplement for breakfast, so please ensure your child has had breakfast prior to drop off.

It is not our policy to force children to eat. However, we do encourage all the children to try each type of food at each snack/meal. Our hope is that children will develop a taste for a variety of foods.

Children's special dietary needs and allergies are posted in all cooking and serving areas. Parents of children with special dietary needs may be asked to assist with food substitutions. Where food is provided from home, all food and drink containers must be labelled with the child's name.

Rest Period

While not all children need a midday nap, young children benefit from periods of quiet relaxation to balance their active play. Some children who are tired may take a relatively long time to relax and sleep, while others only require a short rest period.

Infants sleep "on-demand", based on their own schedule. For other age groups, our daily schedule incorporates a balance of active and quiet play, including a rest period. During this time, children are encouraged to sleep, rest or engage in a quiet activity, according to their needs.

Cribs/cots and sheets are provided by Childcare Central. Toddler and Preschool parents are asked to send a labelled blanket for their child to use that remains on their child's cot. For safety reasons, sleep sacks are not permitted for toddlers or preschoolers. Infants over 12 months of age may be given a blanket for their crib. As no blankets will be used for infants under 12 months, a sleep sack can be used for these children if provided by parents. Should a child wish

for a nap time comfort item (ie stuffed animal), it will remain on their cot during the day. It is required that this item stay at the center. We often suggest taking your child to pick out a new special “school only” stuffie and remind child that it is only to stay at school for sleep time. Bedding & stuffies are washed weekly at the childcare and more often if needed.

We would ask that you do not drop off or pick up during our rest periods (from 12:00-2:00pm) so as not to disturb the quiet time in the classroom. If your child does have an appointment, please plan around these times.

Communication

Communication is encouraged and promoted between the centre, parent and child. The success and future of the center depends largely on the ability to communicate effectively. We ask that you inform us of any illnesses, impending trips, separations or deaths in the family or other major changes in your child’s life. These events often affect behaviours and it is helpful to the staff to be aware of these changes in your child’s lives. Information will be held in strict confidence.

Lillio

Lillio is an electronic communication tool used to inform parents about their child’s day. Lillio is secure, reliable and easy to use. Parents can be updated through email and notifications via the website and mobile app. You can also find the menu, calendars and parent messaging. Invoicing for fees will be done via Lillio with an easy way for parents to make payments. Lillio will keep you in the loop with digital updates to complement our face-to-face interactions. You can expect to receive an invitation to log in from Lillio once the registration package has been returned.

Classroom Teacher

We firmly believe in parent partnerships. If you have any comments, questions or concerns regarding your child, please speak with your child’s classroom teacher or message them via Lillio. When discussing your concerns, try to be open to both sides of an issue. Please do not discuss your concerns in front of your child or other parents. Childcare Central staff are working for the benefit of your child. Please know that the staff are ready to discuss your concerns with you but as they need to be present in the classroom, drop-off and pick-up times are not always the best time for these discussions. If need be, a phone call or meeting can be set up.

If an issue cannot be resolved with your child’s classroom teacher and/or you have a concern regarding programming or center policy, the office staff and/or the Church Director of Operations may be involved. Please see the *Parent Issues and Concerns* section for more information.

Multi-Household Families and Custody

We recognize that multi-household families are common. At the time of registration, any special considerations with respect to custody arrangements between parents and/or guardians should be declared. In the event that custody arrangements should change, parents and/or guardians are responsible for notifying the office and providing documentation to support the change. Changes regarding custody or guardianship will not be made without proper documentation. Childcare Central will release a child to any parent/guardian listed as having full or partial custody at any time, unless otherwise documented.

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian receiving communication from Childcare Central to communicate any necessary information to the other parent/guardian sharing custody. Both parents may register for Lillio, allowing them both to get the same information.

From time-to-time, Childcare Central may contact families by phone to discuss behaviour concerns or illness. When contacting parents/guardians from multi-households, we will first attempt to contact the parent/guardian with primary custody. If we are unsuccessful in reaching this person, the secondary custody will be contacted. We will assume that the parent/guardian receiving such information will communicate any necessary information to the other.

Waitlist

It is never too early to add your child to our waitlist. Childcare Central uses the Niagara Region OneList system to place children in our childcare. (www.niagararegion.ca)

All children are required to be registered on Niagara Region's OneList prior to being placed. Once a parent has added a child to the waitlist, they will receive an acknowledgement email. Parents can update, change or delete a child's application at any time. ****Placement on the waitlist does not guarantee a spot at your preferred start date.**

When space becomes available in the program, priority will be given to children currently enrolled with the need to move up to the next group and changes in schedules; then children of staff employees and then siblings of children currently enrolled. Once these children have been placed, children on the wait list will be prioritized based on program room availability and the chronology in which the children were placed on the waitlist.

When a space becomes available, the parent will be contacted via notification through the OneList. A quick response (within 2 business days) will be needed to secure the spot. Details about the registration process will be given to parents once they confirm wanting the available spot. All forms must be returned before a start date can be confirmed. It is essential that all information be completed, including immunization record and at least 1 emergency contact person to ensure the safety and security of the child.

Spaces are created when a family/child leaves the centre. Spaces can be available at any time throughout the year and at any point in the month.

Only once a withdrawal is confirmed in writing can we begin to find a family to fill the space.

Admission

Applications for enrollment are taken at any time during the year and maximum enrollment is determined by the CCEYA license.

We offer full-time and part-time care (for toddlers and preschoolers only). Part time days must be consistent each week.

Infants benefit from attending daycare on a full-time basis, as this consistent routine plays a crucial role in their adjustment and settling in. Full-time attendance (4-5 days per week) allows infants to form secure attachments with caregivers, adapt to a structured environment, and develop social skills through regular interactions with peers. This continuity of care helps create a sense of stability, making the transition smoother and fostering emotional and developmental growth.

Registration forms need to be returned within 2 weeks of accepting a spot, or your spot will no longer be guaranteed. Any situation regarding children who require specialized services, having an anaphylactic allergy or medical condition would need to be discussed with the office prior to enrollment to ensure that Childcare Central can meet the child's needs. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure to inform the office in order to have all appropriate paperwork completed as soon as possible.

Space cannot be guaranteed if you temporarily withdraw your child or make changes to your schedule (eg reducing days during summer months).

Tours and Gradual Admission

Childcare Central provides an Open House on a Saturday morning in late winter. All families who are registered on the OneList will be invited to attend.

It can be difficult and trying for both children and parents to adjust to an unfamiliar environment and people. Every child has an individual settling-in period. We recommend a gradual stay period to allow your child to get to know our program. Our visit plan includes:

- VISIT 1: child visits with parent for 1 hour from 9-10am
- VISIT 2: child visits on their own for 1.5 hours from 8:45-10:15am
- VISIT 3: should a staff or parent feel the child would benefit from another visit; a 3rd visit will be arranged.

If a child struggles during these times, it may be recommended for a longer gradual admission plan. This will be discussed with the parents.

Change of Schedule

If you wish to make any changes to your child's schedule, a "*Change of Schedule Request Form*" must be provided to the office. This change can include which days a week you require care, or full to part time and vice versa. Every opportunity will be made to accommodate the

request; however, this may not always be possible or may require time to do so. This form can be found on the parent bulletin board by the front entry.

Extra Days available during the year for part-time families

If your child attends on a part-time basis, you may be able to periodically purchase additional days depending on the availability in your child's class. In order to request additional days, please contact the office via Lillio message. The daily base rate will then be charged to your account for the request day (if possible when invoices are issued). No refund will be given should your request no longer be needed and child does not attend.

Fundraising Events

As a non-profit, Childcare Central will participate in fundraising to help support the centre in purchasing additional items. All participation is voluntary. We welcome and support fundraising suggestions brought forth by families.

Ongoing Current Fundraisers:

FundScrip gift cards

FundScrip is a fundraising program that lets our group raise funds simply by individuals purchasing gift cards to stores they already shop at. There are over 250 different stores to choose from. A percentage of the purchase will be donated to our fundraising campaign. Prior to Christmas, we place a large group order (paper forms will be given to you) but for the rest of the year, purchases can be made from the comfort of your home via on-line ordering. We encourage you to invite your family, friends, co-workers and neighbours to participate in FundScrip. Information, including our invitation code, is available on the Parent's Board.

Mabel's Labels

Mabel's Labels is a company that sells personalized labels. They offer stick-on labels for clothes, water bottles, shoes, etc. They even offer personalized stamps! If you need labels for your child's belongings and would like to support this fundraiser, please go to campaigns.mabelslabels.com and search for Childcare Central (Niagara on the Lake). Through your purchases we get a percentage back and this money will be used for items for the children here at the centre.

Transiting Children to New Classrooms

Children will move rooms according to the following:

- as is age appropriate
- as space allows in the next room
- as is developmentally appropriate

Childcare Central's policy is to move children through the centre in such a way as to provide for a smooth transition. A child may visit the older classroom if space allows in the weeks leading up to their move. These will start with short visits and will work up to almost a full day.

Occasionally, when your child ages up to the next group, there may not be space available in that classroom. While movement can happen at any time during the year, most movement will take place in the fall once children leave to attend JK.

Parking

Designated parking is located to the side of the building by the main childcare entrance. Vehicles must not be left running unattended. Please do not leave small children in your car unattended.

Visitors

Visitors MUST check in at the office immediately upon entering the facility and are required to sign in on the visitor log. Parents and guardians of enrolled children are not considered visitors.

Individualized Support Plans

Childcare Central is committed to helping every child grow and learn. For children with exceptionalities who we are able to accommodate, we will work with parents and any other professional person who works with the child to develop an individualized support plan. For children identified prior to enrolling, an individualized plan needs to be returned and discussed with Office staff at least 1 week prior to child's start date. For children identified after enrolling, the staff will work with other professionals to develop an individualized plan while the child is regularly attending.

Inclusion Resource Services Model (IRSM)

The IRSM is an approach that provides the right level of support to children based on their individual needs while also increasing in-class coaching and collaboration with educators ensuring all children benefit from high-quality, inclusive environments.

The IRSM uses a team-based approach that includes:

Early Childhood Educator (ECE): Your child's educator supports them daily. In this model they help identify when a child may benefit from additional supports and work closely with both families and the IRSM team.

Inclusion Quality Coordinator (IQC): IQCs work directly with children, families, and educators by modeling strategies, providing classroom resources, creating goal plans, and bringing in other practitioners when needed. Niagara's IQC services are provided through Bethesda and Niagara Children's Centre.

Community Pedagogical Advisor (CPA): CPAs support educators, supervisors, and IQCs by offering resources, helping identify professional learning needs, and ensuring learning environments align with Ontario's early learning pedagogy.

The IRSM model is broken down into three tiers of support:

Tier 1: Focuses on providing universal support for all children. Classrooms will receive ongoing support from the IQC and CPA to create inclusive, welcoming spaces for children of all abilities. This includes adapting environments, offering resources, and embedding inclusive practices into everyday routines.

Tier 2: Focuses on providing individualized support for some children. If an educator identifies your child as needing additional support, they will discuss this with the IQC and with you, the family. Together you will collaborate to create goals that support your child. The IQC may also engage the CPA to provide additional professional learning or resources to support the teaching team in meeting the needs of your child and other children with similar needs. In some cases, additional wrap-around support may be provided through Pathstone Mental Health Behaviour Consultants.

Tier 3: Focuses on providing intensive support for individual children. For children who require more intensive support or specialized assistance, the educator and IQC will work with families to connect with appropriate community services (e.g., speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, and/or behaviour consultant support).

How Your Child Benefits from This Model

- Your child is part of a learning environment that is inclusive to individual and diverse needs
- Your child's educator is equipped with the resources and strategies to properly support the individual needs of all children
- A strong collaborative approach connecting families, educators, and community partners
- Preparation for school through early support and goal-focused planning where needed

Speech and Language Referral Checklist

WHAT IS IT?

- A screening tool to help educators support each child's communication development
- Completed by one of our educators with parental consent, within 6-8 weeks of the child's start date & annually thereafter AND at any time the parent/guardian or educator has concerns about the child's communication development

WHY DO IT?

- Assists educators in gaining further insight on each child's individual speech and language skills
- To offer additional support by referring to a Speech Language Pathologist at no charge, if suggested
- To offer additional support by referring to a Speech Language Pathologist at no charge, if suggested

Risky Play

Risky play can be defined as a thrilling and exciting activity that involves a child doing something that is outside their comfort zone. This could be physical, social, emotional, or creative. This type of play can provide opportunities for challenge, testing limits, exploring boundaries, and learning about injury risk. Risky play can help develop a child's self-confidence, resilience, executive functioning abilities and even risk-management skills. Children will be invited to explore and learn about these and other types of risk while staff are encouraging them to try new things. This may mean that they will start off by taking small risks and becoming more adventurous as they get older. Below is a list of some indoor and outdoor risks that may be applied to our centre:

- Climbing under tables
- Obstacle course
- Step stools for washing hands
- Infants learning to walk
- Preschoolers talking at group time in front of class
- Messy play (finger painting, shaving cream, glitter)
- Asking friends to play with them
- Loose parts (scissors, glue sticks)
- Trying new foods

Off Premises Activities/Environmental Walks

The staff plan activities for all children which are conducted inside and outside our approved play areas. We do not have planned off-site activities.

The church property provides us with lots of natural wooded space. At times, our groups may take the opportunity to go for a walk around the property. Children will be monitored at all times. An authorized form, in the registration package, acknowledges parental permission for the child to go on these walks with the class.

Photo Policy

Children love to have their photo taken. It is also a great way for staff to record what has happened in our classrooms and for children to be able to look back and remember what they have learned, explored and created at school. Childcare Central will not use pictures of any child on the internet or use for advertising/promotion purposes without further consent.

With your permission and agreement, children's pictures will be shared on Lillio (with children's first name if required). Parents of the children in the classroom have access to pictures and may occasionally be sent group pictures. Parent/Guardian who prefer not to share their child's image with any other parent must indicate this on the Lillio form. While photos will be shared, parents may not share photos on social media that contain other children.

If we would like to use a child's photo outside of Lillio, the parents will be asked for consent to use the photo and given a form to sign.

Outdoor Play

Regulations require at least two hours of outdoor play daily for each child (weather permitting). This is divided between morning and afternoon.

Children thrive in programs where they can engage in vigorous physical play in natural outdoor spaces and that present manageable levels of challenge. While it's important that children are provided with opportunities for a reasonable degree of risk taking. In addition to the physical benefits, active play outdoors strengthens functioning in cognitive areas such as perception, attention, creative problem solving, and complex thinking. There are also lots of opportunities for risky play while being outside. Some examples of outdoor risky play include:

- Jumping off tables/spools/tires
- Holding insects
- Messy play (chalk, painting, bubbles, etc)
- Splashing in puddles
- Riding bikes/play cars
- Walking on small bits of ice
- Trying new games
- Taking gloves off in winter
- Racing with friends

It is our policy that if your child is too ill to play outside or participate in any part of the daily routine, they should remain at home. Should a child have a written note from their doctor stating the reason that they cannot participate in outdoor activities, they may be placed in the office with office staff (if available). A medical form will need to be filled out and be on file before a child will have this consideration. Please note that until all paperwork is filled out and staff have signed off, the child will either have to go outside to play or should remain at home.

Cold Weather/Winter:

Infants (children under 18 months) will not engage in outdoor play when the temperature combined with wind chill is lower than -10C at the time of scheduled outdoor play or at the discretion of the Office Staff. During colder weather, outdoor activities may be limited to 15 minutes.

Children over 18 months will not engage in outdoor play when the temperature combined with the wind chill is lower than -15C at the time of scheduled outdoor play or at the discretion of the Office Staff. During colder weather, outdoor activities may be limited to 30 minutes.

Summer/Hot Weather: During extreme heat, outdoor play may be limited at the discretion of the Office Staff. Our educators will ensure that children are well hydrated at all times and given the option to cool down as needed.

A decision whether or not to go outside is made based on the discretion of the office staff. In cases where Environment Canada, Niagara Public Health or other sources issue a weather alert where the weather may affect human health, staff will keep children indoors and will provide alternate play opportunities.

Sun Safety

It is suggested that all children have a wide-brimmed sun hat. During the months of May to September, Childcare Central will apply and reapply sunscreen when needed prior to outdoor play.

It is the parent's responsibility to apply sunscreen at home in the morning prior to arriving at childcare. Staff will apply sunscreen at least 15 minutes before the children go out in the afternoon. Parents must sign their approval for the center to apply sunscreen on the registration forms. If you do not consent to the sunscreen provided, you are required to indicate this on the form and provide your own labelled sunscreen for us to apply to your child.

Biting Policy

Our primary goal is to provide a safe and loving Christian environment for all children. Biting is an unacceptable behaviour, but our program also realizes that it is not unexpected in some children. When a biting incident occurs, we take it very seriously. Biting can be harmful to other children and to the staff. Our goal is to help identify what is causing the biting and to resolve the issue. Biting can cause upsetting feelings for the parents of the child that was bitten, for the parents of the child that bit and also the staff. Staff want these behaviours to end as quickly as possible. Some reasons that children bite may include experimental biting, teething discomfort, becoming independent, lack of communication skills, frustration because they can't express their needs/wants and feeling threatened by, or negotiating change in their environment (ie start at the program, new baby, etc). If a biting incident occurs, staff will follow the biting policy. The policy is available upon request from the Supervisor.

Incident Reports

The safety and wellbeing of each child in our program is our top priority and we take every precaution to prevent injury. Should your child receive a minor injury while in our care, a written accident report will be completed. Parents will be required to read and sign the report. Parents will receive a signed copy of the report and the original will be placed in the child's file.

If there is a serious accident or injury that results in the need for medical attention, Childcare Central will attempt to contact the parent as soon as possible and arrangements will be made for the child to be picked up or to meet the office staff at the local emergency department. If you cannot be reached, the listed emergency persons will be contacted. If the parent/emergency contact is unavailable, the child will be transported by ambulance to the local hospital, accompanied by and Office Staff/designate.

All staff members are trained in 1st Aid & CPR and are able to administer basic 1st Aid treatment until paramedics arrive.

Head Lice

In the best interest of all children, Childcare Central follows a “no-nit” requirement. Children who are found to have head lice are to remain away from the classroom until they are deemed “nit-free”.

If a child is found to have lice, the parents will be notified immediately and will be required to pick up their child. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that the child(ren) has been appropriately treated before returning. Any employee found with lice will be asked to go home and return when they have treated themselves appropriately, but may return to work without being nit-free. They are told to continue to check for nits and lice to ensure that their treatment worked.

Office staff will conduct follow-up lice checks for 2 weeks following a child’s return after being determined they are nit-free.

Child Abuse Policy & Duty to Report

While we hope and pray that all children are growing up in a safe, secure and loving environment, the statistics show that no community is immune to problems with child abuse.

Under the **Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014**, our staff are morally and legally obligated to report any suspected child abuse to Family and Children’s Services of Niagara.

Smoke Free Environment

Smoking and vaping are not permitted at any time within our Centre, our playgrounds or the parking lot, in accordance with the requirements under the “Smoke-Free Ontario Act of 2017”. Your cooperation is appreciated in ensuring that we offer a smoke-free learning environment for all children, families and employees.

Fire Drills & Emergency Management

Fire Drills are conducted monthly by all classes. Fire drill procedures are posted in each classroom. The children are encouraged to walk quickly and listen to the teachers.

Childcare Central has an Emergency Management Plan in case of a variety of emergencies. This plan is reviewed annually by Office staff (and if need be, the Church Director of Operations) and corresponds with our Emergency Management Policy & Procedures.

If an emergency occurs, we will notify parents via phone, email or a written letter depending on the circumstances. If an evacuation is required, the children will be taken to the Husky Travel Center located at 615 York Rd.

Volunteer and Student Involvement

Volunteers and Students must review Childcare Central's policies and procedures and parent handbook before commencing duties at the childcare centre.

If the Volunteer or Student is over 18 years old, a Criminal Reference Check must be completed before the volunteer or student commences duties at the childcare centre.

Volunteers and students will be supervised by an employee at all times.

Volunteers and students will not be left alone with any child at Childcare Central. They are also not counted in staffing ratios.

Program Statement

Childcare Central believes in offering an exceptional program where we strive to meet the needs of the *whole* child-mind, body, heart and soul. We are committed to offering a stimulating and creative Christian environment that will meet your child's physical, spiritual, social, emotional and intellectual developmental needs. We believe that each child is a gift from God and is unique, competent, capable of complex thinking, curious and full of potential. Every child should feel that they are special, that they belong, are a valuable contributor to their environment and that they all deserve the opportunity to succeed. To foster active exploratory play and inquisitive creativity, children are encouraged to ask questions, take time to wonder about created things, and to be challenged to try new things. A quality program is much more than *what* the children play with but *how* they interact and communicate with others, the environment, and it helps them develop their ability to self-regulate through observation and documentation.

Childcare Central is committed to providing quality programs that are consistent with the Ministry of Education policies and pedagogy, as outlined in:

- How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy in the Early Years (HDLH)
- Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT)
- Think, Feel, Act: Lessons from Research About Young Children

Our program strives to:

A. Promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children

In order for children to be successful, their basic physiological needs must be met.

Practices that maintain safe, clean environments help to ensure the basic provision of care exists. Staff at Childcare Central conduct daily health observations of each child. Children are checked for signs of ill health which are documented in the child's health log. Staff follow all Public Health policies and procedures.

The staff also play a big role in maintaining the safety of other staff, children and families. As children arrive and depart, they are marked in the attendance log and throughout the day, staff conduct head counts to ensure no one is missing. Daily, weekly, monthly and annual inspections are completed as required.

Nutritional health is part of a child's growth and development. Childcare Central provides nutritious snacks and lunches. Allergy/restriction lists are posted in all areas where the

children are, as well as the office and the kitchens. We will work with families with special requests such as vegetarian, vegan, halal and other requests. Staff will follow these lists. For children with anaphylactic allergies, an anaphylactic form is required, and training of staff is done prior to the child's start date.

B. Support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, childcare providers and staff.

We build relationships by interacting with the people around us and relationships are the core of everything we do. It is important to have positive and responsive interactions among the children, families and staff. These interactions are built and nurtured in an environment where educators interact in a warm, responsive and meaningful way and communicate in a manner that ensure the children, families and colleagues feel understood, valued, and respected. When positive interactions and responsive communication exist, authentic relationships are built, and a sense of belonging, trust and comfort are fostered.

Educators will treat everyone with respect and dignity by demonstrating positive interactions, empathy and concern for all. They will maintain a positive tone of voice, model positive non-verbal communication skills and will use teachable moments to further develop positive social behaviours.

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

Throughout the day, children are provided with opportunities to engage in communication with others. These opportunities will help support a child's developing capacity for self-regulation and learn how to interact effectively with the world around them.

Staff will model respectful, inclusive and collaborative interactions, how to accomplish tasks and will assist children to process their own emotions and to identify the emotions of others.

Staff will praise and encourage children when they are engaged in an appropriate manner and will redirect/guide children into acceptable options when engaged in unacceptable activities or behaviours. We will work towards making children aware of the results of their own actions, and how to self-regulate.

D. Foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry

At Childcare Central, we believe that children learn best when they explore through their senses, repetition of task, imitation, asking questions and pretending. We believe it is our role to support the play, so that their learning can flourish.

We strive to provide fun and interesting activities for children. We will ask open-ended questions that promote inquiry and complex thinking. We will provide a variety of activities such as fine motor, sensory, dramatic play, gross motor and creative expression.

We encourage children to decide where, when, what and how they will play. Their decisions are based on their interests and curiosity. Educators will adapt/change the environment by adding new materials, posing questions or being a play partner. Our flexible schedule allows for as little interruptions as possible and provides large amounts of time for children to engage in sustained, complex play and inquiry.

E. Provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences

We believe that children are naturally curious and full of wonder. It is our role to support play, so that learning and development can flourish. In order to create an effective learning environment, there must be a balance between following the children's lead and interests and planning and implementing experiences that will support children's skill development and a growing understanding of their world. We design the classroom environment and activities that responds to what is seen and heard from the children. Educators plan and support experiences by setting out interesting and thought-provoking activities that trigger a child's interest and their complex thinking. Some activities will be on a pre-determined topic but may be taken in a different direction based on the children's interest.

F. Plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported, and which is inclusive of all children, including children with individualized plans

In *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for Early Years*, it says:

Children thrive in indoor and outdoor environment spaces that invite them to investigate, imagine, think, create, solve problems, and take meaning from their experiences-especially when the space contain interesting and complex open-ended materials that children can use in many ways. (pg 20)

We believe that the environment is the third teacher and that educators and children each learn something new each day. We will strive to create settings that offer opportunities for active, creative, and meaningful explorations, and that reflect a sense of belonging for the children, families and staff. We will provide quiet areas, soft furnishings and accessories that are designed to make the child feel comfortable and safe.

Our environment and program plans provide a variety of spaces and activities such as creative expression, sensory, group time, dramatic play, block play, quiet time, and outdoor play.

G. Incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, into the day, and consider the individual needs of the children while receiving care

We believe that a daily schedule should meet the needs of all children, be flexible and provide a balance of activities throughout the day. Periods of active and quiet play are mixed throughout the day, and transitions are kept to a minimum. Our daily schedule is flexible while consistent as young children thrive on regular schedules and feel secure when they know what to expect.

We believe that children need time both indoors and outdoors. We will go outside in all kinds of weather unless a weather watch is in effect.

H. Foster the engagements of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children

Parents are the most important people in a child's life, and they are an important part of the program. They are aware of their child's interests and development. Ongoing, respectful communication between parents and staff is essential. Communication that is both cooperative and collaborative deepens the understanding of expectations and attitudes and allows us to build a stronger connection with the families we serve. We believe that we need to work together with families to promote the success of each child's experience.

Educators and teachers communicate daily about the child's activities and health. Daily highlights which may include observations of each child's interests and activities and pictures are sent via Lillio. We also document connections to learning and list development skills they have achieved.

Parents are encouraged to come into the classrooms to see what their child has been doing. Communication is important and we want each family to feel valued and appreciated. Communication of upcoming church and community events are shared with families via Lillio messages.

I. Involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and staff

We see value in community resources. We work closely with agencies such as Community Living-Preschool Services, Early Childhood Community Development Center, Quality Childcare Niagara, Niagara Region, etc. This approach allows us to better support the developmental needs of the whole child, their families and our staff. We also invite community members into our program. This can include parent information sessions, community helpers coming to speak to the children, or student placements (college or high school).

We will share information of events happening at Central Community Church, as well as other community events/activities that families may find of interest.

Staff connect with community partners and agencies to access training workshops, 1st Aid training, networking groups and other community resources to support their ongoing development.

J. Support staff or others who interact with the children in relations to continuous professional learning

Childcare Central is committed to the ongoing professional development of all educators. We believe that each person is a lifetime learner and support staff in ongoing training to enhance their knowledge of early childhood education practices.

Staff attend monthly team meetings where they engage in meaningful conversation regarding the program and children. We provide the opportunity for staff to attend learning workshops throughout the year. Our Registered Early Childhood Educators must maintain their membership with the College of Early Childhood Educators by complying with the requirements in the Continuous Professional Learning plan.

K. Document and review the impact of the strategies set outlined in A-J on the children and their families

Childcare Central is invested in supporting children to become the person God created them to be. We will ensure that we are reviewing our strategies set forth in the program statement and address any issues. This living document is reviewed regularly, and changes/updates are implemented accordingly.

Prior to starting employment, all staff, students and volunteers are required to read and understand the policy binder, including this program statement, and annually thereafter. Staff are monitored by the Supervisor/designate to ensure that they are meeting the goals.

By documenting and reflective observations, staff reflect on the whole learning environment and review the above goals to ensure they are to help support each child's learning. Ongoing communication and self-reflection will occur at team meetings to ensure any barriers that may be limiting children are addressed.

Families are provided with a copy of the Program Statement and are updated when changes are made.

An annual parent survey will be conducted to gather information and input from parents regarding the program.

Discipline & Prohibited Practices

Children need boundaries and consequences appropriate to their behaviour to feel safe in their environment. At Childcare Central, children will be redirected in a positive manner to promote self-discipline, health and safety, the respect of others and of property.

The following are prohibited practices at Childcare Central:

- corporal punishment of the child
- physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting themselves, or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
- locking the exits of the childcare 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 emergency management policies and procedures;
- use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine their self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
- depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
- inflicting any bodily harm on the children including making the children eat or drink against their will.

If there are behavioral concerns with a child, the parents will be consulted to develop a plan to help the child grow in this area.

Vulnerable Sector Screening

Childcare Central follows the regulations set out by the Ministry of Education concerning Criminal Reference Checks. Anyone who works directly or has close contact with the children must pass a Criminal Reference Check as well as a Vulnerable Sector Check every 3 years (in accordance with insurance). All employees complete an Annual Declaration in the years in between.

Parent Concerns/Issues

Parents/guardians are encouraged to regularly discuss what their child(ren) is experiencing in our program. As supported by our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, childcare providers and staff, and foster the engagement of continuous communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children. Our staff are available to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction.

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by Childcare Central and will be addressed within 48 hours. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties as quickly as possible.

Issues/concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing. Parents should use the Lillio messaging app or email the office directly. If parents have outside relationships with staff, they should refrain from raising concerns or making comments to them while in a social setting or via staff media platforms. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally, or in writing upon request. The level of detail provided to the parent/guardian will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within three business days. The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

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

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

Childcare Central maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated by any party.

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

and/or licensee. Staff will not respond to any concerns or comments made to them outside of the centre (in a social setting/conversation or through personal social media).

Procedures

Nature of the Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern
<p>Program Room-Related</p> <p>Eg: schedule, toilet training, indoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to the classroom staff directly or to the supervisor or licensee</p>	<p>All staff are encouraged to address and resolve the issue/concern at the time it is raised, however, if it is not possible to resolve the issue/concern at the given time, the staff will arrange a meeting with the parent/guardian within three business days.</p> <p>The staff involved in the raised issue will document the issue/concern using the Parent Issue/Concern Documentation form. Staff will ensure that the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within five business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Staff will document the reasons for the delay in writing. Staff will provide a resolution or outcome to the parent/guardian who raised the issue/concern. If a parent/guardian requests a written response, this will be copied and given to the parent/guardian.</p>
<p>General, Centre-or Operations-Related</p> <p>Eg: childcare fees, hours of operation, staffing, waitlist, availability, menus, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue of concern to the Office Staff or Licensee</p>	
<p>Staff, Supervisor and/or Licensee-Related</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to the individual directly OR to the Office staff or licensee.</p> <p>**All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff that puts a child's health, safety and/or well-being at risk should be reported to the office staff as soon as parent/guardian becomes aware of the situation</p>	<p>The staff involved in the raised issue will document the issue/concern using the Parent Issue/Concern Documentation form. Staff will ensure that the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within five business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Staff will document the reasons for the delay in writing. Staff will provide a resolution or outcome to the parent/guardian who raised the issue/concern. If a parent/guardian requests a written response, this will be copied and given to the parent/guardian.</p>
<p>Student/Volunteer Related</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to the staff responsible for supervising the student/volunteer OR to the office staff and/or licensee</p> <p>**All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that puts a child's health, safety and/or well-being at risk should be reported to</p>	

	the office staff as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.	
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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 Ashley Berti, Director of Operations at Central Community Church.

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

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

Contacts:

- Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care Help Desk: 1-877-510-5333 or childcare_ontario@ontario.ca
- Niagara Region Public Health: 905-688-3762
- Early Childhood Community Development Centre: 905-646-7311 or eccdc@eccdc.org
- College of Early Childhood Educators: 1-888-961-8558 or info@college-ece.ca
- Niagara on the Lake Fire Department: 905-468-3266
- Niagara Regional Police: 905-688-4111
- Central Community Church: 905-937-5610

Privacy Policy

Records concerning your child (enrolment forms, health records, observations, DPS, etc.) are confidential and will only be accessible to you, the Supervisor, and the Program Advisor designated by the Ministry of Education to review our records for licensing purposes. Information will not be given to others without parent consent.

It is the policy of our center to not disclose the names of children who may have caused injuries to other children while at the program.

Parent Handbook

This parent handbook will be available online at www.centralcc.ca/childcare. A hard copy will be provided upon request.

Appendix A - Children's Belongings (what to bring)

please make sure all items are **labelled. Check out the section about Mabel's Labels as a great way to label and support our centre.

Infants:

- Indoor shoes
- 2 changes of clothes (each set in own labelled Ziploc bag)
- Appropriate seasonal outerwear (see below)
- Half sleeve of diapers* & diaper cream** (if needed)
- Breast milk/Formula and bottles (if needed)
- Sleep sack (if needed)
- Comfort item (cuddly toy)
- Soother (if required)
- Water cup/bottle with straw

Toddlers:

- Indoor shoes
- 1 change of indoor clothes (labelled in a Ziploc bag)
- Appropriate seasonal outerwear (see below)
- Half sleeve of diapers* & diaper cream** (if needed)
- Blanket and comfort toy for rest time (**to remain on their cot in the classroom**)
- Water bottle with straw

Preschoolers:

- Indoor shoes
- 1 change of indoor clothes (labelled in a Ziploc bag)
- Appropriate seasonal outerwear (see below)
- Half sleeve of diapers* & diaper cream** (if needed)
- Blanket and comfort toy for rest time (**to remain on their cot in the classroom**)
- Water bottle with straw

*Disposable and cloth diapers can be used. Soiled cloth diapers and clothing will be placed in a plastic bag and returned to the parent for laundering. Due to Public Health guidelines, we are not able to rinse or spray soiled articles.

**Consent must be given for use of diaper cream using the Authorization for Non-Prescription Skin Products form.

Appropriate Seasonal Outerwear

Winter:

- snow suit
- winter boots
- 2 pairs of snow mittens
- warm hat & neck warmer (NO SCARVES)

Spring/Fall:

- lined jacket with hood or hat
- splash pants
- rubber boots

Summer:

- sun hat
- running shoes or closed toe sandals (NO FLIP FLOPS)

Appendix B-Fee Schedule (based fee)

Effective: January 1, 2025

DESCRIPTION	RATE
Infant <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Full day care	\$22.00/day
Toddlers <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Full day (7am-6pm)• Half day (7am-11:30, no lunch)	\$22.00/day \$12.00/day
Preschool <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Full Day (7am-6pm)• Half day (7am-11:45am, no lunch)	\$22.00/day \$12.00/day