



**First
Steps**
CHILD CARE
CENTRE

PARENT HANDBOOK





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First Steps Childcare is a not for profit childcare facility dedicated to providing quality childcare for children 3 months to 12 years.



WELCOME TO FIRST STEPS CHILDCARE CENTRE



Here at First Steps Childcare Centre, we want our centre to be the best place for your child to be at while they are not in your care. As noted in our brochure we are licensed by the Ministry of Education, and we follow the Childcare Early Years Learning Act Licensing Standards.

FIRST STEPS CHILDCARE CENTRE is committed to providing a high quality, safe and secure environment for all children enrolled in our program. The safety and wellbeing of children who are being supervised on our premises is one of **FIRST STEPS CHILDCARE CENTRE's** highest priorities. Our classroom staff are individually interviewed and selected Registered Early Childhood Educators chosen to create and learn with your children assisted by educated and trained assistants.

All our staff have a Vulnerable Sectors check completed prior to employment and are trained in CPR-C and First Aid. It is mandatory that our Early Childhood Educators are registered with the college of ECE. There are professional learning opportunities for all the staff offered through OneHSN.

First and most importantly we are a NUT free childcare centre and offer healthy meals and snacks prepared on site by our cook who is certified with the Food Handlers Training Certificate. The following are a few important points from our Anaphylactic Policy that will be followed:

- A NUT free breakfast can be brought in for children who start their day early. Also, children who have food allergies or religious restrictions can also send nut free food substitutions.
- Parents who bring in breakfast food and/or substitutions will label food brought to the childcare centre with the child's full name and the date the food arrived at the childcare centre, and that parents advise all ingredients.
- When food is provided from home for children, ensure that appropriate supervision of children is maintained so that food is not shared or exchanged.
- Parents who serve foods containing allergens at home are asked to ensure their child has been rid of the allergens prior to attending the childcare centre (e.g. by thoroughly washing hands, brushing teeth, etc.)

The following Parent Handbook will highlight some of the important information you may need to know about First Steps Childcare Centre. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the supervisor at any time. Thank You.

Welcome to First Steps Childcare Centre!

Sincerely,
Sue Sherk
Director

Essex

169 Irwin Avenue
Essex, ON
519.776.8699

Latchkey

25 Gosfield Townline West
Essex, ON
519.776.8699

Tecumseh

13291 Tecumseh Road East
Tecumseh, ON
519.739.0811

Beacon Heights

13800 Tecumseh Road East
Tecumseh, ON
519.997.2442



FIRST STEPS CHILDCARE CENTRE

169 Irwin Avenue Essex, ON N8M2T4
frststep@mnsi.net
519-776-8699



First Steps Childcare Centre is enrolled in the Canada-Wide Early Learning Childcare System (CWELLCC).

- We are open daily, Monday to Friday from 6am to 6pm. For our before and after school programs we are open 6am until school hours start to when school hours finish until 6pm.
- We provide quality care at our Essex, Tecumseh and Beacon Heights locations for children from 2 months up to 12 years of age. Essex Latchkey provides care for children Grade 1 to 12 years of age.
- There is no Registration fee, but after acceptance into the program an Enrollment Package must be completed and returned within 48 hours to keep your space. Two weeks notice is needed for termination of care without any additional charge.
- There are no sick days and two weeks notice is necessary for any scheduled time off without being charged for regular scheduled days.
- All payments are due in ADVANCE of your child's care, weekly, biweekly, or monthly. Payments can be made in the office by debit, Visa or MC. Also, e-transfer can be paid to frststep@mnsi.net (No "I" in first). Please use the youngest child's first name as the password.

FEES



BEACON HEIGHTS - BASE FEES

AGE GROUP	FULL DAY	HALF DAY		
Infant	\$22.00			
Toddler	\$20.96			
Preschool	\$19.11			
Kindergarten (Under 6 - Jan 1 - June 30)	\$17.40			
Kindergarten (Over 6 - After June 30)	\$36.82			
KINDERGARTEN	B/A SCHOOL	BEFORE	AFTER	
Under 6 years (Jan 1 - June 30)	\$12.00	\$10.00	\$12.00	
Over 6 years (After June 30)	\$21.00	\$10.00	\$13.00	

BEACON HEIGHTS LATCHKEY (NON CWELLC) BASE FEES

AGE GROUP	FULL DAY	HALF DAY		
6-12 Years	\$36.82	\$21.00		
	B/A SCHOOL	BEFORE	AFTER	
6-12 Years	\$21.00	\$10.00	\$13.00	

TECUMSEH - BASE FEES

AGE GROUP	FULL DAY	HALF DAY		
Infant	\$22.21			
Toddler	\$19.37	\$12.76		
Preschool	\$17.95	\$12.00		
Kindergarten (Under 6 - Jan 1 - June 30)	\$17.95	\$12.00		
Kindergarten (Over 6 - After June 30)	\$38.00	\$24.00		
KINDERGARTEN	B/A SCHOOL	BEFORE	AFTER	
Under 6 years (Jan 1 - June 30)	\$12.00	\$10.00	\$12.00	
Over 6 years (After June 30)	\$20.00	\$10.00	\$13.00	

TECUMSEH LATCHKEY (NON CWELLC) BASE FEES

AGE GROUP	FULL DAY	HALF DAY		
6-12 Years	\$36.00	\$21.00		
	B/A SCHOOL	BEFORE	AFTER	
6-12 Years	\$20.00	\$10.00	\$13.00	



FEES

ESSEX - BASE FEES

AGE GROUP	FULL DAY	HALF DAY	
Infant	\$19.84		
Toddler	\$17.95	\$12.00	
Preschool	\$17.01	\$12.00	
Kindergarten (Under 6 - Jan 1 - June 30)	\$17.01	\$12.00	
Kindergarten (Over 6 - After June 30)	\$36.00	\$22.00	
KINDERGARTEN	B/A SCHOOL	BEFORE	AFTER
Under 6 years (Jan 1 - June 30)	\$12.00	\$9.00	\$12.00
Over 6 years (After June 30)	\$18.00	\$9.00	\$12.00

ESSEX LATCHKEY (NON CWELLC) BASE FEES

AGE GROUP	FULL DAY	HALF DAY	
6-12 Years	\$34.00	\$21.00	
	B/A SCHOOL	BEFORE	AFTER
6-12 Years	\$18.00	\$9.00	\$12.00

NON-BASE FEES

Post Centre Closing	Any child not picked up before the centre is closed is subject to \$25.00 per 15 minutes.
NSF Fee	\$25.00
Sunscreen Fee	Paid Annually in April (Fee is based on the cost of the Sunscreen Program in that year)
Swipe Card Fee at Essex location only	\$10.00

Any "Summer Fun" Program Field Trip costs will be outlined in the summer calendar for the Kindergarten and Latchkey Programs at the beginning of the summer.

Closed for statutory holidays, Civic Holiday, the week between Christmas & New Year and the first week of July. There is no charge for these days.

A FEW QUICK TIPS



- At First Steps Childcare Centre we do not have a registration/administration fee to reserve/hold a childcare space. Childcare spaces are reserved for children after parents or guardians have a tour in our facility and there is a space confirmed for the time the care is requested. Then once the registration forms are processed and on file with a confirmed start date the child is ready to start as needed. We do ask that if a parent/guardian's childcare needs to change and the space is no longer needed at First Steps Childcare Centre, you could please contact and let us know as soon as you know.
- If a parent has a tour of First Steps Childcare Centre and chooses to be put on a waitlist for a future space or until there is a space available, you will be put on our waitlist.
- *Please see Attachment A for our "Waitlist Policy"
- Signing In and Out your child daily is important. We do fire drills once a month and we take the sign in/out with us to confirm attendance. If there were an actual emergency, it would be important to have the children signed in/out to cross reference who was in the building with who has been evacuated.
- Your child's safety is our number one priority. In the event there is a serious occurrence it is reported to the Ministry of Education in the Childcare Licensing System (CCLS) within 24 hours of the licensee or supervisor becoming aware of the incident. A notification form would be posted on the front entrance bulletin board for 10 business days.
- Two weeks notice is required for termination of your care at First Steps Childcare Centre. You can use the two weeks notice of care or make a payment for the two weeks your child was scheduled to attend. Two week notice is also required to schedule days off without being charged for your child's scheduled care.
- We have no sick days. Your scheduled space is YOUR child's space while they are enrolled with us. We are closed for all the Statutory Holidays and there is NO charge for them if it is your child's scheduled day. We are closed for the civic holiday in August as well as the week between Christmas and New Year.
- Prior to enrollment all children sign an authorization for walks. This is for the children to go for walks on the sidewalks in town. This includes the infant staff taking the infants out for stroller rides in town on the sidewalks. They do prefer to use the Infant/Toddler playground made right just for them but sometimes the walks add a nice change to their day. If there is a field trip for any of the children in town within walking distance (local parks, splash pads, etc) there will be a week or more notice posted by the sign in/out and it will be on the Bright Wheel app for parent's awareness as there will be extra supervision.
- The Latchkey/Summer Fun Program has a calendar processed in June prior to the summer of the events, field trips and parks they will be attending throughout the months of July and August.



PHILOSOPHY AND PROGRAM STATEMENT

Our program at First Steps Childcare Centre reflects our philosophy, which is to provide a safe nurturing environment that will allow each child to express their individuality and creativity indoors and out. It is important that all areas of development will be included by providing the best possible environment, so that the children are actively involved while they are meeting their social, physical, emotional and intellectual needs. By providing them with the proper tools for each of these areas of development, we will allow the children to develop to their full potential. We believe all children are competent, capable, curious, and rich in their potential.

We offer a secure environment with controlled access where only staff, parents and guardians have access to their children unless otherwise specified. All staff on site are First Aid/CPR trained with a Vulnerable Sectors Check and a Police Record Check on site. First Steps Childcare Centre is a NUT free facility that offers a four-week menu rotating each week uniquely designed using the Canadian Food Guide. Due to food allergies and religious beliefs special food requests are welcome. Breakfast snacks should be brought in already prepared, in a labeled container and MUST be NUT FREE.

We have created positive and responsive interactions by using respect among the children, parents, childcare providers and staff. Respect creates a chain of positive reactions in communication and relationships. The staff begin the chain of respect by creating a positive relation amongst themselves by listening to each other, supporting each other, and setting an example for the children. Then staff and parent/guardian interactions will support respect when the staff provide them with direct contact and attention upon drop off and pick up as needed. Parents are then made aware of their child's daily interests and activities through communication, as well as photo boards and social media. This represents a respectful environment that is promoted among the staff throughout daily interactions and encouraged among the children. Every child is a capable communicator who expresses themselves in many ways. The children are being spoken to with respect and will honor and support their competencies by example.

Those treated with respect will be most likely to respect others and communicate in a positive way. Children having difficulty respecting others or just needing some time to self-regulate will be encouraged to use the quiet areas designated in each classroom or outdoors. Self-regulation involves children's developing ability to regulate their emotions, thoughts, and behavior to enable them to act in a positive way towards a goal.

Each classroom and playground have been designed to foster the children's Early Childhood Education through exploration, play and inquiry while developing independence, curiosity, creativity, responsibility, self-regulation and most importantly a sense of self-worth and a sense of belonging. As co-learners, together we have provided the children with a variety of tools to explore and support the children's-initiated play through adult-supported experiences in their daily learning since every child is developing a sense of self, health and wellbeing. This is encouraged to happen by expanding on what happens in a child's day, including open ended self-directed activities and providing opportunities for the children to grow cohesively. Planning for and creating positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported, in which is inclusive of all children, including children with individual plans. Indoor and active playtime, sleep/rest time and outdoor play will be monitored, and areas will be flexible and identified for change, if an area needs to be enhanced or tools added. As well, assessment tools for the children are available through Talk to Me and Children's First upon a referral.



Meaningful opportunities are used to create emergent learning and experiences are initiated as the children discover through their surroundings and life around them. These experiences and new ideas can be used in all areas in the classroom, during craft time, circle time, in classroom discussions and on the playground. The emergent learning opportunity is incorporated into the program through indoor play, outdoor play, active play, rest and quiet time if the children are interested in the idea. Respect and consideration of the children's needs are taken into consideration at every opportunity. An outline of learning opportunities will be listed on a "reflection template" posted on the information board in each classroom. This classroom information area will help foster the engagement of ongoing communication with parents about the program including photos of activities and newsletters with current information about the program. The children's emergent learning will be documented by learning stories posted inside/outside the classroom, curriculum books and emergent books. Parents at any time can read the emergent book in their child(ren)'s room(s). Teachers will review and reflect on all documentation every 6 months to ensure children are engaged in their program.

The staff in each room are available throughout the day by messaging Bright Wheel or calling the Centre and speaking with your child's room directly. Pictures and messages will be available through Bright Wheel to share the children's daily experiences and positive learning experiences with parents/guardians.

Field trips, special visitors, and involvement with community helpers create awareness for the children and their families of our local community partners and allows those partners to support the children, their families and staff.

As a foundation to our high-quality programs, we are dedicated to upholding the College of Early Childhood Educator's Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice. As professionals we are dedicated to life-long learning and experiences that expand our growth and knowledge on child development and care. It is important that we have a continuous understanding of the best up to date advances made in the related fields of study. As part of our commitment to quality, our staff are encouraged and supported in professional growth and development through ongoing training events provided by the City of Windsor.

The impact of strategies set out daily in each age group outlined in this Program Statement will be reviewed from the documentation in the emergent learning journals by the RECE staff. This information will be used to assist the staff in future approaches that will be implemented while working to achieve future goals in the program with each age group.

Our Infant, Toddler, Preschool and School-Age programs are based in this strong foundation to provide a safe nurturing learning environment that respects each child's unique stage of development while providing every child with a sense of belonging among and between children, adults, and the world around them.

Our guiding documents - we use the document titled "How Does Learning Happen?" Ontario's Pedagogy for the early Years (2014), "Childcare and Early Years Act", 2019. These documents are reviewed on a continual basis with staff.



SUPERVISION POLICY FOR VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENTS

FIRST STEPS CHILDCARE CENTRE is committed to providing a high quality, safe and secure environment for all children enrolled in our program. The safety and well-being of children who are being supervised on our premises is one of FIRST STEPS CHILDCARE CENTRE'S highest priorities.

Effective September 6, 2011, all day nurseries and private home daycare agency operators will be required to develop and implement a policy for the supervision of volunteers and placement students in childcare programs.

All documentation will be kept/retained for 3 years.

FIRST STEPS CHILDCARE CENTRE has developed the following policy and programs that set out the framework and the program which applies to all agency volunteers and placement students who have been approved or accepted by FIRST STEPS CHILDCARE CENTRE.

POLICY

FIRST STEPS CHILDCARE CENTRE may have volunteers and/or students (College and Secondary School) working within the organization along with staff throughout the year. **AT ALL TIMES, VOLUNTEERS AND PLACEMENT STUDENTS MUST BE UNDER THE DIRECTION AND SUPERVISION OF THE FIRST STEPS CHILDCARE CENTRE STAFF.**

- No child will be supervised by any person less than 18 years of age.
- No child will be supervised by someone who is not an employee of FIRST STEPS CHILDCARE CENTRE.
- Only employees of FIRST STEPS CHILDCARE CENTRE will have direct unsupervised access to children.

FIRST STEPS CHILDCARE CENTRE encourages, supports and values the involvement of students, parent/guardians and community volunteers in its program in order to enhance the quality of learning activities, provide teaching opportunities for future educators and to increase communication and positive relationships amongst the childcare program, parents and the community. FIRST STEPS CHILDCARE CENTRE shall, for the safety of children in our care and the integrity of our program, ensure that appropriate procedures are in place for the screening, selection, orientation, training, supervision, recognition and evaluation of students and volunteers is in effect and monitored.

At FIRST STEPS CHILDCARE CENTRE, only staff employed with the organization will have direct unsupervised access to the children enrolled in the program. Volunteers and students may not be counted in staffing ratios and are therefore not to be left alone with any of the children enrolled in the program.

It is the responsibility of the supervisor to orient volunteers and students and to set out expectations and limitations regarding the care of the children enrolled at FIRST STEPS CHILDCARE CENTRE.



PROCEDURE

- All staff are required to review the organizations policies, procedures and practices regarding the supervision of volunteers, participating parents and students at FIRST STEPS CHILDCARE CENTRE,
- All staff will review their roles and responsibilities when directly supervising and working with volunteers, participating parents and/ or placement students in their classrooms annually
- The director/supervisor of the childcare centre is responsible for ensuring that volunteers, participating parents, and students are provided an orientation to the organization, appropriately trained and supervised
- Volunteers, participating parents, and students have a responsibility to contribute to their orientation by seeking information, asking questions and assistance as required.
- All volunteers, participating parents, and placement students must agree to follow all policies and procedures of FIRST STEPS CHILDCARE CENTRE.
- All volunteers, participating parents, and placement students must agree to follow the directions and guidelines provided by staff and management of FIRST STEPS CHILDCARE CENTRE.
- In the case of a disagreement over the direction provided by a staff member the volunteer participating parent or student may address this issue in writing with the director or supervisor.

VULNERABLE SECTOR CHECKS

All volunteers, including participating parents having direct contact with the children in the childcare must have a satisfactory vulnerable sector check.

Student placements - Students, prior to their placement in the childcare centre must verify they have a satisfactory vulnerable sector check.



SUPERVISION POLICY FOR VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENTS CON'T

MANDATORY ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

Prior to starting in the classroom at FIRST STEPS CHILDCARE CENTRE, all volunteers, participating parents and students will have an orientation which will include a comprehensive discussion regarding FIRST STEPS CHIDCARE CENTRE'S program statement.

All volunteers, participating parents and students will be provided with a detailed orientation regarding their roles and responsibilities within the organization. This will include a thorough review of FIRST STEPS CHIDCARE CENTRE'S Code of Ethical behavior. (College of ECE Code of Ethics and Standard of Practice) prior to working in the classroom.

All volunteers, participating parents, and placement students are required to review and sign off on all policies and procedures prior to working with the children for the first time and at least annually thereafter.

All volunteers, participating parents, and placement students will have ongoing training through impromptu daily meetings and scheduled monthly staff meetings.

All volunteers, participating parents, and placement students are required to read all applicable memos and organizational updates. All volunteers, participating parents, and placement students will be made aware of all applicable policies and procedures in the organization including but not limited to:

- The Behavior Management Policy
- Emergency policies and procedures
- Anaphylaxis Policy and procedure
- Serious occurrence policy
- Playground policy
- Confidentiality policy
- Code of Conduct

RECORD RETENTION

All records documenting the volunteer, participating parent, and/or placement student has reviewed and signed off on all applicable policies and procedures will be kept on file at the First Steps Childcare Centre for three years.

Confidentiality - ALL volunteers, participating parents and students must sign a Confidentiality Agreement.

All volunteers, participating parents and students are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed while at FIRST STEPS CHILDCARE CENTRE, involving staff, clients, or other volunteers and students.



DISCIPLINE

All volunteers, participating parents and students who fail to adhere to the policies and procedures of FIRST STEPS CHIDCARE CENTRE, may face disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

FIRST STEPS CHIDCARE CENTRE believes in fairness and openness and where volunteers, participating parents and students can expect a commitment to resolving conflict and receiving supportive and constructive criticism. If disciplinary action is required, the organization follows the same steps as its staff policies:

- Performance review
- Verbal warning
- Written warning
- Suspension
- Dismissal

NOTE: This agreement is in honor only and is not intended to be a legally binding contract of employment.



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Name of Childcare Centre: First Steps Childcare Centre

Date Policy and Procedures Established: Jan 12, 2017

Date Policy and Procedures Updated: June 17, 2024

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 childcare 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 childcare 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 childcare centre.

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

Meeting Place: the designated safe place near the childcare centre where everyone is to initially gather before proceeding to the evacuation site, or returning to the childcare 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 childcare premises.

Staff will notify parents as soon as the information has been given by the authority.



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.

At First Steps Childcare Centre - Beacon Heights (13800 Tecumseh Rd. E, Tecumseh ON),

For situations that require evacuation of the childcare centre, the meeting place to gather immediately will be located outside the main entrance: First Steps Childcare Centre 13800 Tecumseh Road, Tecumseh, ON, N8N 3T5

If it is deemed 'unsafe to return' First Steps Childcare Centre's evacuation site to proceed to is located at: Ecole Secondaire Catholique l'Essor, 13605 St Gregory's Rd, Windsor, ON N8N 3E4

At First Steps Childcare - Essex (169 Irwin Ave, Essex ON),

For situations that require evacuation of the childcare centre, the meeting place to gather immediately will be located at: Infant, Toddler and Preschool 2 meet outside the front of the building (awning door) Preschool 1 and 3 or Kindergarten will evacuate into the Preschool Playground and stand along the fence by the gate.

If it is deemed 'unsafe to return' to the childcare centre, the evacuation site to proceed to will be Foodland Grocery Store, 191 Talbot Street, Essex ON (across the street)

At First Steps Childcare Centre - Latchkey (25 Gosfield Townline West, Essex, ON),

For situations that require evacuation of the childcare centre, the meeting place to gather immediately will be located outside the main entrance: Gosfield Townline Entrance

If it is deemed 'unsafe to return' First Steps Childcare Centre's evacuation site to proceed to is located at: First Steps Childcare Centre, 169 Irwin Ave Essex ON N8M2T4

At First Steps Childcare Centre - Tecumseh (13291 Tecumseh Rd, Tecumseh ON),

For situations that require evacuation of the childcare centre, the meeting place to gather immediately will be located at: Infant and Preschool 3 or kindergarten meet outside the front door (awning door) Toddler, Preschool 1 and 2 meet outside the side door facing Manning Road.

If it is deemed 'unsafe to return' First Steps Childcare Centre's evacuation site to proceed to is located next door at Good Life Fitness, 13275 Tecumseh Road E, N8N3T4.

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.



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES CON'T

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, the assigned Supervisor will provide directions to staff for the immediate response and next steps. Staff will follow the directions 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 in the daily written record.

ADDITIONAL POLICY STATEMENTS

Fire drills are conducted on a monthly basis and recorded by the staff in each room as well as recorded by the supervisor in the **Fire Safety Plan Binder**.

PROCEDURES / PHASE 1: IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE



EMERGENCY SITUATION

LOCKDOWN

When a threat is on, very near, or inside the childcare centre. E.g. a suspicious individual in the building who is posing a threat.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The staff member who becomes aware of the threat must inform other staff of the threat as quickly and safely as possible.
2. Staff members who are outdoors must ensure everyone who is outdoors proceeds to a safe location.
3. Staff inside the childcare centre must:
 - remain calm;
 - gather all children and move them away from doors and windows;
 - take children's attendance to confirm all children are accounted for;
 - take shelter in closets and/or under furniture with the children, if appropriate;
 - keep children calm;
 - ensure children remain in the sheltered space;
 - turn off/mute all cellular phones; and wait for further instructions.
- 4) If possible, staff inside the program room(s) should also:
 - close all window coverings and doors;
 - barricade the room door;
 - gather emergency medication; and
 - join the rest of the group for shelter.
- 5) Supervisor will immediately:
 - close and lock all childcare centre entrance/exit doors, if possible;
 - and take shelter.

NOTE: Only emergency service personnel are allowed to enter or exit the childcare centre during a lockdown.



PHASE 1: IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE

EMERGENCY SITUATION

HOLD & SECURE

When a threat is in the general vicinity of the childcare centre, but not on or inside the childcare premises. E.g. a shooting at a nearby building.

BOMB THREAT

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.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 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.
- 2) Staff members who are outdoors must ensure everyone returns to their program room(s) immediately.
- 3) Staff in the program room must immediately: take children's attendances to confirm all children are accounted for; close all window coverings and windows in the program; continue normal operations of the program; and wait for further instructions.
- 4) The supervisor must immediately:
 - close and lock all entrances/exits of the childcare centre;
 - close all blinds and window outside of the program rooms; and place a note on the external doors with instructions that no one may enter or exit the childcare centre.

NOTE: Only emergency services personnel are allowed to enter or exit the centre during a hold and secure.

- 1) The staff member who becomes aware of the threat or possible dangerous situation must:
 - remain calm, if emergency services are not yet aware of the situation; Call 911
 - follow the directions of emergency services personnel; take children's attendance to confirm all children are accounted for.
- 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.
- 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.

PHASE 1: IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE



EMERGENCY SITUATION

DISASTER REQUIRING EVACUATION

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

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 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 and ensure their required medication is accessible; if applicable and wait further notice.

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



PHASE 1: IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE

EMERGENCY SITUATION

DISASTER-EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENTAL THREAT

An incident outside of the building that may have adverse effects on persons in the childcare centre. E.g. gas leak, oil spill, chemical release, forest fire, or nuclear emergency.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 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.

If remaining on site:

- 1) Staff members who are outdoors with children must ensure everyone who is outdoors returns to their program room immediately.
- 2) Remain calm; staff must immediately
 - take children's attendance to confirm all children are accounted for; close all program room windows and all doors that lead outside
 - (where applicable); continue with normal operations of the program; and wait for further instructions.
- 3) The supervisor must:
 - seal off external air entryways not located in program rooms where applicable);
 - place a note on all external doors with instructions that no one may enter or exit the childcare centre until further notice; and
 - turn off all air handling equipment (i.e. heating, ventilation and/or air conditioning, where applicable).

If emergency services personnel otherwise direct the childcare centre to evacuate, follow the procedures outlined in the "Disaster Requiring Evacuation" section of this policy.

PHASE 1: IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE



EMERGENCY SITUATION

NATURAL DISASTER: TORNADO | TORNADO WARNING

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1) The staff member who becomes aware of the tornado or tornado warning must inform all other staff as quickly and safely as possible.
- 2) Staff members who are outdoors with children must ensure everyone who is outdoors returns to their program room(s) immediately.
- 3) Staff must immediately:
 - remain calm;
 - gather all children;
 - go to the basement or take shelter in small interior ground floor rooms such as washrooms, closets or hallways;
 - take children's attendance to confirm all children are accounted for;
 - remain and keep children away from windows, doors and exterior walls;
 - keep children calm;
 - conduct ongoing visual checks of the children; and wait for further instructions.



PHASE 1: IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE

EMERGENCY SITUATION

NATURAL DISASTER: MAJOR EARTHQUAKE

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1) Staff in the program room must immediately:
 - remain calm; instruct children to find shelter under a sturdy desk or table and away from unstable structures;
 - ensure that everyone is away from windows and outer walls;
 - help children who require assistance to find shelter;
 - for individuals in wheelchairs, lock the wheels and instruct the individual to duck as low as possible, and use a strong article (e.g. shelf, hard book, etc) to protect their head and neck;
 - find safe shelter for themselves;
 - visually assess the safety of all children; and wait for the shaking to stop
- 2) Staff members who are outdoors with children must immediately ensure that everyone outdoors stays away from buildings, powerlines, 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 after shock 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 a safe place and make them feel comfortable and ensure their required medication is accessible, if applicable; and wait for further instructions.
- 7) The site designate must conduct a walkthrough of the childcare centre to ensure all individuals have evacuated, where possible.



PHASE 2: NEXT STEPS DURING THE EMERGENCY

IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROCEDURES FOR OTHER EMERGENCIES

First Steps Childcare Centre, 13800 Tecumseh Road, Tecumseh, ON N8N 3T5

Additional Procedures for Immediate Emergency Response

The Cook and supervisor position will always go to the Infant Room during any emergency to help evacuate.

Phase 2: Next Steps During the Emergency

- 1) Where emergency services personnel are not already aware of the situation, Supervisor, must notify emergency services personnel (911) of the emergency as soon as possible.
- 2) Where the childcare 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		1-800-310-1122
Ambulance		911
Local Fire Services		911 or 519-979-4041
First Steps Childcare Centre - Beacon Heights Site Supervisor/Director	Sue Sherk	519-997-2442
First Steps Childcare Centre - Essex Site Supervisor	Sydney Renaud	519-776-8699
First Steps Childcare Centre - Essex Latchkey - Site Supervisor	Michelle Damm	226-724-8430
First Steps Childcare Centre - Tecumseh Site - Site Supervisor	Keri Rush	519-739-0811

The Site Supervisors are the licensee contact and childcare centre designate

- 4) Where any staff, students and/or volunteers are not on site, Sue 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 childcare centre.
- 5) The supervisor 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.



PHASE 2: NEXT STEPS DURING THE EMERGENCY

8A) PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW WHEN “ALL-CLEAR” NOTIFICATION IS GIVEN

PROCEDURES

- 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 childcare centre.
- 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 childcare centre.
- 3) Staff must:
 - take attendance to ensure all children are accounted for; escort children back to their program room(s), where applicable; take attendance upon returning to the program room(s) to ensure
 - that all children are accounted for; where applicable; and re-open closed/sealed blinds, windows and doors.
- 4) Sue will determine if operations will resume and communicate this decision to staff.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS

- 1) As soon as possible, Abby must notify parents/guardians of the emergency situation and that the all-clear has been given.
- 2) Where disasters have occurred that did not require evacuation of the Childcare centre, Sue must provide a notice of the incident to parents/guardians by the end of that day.
- 3) If normal operations do not resume the same day that an emergency situation has taken place, Sue must provide parents/guardians with information as to when and how normal operations will resume as soon as this is determined.

PHASE 2: NEXT STEPS DURING THE EMERGENCY



8B) PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW WHEN “UNSAFE TO RETURN” NOTIFICATION IS GIVEN

PROCEDURES

- 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.
- 2) Staff must take attendance to confirm that all children are accounted for, and escort children to the evacuation site.
- 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.
- 4) Sue will post a note for parents/guardians on the childcare centre entrance and Bright Wheel app with information on the evacuation site, where it is possible and safe to do so.
- 5) Upon arrival at the evacuation site, staff must:
 - remain calm; take attendance to ensure all children are accounted for;
 - help keep children calm; engage children in activities, where possible;
 - conduct ongoing visual checks and head counts of children; maintain constant supervision of the children; keep attendance as children are picked up by their parents,
 - guardians or authorized pick-up persons; and remain at the evacuation site until all children have been picked up.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS

- 1) Upon arrival at the emergency evacuation site, Sue and an assistant will notify parents/guardians of the emergency situation, evacuation and the location to pick up their children.
- 2) Where possible, Abby will update the childcare centre’s voicemail box and Bright Wheel app as soon as possible to inform parents/guardians that the childcare centre has been evacuated, and include the details of the evacuation site location and contact information in the message.



PHASE 3: RECOVERY - AFTER AN EMERGENCY SITUATION HAS ENDED

ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES FOR NEXT STEPS DURING AN EMERGENCY

Children will be given TLC if they seem in distress, snacks and water provided, and staff will document anything that seems out of the ordinary.

PROCEDURES FOR RESUMING NORMAL OPERATIONS

E.g. where applicable, reopening the childcare centre, contacting the Ministry of Education Program Advisor, responding to media and community inquiries, contacting the insurance company, informing the caterer, temporarily relocation, etc.

All the correct paper work and follow up will be forwarded to the Ministry of Education, and insurance company, and any other agencies that were involved, or needs updating.

PROCEDURES FOR PROVIDING SUPPORT TO CHILDREN AND STAFF WHO EXPERIENCE DISTRESS

The staff will comfort the children and when the parent arrives to pick up the staff will need to inform the parent of the distress that was displayed by the child. There is a Transitional Stability Centre located at 744 Ouellette Ave, Windsor open 8am to 8pm when staff in distress can go. If there is attention needed after 8pm there is mental health support at Hotel Dieu Ouellette Campus @1030 Ouellette Ave, Windsor.

PROCEDURES FOR DEBRIEFING STAFF, CHILDREN, PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Include, where the supervisor will provide details about when and how the debrief(s) will take place, etc.

Victim services must debrief staff, children and parents/guardians after the emergency either at the scene of the incident or there will be a group text generated where staff and parent/children can meet up in a safe place. (Good life Fitness, 13275 Tecumseh Road, Tecumseh, ON)

If staff or a child were in distress and need further attention there will be a contact number provided to reach the supervisor who will contact someone in higher authority or have references for staff, Parents and their Children to contact Children's First 519-250-1850, Hotel Dieu, Ouellette Campus, 1030 Ouellette Ave, Windsor or attend the Transitional Stability Centre, 744 Ouellette Ave, Windsor.

PHASE 3: RECOVERY – AFTER AN EMERGENCY SITUATION HAS ENDED



REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS: ONTARIO REGULATION 137/15 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

68.1 (1) In this section,

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

- (2) Subject to subsection (3), every licensee shall ensure that each childcare 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 childcare 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 childcare 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.



PARENT ISSUES, CONCERNS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Name of Childcare Centre: First Steps Childcare Centre - Beacon Heights Site

Date Policy and Procedures Established: January 15, 2018

Date Policy and Procedures Updated: June 18 2024

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a transparent process for parents/guardians, the childcare licensee and staff to use when parents/guardians bring forward issues/concerns.

DEFINITION

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

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

Volunteer: Individual giving their own time to help out the licensee

POLICY

GENERAL

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our childcare centre and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing with our program. 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 and ongoing 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 the supervisor and staff at First Steps Childcare Centre's, Beacon Heights Site, and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties and as quickly as possible.

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



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

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

CONFIDENTIALITY

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

CONDUCT

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

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

CONCERNS ABOUT THE SUSPECTED ABUSE OR NEGLECT OF A CHILD

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

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

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

For more information, visit <http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaid/reportingabuse/index.aspx>



PROCEDURES

8A) PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW WHEN “ALL-CLEAR” NOTIFICATION IS GIVEN

NATURE OF ISSUE OR CONCERN	STEPS FOR PARENT AND/OR GUARDIAN TO REPORT ISSUE/CONCERN:	STEPS FOR STAFF AND/OR LICENSEE IN RESPONDING TO ISSUE/CONCERN:
<p>Program Room - Related E.g.: schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the classroom staff directly or the supervisor or licensee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised or arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within 1-3 business days.
<p>General, Centre or Operations - Related E.g.: Childcare fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the supervisor or licensee. 	<p>Document the issues/concerns in detail.</p> <p>Documentation should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the date and time the issue/concern was received; the name of the person who received the issue/concern; the name of the person reporting the issue/concern; the details of the issue/concern; and any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.
<p>Staff, Duty parent, Supervisor, and/or Licensee - Related</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the individual directly or the supervisor or licensee. <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, duty parents, etc. that puts a child’s health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	<p>Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.</p>
<p>General, Centre or Operations - Related E.g.: Childcare fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student or the supervisor and/or licensee. <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that puts a child’s health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	<p>Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within [insert number] business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing.</p> <p>Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.</p>



ESCALATION OF ISSUES OR CONCERNS:

Where parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may escalate the issue or concern verbally or in writing to the supervisor and board of directors.

Issues/concerns related to compliance with requirements set out in the Childcare and Early Years Act., 2014 and Ontario Regulation 137/15 should be reported to the Ministry of Education's Childcare 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 Childcare Help Desk

Telephone: 1-877-510-5333

Email: childcare_ontario@ontario.ca

CINDY FISHER

RECE, B.A. Program Advisor, Southwest Region Childcare Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch Early Years and Childcare Division | Ministry of Education

Telephone: 226-280-1863

Email: Cindy.Fisher@ontario.ca

SUE SHERK

Director

Telephone: 519 -997-2442



PROHIBITED PRACTICES

With respect to a child receiving childcare at First Steps Childcare Centre no licensee supervisor, staff, volunteer, student on an educational placement, parent volunteer or employed persons on the premises that oversees the provision of childcare shall permit,

- a) Corporal Punishment of a child
- b) Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to the highchair, 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 the 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.
- c) Locking the exits of the childcare centre or home childcare premises for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as a part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures;
- d) Use of harsh or degrading measures of 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 themselves self-respect, dignity or self-worth.
- e) Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding.
- f) Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

All young children benefit from an affirming approach that encourages positive interactions with other children and adults. Every person, employees, students and volunteers who contravenes or complies with prohibited practices is guilty of an offence.

Research from diverse fields of study shows children who attend programs where they experience warm supportive relationships are happier, less anxious and more motivated to learn than those who do not. Experiencing positive relationships in early childhood also has significant long-term impacts on physical and mental health, and success in school and beyond.

All of First Steps Childcare Centre's policies and procedures are reviewed before an employee begins employment, volunteers start interacting with the children or students begin their educational placement. All policies and procedures are then reviewed annually or at any time there is a change to a policy, procedure or individualized plan.

CHILDCARE CENTRE WAITING LIST POLICY AND PROCEDURES



Name of Childcare Centre: First Steps Childcare Centre

Date Policy and Procedures Established: February 22, 2022

Date Policy and Procedures Updated: June 13, 2024

POLICY

A waitlist is formed when First Steps Childcare Centre has reached full capacity. Parents are required to apply on the OneHSN site for the specified First Steps Childcare Centre location they prefer. The OneHSN site tracks the waitlist including the number of children on the waitlist and the position children are in on the list. When there is an opening the next child on the OneHSN list will be offered the available space.

PRIORITY is established by the longest application date of the one HSN, however, siblings of children currently enrolled and children of employees will be given priority status.

Once your child is excepted from our waiting list, a parent or guardian must have a tour of the centre to ensure the centre is a 'good fit' for the family.

If the family for any reason declines the spot, we will offer the spot to the next family on the list. Any family that declines a spot will remain on the list in the same sequence unless they request to be removed from the waiting list. When a family is called and does not respond in 24 hours the next family is called and the same process is followed. The spot will go to whoever accepts the space first.

The child is removed from the waitlist upon a parent or guardian's verbal or written request.

When a family accepts an offered spot, we will arrange for a pickup for the necessary forms and a time for the parents and child/children to meet the teachers, ask questions and learn what supplies the parent or guardian will need to bring for their child's first day. A prepayment schedule will be set up at this time as well.

There is no deposit or holding fee required for a child's space.



CHILDCARE CENTRE WAITING LIST POLICY AND PROCEDURES

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

The waiting list will be maintained in a manner that protects the privacy and confidentiality of the children and families on the list. Only the child's position/number on the waiting list will be provided to parents.

The waitlist is kept on our OneHSN site with access to the supervisor who can check upon the request of a parent to see where their child is on the waitlist if an inquiry is being made at any time. The information on the waitlist remains confidential but the parents and/or guardians are welcome to enquire with the supervisor of the childcare centre to gain access to the information.

Regulatory Requirements: Ontario Regulation 137/15

Waiting Lists

- 75.1 (2) Every licensee that establishes or maintains a waiting list described in subsection (1) shall develop written policies and procedures that,
- (a) explain how the licensee determines the order in which children on the waiting list are offered admission; and
 - (b) provide that the waiting list will be made available in a manner that maintains the privacy and confidentiality of the children listed on it, but that allows the position of a child on the list to be ascertained by the affected persons or families.

CHILDCARE CENTRE SAFE ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL POLICY & PROCEDURES



Name of Childcare Centre: First Steps Childcare Centre

Date Policy and Procedures Established: January 1st 2024

Date Policy and Procedures Updated: January 25, 2024

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 childcare 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

First Steps Childcare Centre will ensure that any child receiving childcare at the childcare centre is only released to the child's parent/guardian or an individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization the childcare centre may release the child to.

Please select which of the below policy statements apply to your program with respect to the dismissal of children from care without supervision. Please delete or edit those bullet points as you see fit.

- First Steps Childcare 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.
- A parent/guardian may request that a child who is 10 years old or older be released from childcare without supervision. Parents/Guardians must provide written and signed authorization and instructions for the release of the child including the time of dismissal.
- Where a parent/guardian provides written instructions for the release of their child from care without supervision, the parent/guardian is aware that the childcare is no longer responsible for that child upon their dismissal.



CHILDCARE CENTRE SAFE ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL POLICY & 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 the full name of the person that will be picking up and communicate this to the other staff verbally and write it in the classroom daily log book. If this change happens during the day of the pick up after drop off the parent /guardian must message the authorization for pick up through the Bright Wheel app to provide authorization for pick-up in writing
 - document the change in pick-up procedure in the daily written record.
 - sign the 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 childcare centre and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off (e.g., left a message on the Bright Wheel app or advised the closing staff at pick-up), the staff in the classroom must:
 - inform the opening staff at the centre to confirm there has been no messages left on the voice mail. If there has been no message on the Bright Wheel app or left on the childcare centre voice mail the classroom staff present in the room must commence contacting the child's parent/guardian no later than 30 minutes after their expected drop off time Staff shall send a message on the Bright Wheel app. If after 15 minutes there is no response, the staff will attempt to call the parent/guardian. If there is no answer, an attempt to reach a second parent/guardian listed on the registration form will be made. When there is no answer during the phone calls a voice mail must be left that we are inquiring about the child's change in drop off. After trying both main contacts the staff must try contacting the emergency contacts from the registration form. If after all attempts a parent/guardian cannot be contacted the classroom staff must contact the supervisor to make him/her aware that the child did not show up at their expected time and all attempts have been made to contact the parent and guardian.
 - the Supervisor will determine if any additional steps should be taken (e.g. involve the police).
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 classroom daily log book

Releasing a child from care

1. The staff who is supervising the child at the time of pick-up shall only release the child to the child's parent/guardian or individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization that the childcare may release the child to. 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.

CHILDCARE CENTRE SAFE ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL POLICY & PROCEDURES



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

1. Where a parent/guardian has previously communicated with the staff a specific time or time frame that their child is to be picked up from care and the child has not been picked up within 30 minutes from the expected pick up time, the classroom staff shall proceed in contacting the parents/ guardians by using the Bright Wheel app., and advise that the child is still in care and has not been picked up.
 - Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian, staff must call the parents/guardians on the registration form and leave a message if the phone call is not answered. 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 staff has not heard back from the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was to pick up the child the staff shall contact the emergency contact by phone from the registration form. If there is no answer leave a message, then 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 6:00pm , 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 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 and 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 authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the child, the staff shall continue to try to contact authorized individuals/emergency contacts listed on the child's registration forms.
4. Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or any emergency contact's listed on the child's Registration form by 7:00PM, the staff shall proceed with contacting the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) 519-252-1171 or 519-258-6111. Staff shall follow the CAS's direction with respect to next steps.

DISMISSING A CHILD FROM CARE WITHOUT SUPERVISION PROCEDURES

Staff will only release children from care to the parent/guardian or other authorized adult. Under no circumstances will children be released from care to walk home alone. Unless, a parent/guardian has provided written authorization for their child to be released from care without supervision, one staff in the program must be responsible for dismissing the child from care. Prior to dismissing the child from care, the staff shall review the written instructions for release provided by the parent/guardian and release the child at the time set out in the instructions. The staff shall document the time of departure from care and as well as their initials on the attendance record.



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 licence issued by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of the childcare 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.

Regulatory Requirements: Ontario Regulation 137/15

Safe arrival and dismissal policy

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

- (a) provides that a child may only be released from the childcare centre or home childcare premises,**
 - (i) to individuals 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 childcare premises, or**
 - (ii) a child is not picked up as expected from the centre or home childcare premises.**

NOTES



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First Steps CHILD CARE CENTRE

Essex

169 Irwin Avenue
Essex, ON
519.776.8699

Latchkey

25 Gosfield Townline West
Essex, ON
519.776.8699

Tecumseh

13291 Tecumseh Road East
Tecumseh, ON
519.739.0811

Beacon Heights

13800 Tecumseh Road East
Tecumseh, ON
519.997.2442

