



Est. 2022

CREEK
CHILDCARE
Corporation

PARENT
HANDBOOK

Created January 2022
Revised February 2024

Locations

Hickory Creek Childcare Centre

12 Young Street

Welland, Ontario L3B 4C4

Hours: 7:00am to 5:30 pm

Supervisor: Chevelle Bernard – hickory@creekchildcare.ca

Phone: (905)658-1222

Etransfers – hickorycreekcc@gmail.com

Ages: Toddler, Preschool, ELKP/School Age



Cedar Creek Childcare Centre

116 West Street

Smithville, Ontario L3B 4C4

Hours: 7:00am to 6:00 pm

Supervisor: Shanice Springer (Natalie Rizzi – Interim)– cedar@creekchildcare.ca

Phone: (289)780-1733

Etransfers – cedarcreekcc23@gmail.com

Ages: Infant, Toddler, Preschool, ELKP/School Age



Director/Owner

Mackenzie Curran B.A., R.ECE.

Email – mackenzie@creekchildcare.ca

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The Director, Supervisors and Staff welcome your child and family to our Creek Childcare Centres. We look forward to this new addition to our family and community. We have prepared this handbook so that you will know what you can expect from us and what we will expect of you and your child. We have included many of our policies and procedures, so that our operations are transparent and informative. Our practices are guided by the Child Care Early Years Act, 2014, the College of Early Childhood Educators' Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, How Does Learning Happen, and our own Policies and Procedures. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us and we will be happy to help you. I look forward to meeting each and every one of you.

Thank you,
Mackenzie Curran, B.A., R.ECE
Director and Owner

About Creek Childcare

Creek Childcare was established in 2022 with the hopes of opening multiple centres throughout southern Ontario. Our first centre being our Welland Location, *Hickory Creek*, open in November 2022. *Cedar Creek* being our second location opening Spring 2024 in Smithville, Ontario.

The names of our centres stem from the most popular tree in the area of the childcare centre. We hope that the natural name style of our centres will help gain the natural atmosphere inside.

Creek is a childcare organization that runs with a Director of Operations, Centre Supervisors, RECE's, ECA's and Camp Counsellors.

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Program Statement

Our mission at Creek Childcare is to provide our communities with a safe, nurturing, and natural environment that feels like home, where the children can be inspired for a lifetime of exploration and discovery. We are committed to providing safe, affordable, high-quality care for families living in the local area.

Creek Childcare Inc. is dedicated to supporting children's learning, development, health and well-being through caring and responsive Early Childhood Educators, who focus on active learning, exploration, play and inquiry, and who see children and their families as competent and able, and as active participants in all aspects of the program.

We believe that the outdoor atmosphere and natural play materials are the best for young minds. By using natural colours, tools and materials, children can learn imagination and discovery.

At Creek Childcare, we follow the How Does Learning Happen pedagogy where children can learn through play and engage in many hands-on activities. Our core program mirrors the Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT) guide while merging with the well-known Emergent curriculum (child led).

A key feature of the Child Care and Early Years Act 2014 (CCEYA), is the focus on strengthening child care programs and ensuring high quality experiences for all children. The CCEYA authorizes the Minister of Education to issue policy statements regarding programming and pedagogy for the purpose of guiding operators of child care and early year's programs. How Does Learning Happen is organized around four foundational conditions that are considered essential to a child's learning and healthy development:

- **Belonging**, which refers to a sense of connectedness to others, a child's experience of being valued, of forming relationships and making contributions to feel a sense of community.
- **Well-being**, which addresses the importance of physical and mental health and a child's wellness. It incorporates capacities such as self-care, self-awareness, and self-regulation skills.
- **Engagement**, which suggests a state of being involved and focused in a classroom setting. Through exploration play and inquiry, children develop skills such as problem solving and creative thinking, which are essential for learning and success in a child's future beyond care.
- **Expression** is when a child can communicate through their bodies, words, and use of materials. Opportunities to explore materials support creativity, problem solving, and mathematical behaviours.

The four foundations apply regardless of a child's age, ability, culture, language, or setting. Unlike a structured school type of curriculum, HDLH states that children naturally seek for themselves and should not be viewed as incompetent to self-learning.

Goals and Values

All children and staff have the right to equitable learning opportunities that help them achieve their full potential as engaged learners and valued members of society. Thus, all Early Childhood Operators and Educators have a professional obligation to advance equity. They can do this best when they are effectively supported by the early learning settings in which they work, and when they and their wider communities embrace diversity and full inclusion as strengths, uphold fundamental principles of fairness and justice, and work to eliminate structural inequities that limit equitable learning opportunities. We commit to fostering a compassionate, accepting, and inclusive environment in our organization and in each of our child care centres.

- At Creek Childcare, our teachers are people from the community who have completed the qualifications for Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECE) and have obtained their First Aid and Police check clearance. We support our educators through professional development workshops, to obtain the best educational sources to teach their students. All staff will promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of each child by providing a clean and safe environment, nutrition based on the Canada's Food Guide, access to drinking water throughout the day, limited transitions, eliminating any environmental issues that may cause undue stress to the child, unnecessary disruptions to play and reducing hazards that may cause injury. Educators will familiarize themselves with all information concerning any medical conditions, exceptionalities, allergies, food restrictions, medication requirements, and parental preferences in respect to diet, exercise and rest time.
- At Creek Childcare, we believe that children should be treated with respect and dignity, to feel safe and secure, to have opportunities for learning through play, decision-making, and social interaction with their peers. As educators, we support and encourage the development of creative and social skills through opportunities of sensory play through a wide variety of materials, activities, and programming. All staff will foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry by providing a variety of activities, and an environment rich in content, that encourages choices, and active play.
- All staff will support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, and educators. The Director and Supervisor will support this through the hiring of qualified, responsive, and well trained Early Childhood Educators and assistants who support families in their role as primary caregivers, and understand the needs of each child as an individual.
- All staff will encourage children to interact and communicate in a positive way, and support their ability to self-regulate; acknowledging that each child is competent, curious and rich in potential. Staff will support self-regulation in children (defined as the child's ability to gain control of bodily functions, manage powerful emotions and maintain focus and attention) Self-regulation in early

development is influenced by a child's relationship with the important adults in that child's life, including the ECEs in the program. All staff will provide the experiences, support and encouragement that help young children learn to self-regulate, which is a crucial component of quality care.

- All staff will foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry by providing a variety of activities, and an environment rich in content, that encourages choices, and active play, supported by qualified, attentive and interactive Early Childhood Educators.
- All Staff will provide child-initiated and adult supported experiences. The Early Childhood Educators will observe the children and use that information to plan and create a positive learning environment that is based on the interests of the child, and supported by all the adults in the child care environment, and be inclusive of all children, including children with individualized plans. Educators will be responsible for introducing new ideas, interests, facts, concepts, skills and experiences to widen the child's knowledge and life experiences.
- All Early Childhood Educators need to be reflective practitioners who learn about children through listening, observation, documentation, and discussion with others, families in particular, to understand children as unique individuals. They will observe and listen to learn how children make meaning through their experiences in the world around them, and use this to have meaningful interactions, and engage children on a daily basis.
- Each child will experience indoor, and minimum two hours of outdoor play (weather permitting) daily, as well as a time to rest and sleep if needed, quiet and active times, always being mindful of each child's needs and parental direction.
- Regular and ongoing communication with parents is an important component of the day. Communication may be in person, by phone, e-mail or through an app we use called HiMama, where parents will be sent a daily report of their child. School age staff will use an app called Remind, to allow parents the opportunity to ensure the safe arrival of their children from School to Childcare. Communication needs to come from all members of the organization: the Director, the Supervisor and all staff.
- Parents will be directed to resources outside of the centre if necessary and community partners such as early year's services, speech therapists, support services, occupational therapists, counsellors, etc., this will be an important part of the centres support to all children and their families. Our relationship with the local elementary schools are also important for our Before and After school

Program; relationships with principals, faculty and teachers are critical in the success for both the child, family and our centre. We view the community as a valuable resource and our educators plan learning opportunities to engage the community in our programs. We seek out opportunity to share our knowledge and to learn from others in the community.

- The organization will provide ongoing opportunities for educators to engage in critical reflection and discussion with others about pedagogy and practice, to support continuous professional learning.
- All staff will build a climate of trust, honesty, and respect in the workplace, working collaboratively in order to provide a safe, secure, healthy and inviting environment for all children and their families, building and maintaining healthy professional relationships that encourage growth and offering support and mentorship.
- Our School Age Programs: Before, After School Days, & Full Day PD Day/Camp Programs Our school age programs for 4-5 year olds and 6-12 years of age is in keeping with our vision, to provide children and families with a seamless day from child care to the school day. At this particular age, children are looking for challenges and opportunities to help plan their activities all while building self-esteem and discovering their talents through social, emotional, physical and cognitive play. Our overriding goal is to support children through this discovery and provide environments that are safe, fun, hands-on and play based.

Program Statement Implementation Policy

Creek Childcare staff, students and volunteers will read the Program Statement and sign off in the Policy and Procedures Sign Off binder prior to employment and prior to interacting with children, as well as on an annual basis. The Director or Supervisor will review all sign offs by staff, students and volunteers and sign the review sheet to indicate that the process has been completed. The Supervisor must be confident that the staff, volunteer or student is fully aware, and understands our Program statement and its implementation for the classrooms.

Each class will maintain a folder for each child containing observations and documentation that will be shared with all parents or guardians of said child at the end of every “school year”. Each classroom will also keep a binder full of copies of documentation, proving their knowledge and implementation of the Program Statement.

Creek Childcare staff will reflect on How Does Learning Happen, by reviewing their observations made and engaging children in meaningful activities, by maintaining communication with parents and building trusting relationships with the families, by working with their team to create a safe and healthy environment for their students and by taking the time to engage in self-reflection on a regular basis.

Creek Childcare wants to ensure that all our children have a safe and positive experience with our centres, which promote their growth as a learner. The Director or supervisor will observe staff interactions with children ensuring that they align with our program statement and beliefs in adult-child interactions.

In the event that the Director or Supervisor observes or is made aware of any practice that is not supported, they will address the issue with the staff member according to the strategies outlined in the Disciplinary Policy that is outlined in the Creek Childcare staff handbook.

The following practices are not supported by our facility:

- (a) Corporal punishment of the child;
- (b) physical restraint of the child, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
- (c) locking the exits of the child care centre or home child care premises for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee’s emergency management policies and procedures, one staff member must still be present with child;
- (d) use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child;

- (e) depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
- (f) Inflicting any bodily harm on children, including making children eat or drink against their will.

Additionally, all Early Childhood Educators (RECE) have made a commitment to abide by the standards of their profession as set out in the College of Early Childhood Educators Code of Ethics and Standards of practice. All Early Childhood Educators hold themselves accountable, and will use the Code of Ethics, the Standards of practice and the CCEYA to guide their decisions made daily in the classroom.

We keep records pertaining to the implementation of, and staff adherence to, our Program Statement, for 5 years.

Note: References and information in this living document are extracted from: “*How Does Learning Happen?*” Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years; and Ministry of Education’s Extended Day Program

Duty to Report

Duty to Report is defined under section 72 (1) of Ontario’s Child and Family Services Act and sets out what must be reported to a child protection authority ie: Family and Children’s Services (FACS). A report must be made immediately if a child is, or appears to be, suffering from abuse or is at risk of harm. While the Duty to Report applies to the public, it also includes special reporting responsibilities for professionals in the child care field. Registered Early Childhood Educators also have this obligation under the College of ECE. Creek Childcare supports its staff in their Duty to Report responsibility. Creek Childcare does not investigate these reports; we cooperate fully with FACS’ investigations.

Canada-Ontario Early Years and Child Care Agreement

As of November 2022, Our Hickory Creek Childcare location Opted-in to participate in the Canada-Ontario Early Years and Child Care Agreement. This agreement has allowed our registered families to access childcare at a reduced fee, in hopes to make childcare \$10-a-day by 2026. This is reflected in our daily Base Rate Fees portion of this handbook. This discount is only for children ages 0-6 years old, ELKP students. There is no discount for children that are 7 years and older just yet, Grade 1+.

Once open, Cedar Creek Childcare will be included in the CWELCC program.

Arrival and Departure

At Creek Childcare Centres, our core teaching hours are from 9am until 3pm and we ask that if you must feel the need to drop off/pick up between these hours that you give notice well before hand as it interrupts the learning environment for all children and teachers.

Hickory Creek:

Our Welland Location hours are open from 7:00 am to 5:30pm Monday to Friday, year-round excluding statutory holidays.

Parents and guardians dropping and picking up their children will buzz the supervisor at the side entrance of the church to be allowed in; the door is locked at all times for everyone's safety.

HCC School Age Children:

Walkers:

For our school age children who do not take the bus, parents must make sure children are dropped off to the centre in time to walk with staff to school. Walkers typically leave 20-25 minutes before the school bell times. Please let your child's school and teacher know that HCC Staff will be picking up your children from school. Our staff will have a vest to make teachers aware that they are childcare walkers.

Bus Friends:

Parents who wish to have their child take the bus must contact their respective school and request their child be picked up and dropped off at 12 Young Street (HCC). Once they get confirmation on bus pickup/drop off, please let the supervisor know what time the bus arrives by and the bus number that the child will be going on.

Cedar Creek:

Our Smithville Location hours are open from 7:00 am to 6:00pm Monday to Friday, year-round excluding statutory holidays.

CCC School Age Children:

Bus Friends:

Parents who wish to have their child take the bus must contact their respective school and request their child be picked up and dropped off at 116 West Street (CCC). Once they get confirmation on bus pickup/drop off, please let the

supervisor know what time the bus arrives by and the bus number that the child will be going on.

All parents and guardians must walk their child into the centre and sign in/out their child before they can leave. While you can see the rooms from the main area, parents are not permitted into the classrooms unless otherwise approved from the centre director or supervisor.

We ask that parents fill out the registration forms accurately, as we use that information to allow pick up of the children in our care. If there is someone who is not normally there to pick up, parents are asked to give their name and phone number to the supervisor and the person will be asked for a piece of I.D. upon pick up.

Our parking lots at all centres is very small and accidents do occur, please drive safely. Creek Childcare is not responsible for any damage to cars in the parking lot or street parking.

Admission and Discharge

Once a space becomes available and has been offered to a family, there are a number of steps that need to take place. **The families are asked to pay a non-refundable registration fee of \$100.00 (Base Fee), \$47.25 for CWELCC enrolled families.** Enrolment forms must be completed and returned before the child starts in the program, as well as first month's payment. The forms are designed to include all of the information required by the Ministry of Education and the Public Health Department. It also provides the teachers with a good introduction to your child.

To allow for proper staffing, schedules of children must remain constant for each week. We are unable to accommodate a varying schedule of days that correlates to shift work etc.

The centre reserves the right to adjust any childcare fees on a yearly basis. Fees will be reassessed in December of every year and parents will be notified as soon as possible if there are any changes.

Part Time Care

Priority for childcare space is given to full time registration. Part time care is only available on a limited basis and is vulnerable as the centre reaches capacity and/or there is an existing waitlist. Creek Childcare strives to serve our childcare communities, and relying on fees for financial viability, we register each component of care to the full operating capacity. Requests to change from full time registration to part time will not be approved if the centre has a waitlist. Part time care is 3 days minimum, no less. Anything more would be considered full time care.

Termination

A notice of **1 month** of your child's scheduled days must be given prior to the withdrawal of your child from the centre. If notice is not given, the parent is required to pay an additional 4 weeks of childcare fees.

Creek Childcare cannot guarantee a permanent space if you wish to temporarily withdraw your child from the program. Your child will be placed on the waiting list to re-enter. This includes summer withdrawals. It is the responsibility of the parent to make regular contact and communication with the Supervisor regarding availability of space.

Creek Childcare Centres reserve the right to terminate services if policies are not followed, fees are not paid, and health and safety concerns- for both your child and the childcare centre.

Subsidy

Hickory Creek has finally been approved to accept subsidized care for families. If your family has been approved for Childcare Subsidy through the Niagara Region, please follow these steps in order to receive subsidy while in our care. Currently, Hickory Creek Childcare's Caseworker is Kathleen Olah (Kathleen.olah@niagararegion.ca).

1. Place child's name on the OneHSN – childcare registry, under Hickory Creek [Niagara Region Children's Services | Child Care Waitlist \(onehsn.com\)](https://onehsn.com)
2. When your child is offered space at our centre, you must then create an account and apply for Fee Subsidy at [Child Care Assistance \(Fee Subsidy, Additional Support\) \(missioninc.com\)](https://missioninc.com).
3. Parents/Guardians must meet priorities for admission prior to applying for subsidy: Employed, Attending School and have a confirmed child care space.
4. A Children's Services Caseworker will be assigned to your family who will conduct a phone interview if you are eligible to receive fee subsidy.
5. The approval contract will provide information on the amount of days of approved per child and the parental contribution that the parent/guardian is responsible to pay directly to the centre, if any.
6. Each contract given has a start and end date. If the family starts care prior to the contract start date, the parent/guardian may be responsible to pay full fees to the centre. If your child attends past the approval end date, you may be responsible to pay full fees to the centre.
7. Each contract also includes absent days that have been allotted to each child. There are 36 absent days for the calendar year if care begins in January. Absent days are pro-rated through out the calendar year and to when placement begins. Subsidy will cover 10 absent days in month. Both parent/guardian and Childcare Centre are to report 3 consecutive absent days or more in a month to

their Caseworker. Parent/Guardians are responsible to pay full fees to the centre for any absences that occur if their absent day bank is exhausted.

8. The contract will be emailed to the Provider as well as the Client.

Age Groups

Hickory Creek

- Toddler: 15 children (18 months to 2.5 years) 1:5 staff ratio
- Preschool: 16 children (2.5 to 5 years) 1:8 staff ratio
- Before and After School: 26 children (3.5 years to 13 years) 1:13 staff ratio

Cedar Creek

- Infant: 6 children (3 months to 18 months) 1:3 staff ratio
- Toddler: 10 children (18 months to 2.5 years) 1:5 staff ratio
- Preschool: 16 children (2.5 to 5 years) 1:8 staff ratio
- Before and After School: 26 children (3.5 years to 13 years) 1:13 staff ratio

In all of our classrooms, we invite the children to explore based on topics that they have expressed interests in. These interests are observed by our qualified educators and have been further planned through activities and play. The teachers create documentation to record and follow the learning experience that each child has. These documentations will be posted and will be readily available for parents and guardians to read and browse through.

Daily Activities

Within all of our programs at Creek Childcare Centre's, we believe the children should have control of their own activities, but as educators will provide a routine based on these interests. We provide times during the day that peak the child's interest through reading, writing, puzzles, manipulatives, dramatic play, sensory, music and art. A lot of our tools and activities stem from Loose Parts, where children are encouraged to build and play with more natural 'toys' and are free to express their knowledge of cause-and-effect and risk play.

Our students have a 2-hour rest time, 12:00pm-2:00pm, allocated for a relaxing time so children can reset and enjoy the rest of their day. The children are allowed to bring a blanket, or a small comfort item to rest with. Staff will assist the children to sleep by rubbing their backs along with soft sleep time music. Preschool children are encouraged to rest but not forced to sleep for the 2-hour period, they will be given books or a quiet activity after 1 hour.

At any Creek Childcare location, our students will have 2 hours of outdoor play: 1 hour in the morning and 1 hour in the afternoon, weather permitting. Our centres have a grassy, fenced in lot where the children can run, jump, and skip as much as their hearts

desire. We make sure at all our locations that the fences are Ministry required height and that all locks and gates are in perfect working order, for your child's safety.

Costs (Base Rates for 2023)

Part time Care is 3 days a week, anything more will be charged Full time Pricing

Group	Program	Base Rate <i>Pre CWELCC</i>	Current CWELCC Rate
Infant	Full Day	\$70.00	\$33.08
Toddler	Full Day	\$60.00	\$28.35
Preschool	Full Day	\$55.00	\$25.99
ELKP+	Full Day Camps	\$45.00	\$21.26
	Before School	\$12.00	\$12.00
	After School	\$15.00	\$12.00
	Before and After School	\$27.00	\$12.76

Payment

Payments will be made on a monthly basis. Payment method must be signed off on your child's registration form and must be updated if any changes occur. Payments must be made on or before the 1st of the month.

Etransfer is accepted and preferred for parents ease.

School Age:

PA Days, Summer Camp, March break and Winter Break are all to be paid first come first serve basis. Summer camp can be different weeks but must be arranged by May 1st to allow for other children to register for their preferred weeks. March break and Christmas are not assumed spots for School Age children, parents must let their supervisor know that they need care for those weeks.

Separate Billing

If a family has more than one parent or guardian that pays for childcare tuition costs and requests both parents/guardians be billed separately, there will be an **additional \$50 (non-base fee) per parent/guardian** added to the invoices. Parents and guardians must also be aware that there may be some months that do not split evenly 50/50 for dual payments to be made and that is up to the parents/guardians to work out.

Late/Missed Payment

Fees may occur when payments bounce. If payments for care have not been made and there has been no communication between the child's parent or guardian and the supervisor, care may be terminated.

If a payment is late or not made on time of agreement, parents will be charged an additional \$20.00 (non-base fee) for every day they miss payment. This means that if payment is not made by midnight on the first of the month, parents will be charged \$20 per day missed paying tuition fees. Parents will get a physical notice that they may lose care if not paid by certain date. After 2 weeks and no payment or communication of when payment will be made, care is terminated and the child loses their childcare spot.

Late Pick up Fees

A late fee of \$10 (non-base fee) for every 10 minutes, per child will be charged to any family who has not picked up their child from the centre by closing. Creek Childcare staff know emergencies occur and we ask that parents/guardians notify their centre as soon as possible to notify of any late pickups. If the children are not picked up after 30 minutes and no answer, we call the emergency contact on file. If after an hour and no contact has been made to any contacts provided to the centre and the child is still not picked up, the supervisor then contacts Children's Aid Society and the Regional or Ontario Provincial Police.

Absences

There will be no fee reduction should a child be absent from childcare regardless of illness, statutory holidays or any other reason. Please contact your child's teacher or supervisor as soon as possible when your child will be absent.

Vacation time

Full monthly fees are required irrespective of days missed for time off. Each **Fulltime** family can retain a 1-week period where they are not charged, as per their request. Part time families and school age families do not receive a 1-week vacation. Parents must let the supervisor know at least 1 month before their "vacation" time is booked. Vacation time must be taken as a full week, not daily.

Invoices and Receipts

Your childcare invoices are sent via Email before the 23rd of every month. Once the Director receives the payment, you will be sent a receipt to the email provided in the registration forms within 1-2 business days. If there are any discrepancies, please contact Mackenzie, the Director and Owner.

Tax Receipts

Childcare fees are tax deductible on adults' income taxes, but we do not charge any taxes for children under the age of 14.

A final annual statement will be available to each family **by the end of February** for income tax purposes.

Parent Agreement

All parents are required to sign an agreement with Creek Childcare prior to their child attending our Centre. The form is to protect both the parent and the Program's interests. For some new parents, there are many questions about the Centre that can only be answered once the family has had a tour of our centre, thus we ask that all families have a tour prior to filling out any registration forms.

Parents Issues and Concerns Policy

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our child care 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, child care 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 staff and supervisor 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 1 business day. 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, 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*.

Procedures

Program or Room Related:

We ask that parents or guardians raise the issue or concern to the classroom staff directly before coming to a supervisor or director. If the issue does not seem to get resolved in a timely manner, then we ask that the parent or guardian contact the centre supervisor. If the issue goes on further, the Director will become involved and meetings will take place with both the staff of that room and the parents/guardians.

General Centre or Operations Related:

We ask that parents, guardians and staff raise their concern or issue to the supervisor or director, as they are the people in charge of the general operations of our centres. If they would like to contact our supervisor privately, we have emails and phone call appointments available for their discretion.

Staff, supervisor or director Related:

We ask that parents, Guardians and staff raise their issue or concern to the individual directly, if appropriate. 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. If the situation calls for a more formal report, the

supervisor will be happy to sit down with the individual to make one. If the report concerns the supervisor, the director will contact the parent and hold a meeting.

Student or Volunteer Related:

We ask that parents, Guardians and staff raise the issue or concern to the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student. The staff will then talk to the student or volunteer and if the issues is consistent, the supervisor and/or director will become involved. 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.

Steps for Staff in responding to Issue or Concern:

We ask that our staff/supervisor address the issue/concern at the time it is raised or arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within 2 business days.

Document the issues/concerns in detail. Documentation should include:

- 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.

Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.

Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within 2 business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing.

Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.

Parent Issues and Concerns Resolution Policy

At Creek Childcare, we recognize that our engagement and communication with parents and guardians helps a child to feel a greater sense of belonging and is key as we strive to build relationships with our families.

We are committed to finding resolutions to issues and concerns that may arise for families while participating in our centres. We are committed to engaging with families and addressing their concerns in a timely manner, and all efforts will be made to resolve concerns within Creek Childcare policies. During this process confidentiality will be maintained at all times. Maintaining necessary documentation and reports is an important aspect of the process, and will also remain confidential.

Resolution Process

- Parents/Guardians are encouraged to share their concern with the Centre Supervisor or directly with staff at the childcare centre. Staff will bring the concern to the Supervisor.
- If the Supervisor receives the information through a third party, he/she will contact the parent/guardian within one business day.
- Centre Supervisor gathers information and determines if he/she can provide a solution to the concern or issue within two business days of initial contact.
- Centre Supervisor contacts the parent to resolve the concern. If the process for resolution is extended, the parent/guardian will be informed.
- If the Centre Supervisor cannot provide resolution to the conflict, the information will be shared with the Director for advice on how to proceed.
- Follow up with the parent/guardian will take place within two business days of the information being shared with the Director.
- If the parent/guardian is not satisfied with the resolution or information as presented to them, they may request that the concern be escalated to the next level of leadership. (Staff - Centre Supervisor – Director) Creek Childcare staff will provide the parent/guardian with the requested contact information.

Behaviour Expectations

We want all children to be safe, have fun, and enjoy our program. For this reason we have expectations and rules that respect the rights of all persons in the program. Violence, swearing, and behaviour that puts others or self at risk are not permitted.

It is the intent of Creek Childcare to include all children in our programs. However, should a situation arise where concerns have been identified that a child's needs are not being met and/or other individuals are at risk, the Director, the Supervisor, the child (depending on age) and his/her parents will work together to resolve the situation. A step in the resolution process may include developing a case plan, keeping progress documentation, and consultation with community resources.

Code of Conduct: Zero Tolerance Policy

At Creek Childcare, all children are expected to follow our behaviour guidelines: to interact in a positive and appropriate manner with their fellow peers, educators, and other members of the Creek Childcare community. Behaviour (including but not limited to: violence, swearing, harassment; verbal threats; physical behaviour; etc.) that negatively impacts others physically or emotionally may result in a call home where the child must be picked up by a parent or guardian as soon as possible, and/or result in the permanent termination from the childcare centre at the discretion of Creek Childcare Management. After three consistent calls home for the same type of behaviour, a child may be terminated from our care. Our staff and other children's safety is our top priority, and we do not condemn physical abuse towards anyone in our care.

General Policies

Communication

At Creek Childcare, we use two apps to communicate with families in our care, allowing parents and guardians to see how their children are doing during their days.

Full time childcare uses “HiMama” where staff send parents/guardians daily sleep, toilet and food reports to make sure the line of communication is open between families and childcare workers. Although it is nice when staff have time to send pictures of your children, please note that this is not a mandatory item, as being present with your children is our staffs’ top priority.

School Age childcare uses “Remind” app, where the staff will send a quick safety message to let parents know they have arrived back to the centre after school. This app also allows teachers to let parents know of any fun days or activities being planned for future PA days.

Language and Altercations

All Parents and guardians must use appropriate language while on any Creek Childcare property. Foul language of any kind is not permitted on centre grounds, which includes playground and parking lot spaces.

If there are any indications of an altercation outside or inside the building, Creek Childcare staff have the right to call the local police department to solve any issues that may arise. We provide a safe space for any parent, guardian or child at our centre and we must respect the safety of everyone, including staff and passerby citizens.

If foul language and/or altercations occur, the parties will be asked to leave the premises and may be asked for their child to stay home the following day. If the inappropriate actions continue, any children registered will be terminate from care and will not be welcomed back to any Creek Childcare site.

Cell phones/electronics

Children are encouraged to keep all electronic devices at their homes, unless needed for medical reasons.

Celebrations

We encourage parents and guardians to let their children share special occasions and celebrations with us at all Creek Childcare locations. If you would like to extend the celebration in the form of outside food, please contact the centre’s supervisor for approval.

All parents/guardians will be asked not to send food containing specified allergens or ingredients and all food must be kept in the original container. This means, no home

baked goods or products as we cannot be sure of all of the ingredients in the item. Store bought foods must have the school safe, peanut free symbol on it.

Clothing

We suggest that your child/children be sent in comfortable clothing so that they have can explore and play without the fear of getting dirty both indoors and outdoors. Clothing should be appropriate for all weather and seasons.

Winter Clothing: Boots, hats, mittens, scarves, winter coats, snow pants, extra socks.

Summer/Spring/Fall Clothing: Hat, jacket, shorts, t-shirt, running shoes for outdoor play and sunglasses. Please provide sunscreen for your child clearly labelled with their name on it.

Head Lice

If and when a case of head lice is found at the centre, parents will be notified immediately to pick up from child care. We ask that you check your children on a regular basis. Although they may sound awful, Lice (the plural of louse) are a very common problem through schools and child care centres from the ages of 3-12 years of age.

Treatment: When you are called about your child having head lice, you will need to pick them up and start treatment right away. You should check the entire family as well. After the first treatment, your child should be checked before they return to child care.

If you find any signs of lice or eggs, you must do a second treatment according to the directions of the treatment you are using. Eggs are often found near the scalp and sometimes around the ears and the back of the neck. Once you have checked your child and family members and they show no signs of lice then they can return to the centre. If you require more information in this regards, please contact your doctor or local pharmacy.

Home Items

Although Creek Childcare has a variety of age-appropriate toys and activities for your child to enjoy and share, some children might feel more comfortable in bringing an item from home. By allowing items from home, this will build responsibility, trust and social relationships with their educators and other children. We also accept children to bring in a blanket and stuffy for sleep time to allow for more comfortability.

Creek Childcare staff are not responsible for any lost or damaged personal items.

Non-discrimination policy

At all Creek Childcare locations, we welcome all children and families and appreciate the opportunity to learn about various heritages and backgrounds. It is our policy to provide an environment that is free of unlawful discrimination of any type including

discrimination based on race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Photograph and Video

Creek Childcare Centre's thrive on including pictures of activities in our documentation, which means that children may be included in photographs taken by team members. All of our centre's occasionally share pictures from our Centre on Facebook & Instagram, however we ensure that photographs shared online do not include the children's faces, unless we have consent from their parents/guardians. If you do not consent, please notify the Centre Supervisor.

A photo of your child will be updated annually for the centre's records.

All Creek Childcare locations have security cameras in the classrooms for the children's safety and our staff's safety as well. Parents will not have access to these videos as they are strictly for security purposes only.

Smoking

Smoking is prohibited on all Centre property, including parking lots and playgrounds. No one is permitted to smoke anytime with or in the presence of a child or in view of the Centre.

Statutory Holidays and Centre Closures

Our centre will be closed during the following holidays:

- New year's day
- Family day
- Good Friday
- Victoria Day
- Canada day
- Labour day
- Thanksgiving day
- Christmas day
- Boxing day

Extra Closures

We will be closed **a week at Christmas time** to have all staff and families be surrounded with loved ones during the Holiday season. This will be a year-to-year basis to see which week makes the most sense to close.

We will also be closed the **Friday before Labour Day** for staff to set up their new classrooms and follow Professional Development outside of regular program hours. Parents will not be charged for this day.

Anaphylactic

All Creek Childcare Centre's are Nut free facilities. We make sure all staff are EpiPen trained and have a valid First Aid and CPR certificate. Creek childcare promises to make sure all staff and visitors to our centres are aware of who is Anaphylactic and what their emergency measures include. Staff will always know where to access EpiPens in case of emergency and will keep a 'fanny' pack with any EpiPens on them at all times when outdoors or off the premises.

Nutrition

Our Hickory Creek location has partnered with the local catering business "Lunch Lady of Welland" to provide the highest nutritional valued meals to our centre.

Cedar Creek has partnered with the local catering business "Lunch Lady of Welland" to provide the highest nutritional valued meals to our centre.

We serve an in-house morning and afternoon snack, as our lunches are fully catered and brought fresh every day. We follow Canada's food guide and make every meal as healthy as possible, while making sure it still meets the children's food interests. If your child has any dietary restrictions for cultural or medical reasons, we will do our best to accommodate these needs to our full extent.

Severe Weather

All Creek Childcare Centre's will follow the direction of the local school boards, both public and catholic, for centre closures. If the school board closes schools, then the centre will also be closed. Please check the centre's social media for the latest updates on closures. The supervisor will also email all parents and it will be posted to the child's HiMama page.

If there are days of hazardous weather and we cannot open, parents will still be charged their normal daycare fees.

Outdoor

At all of Creek Childcare locations, children are permitted to go outside for two hours a day. Parents must send their children in weather appropriate clothing; rain coat, boots, summer hat, etc.

Cold weather

During the winter months, outdoor play will be based on weather permitting. Once the temperature reaches a low of -18 degrees Celsius, the children will not engage in any outdoor play, as measured by the weather network. During colder weather warmer than -18 degrees but colder than -5, outdoor play time will be limited to 30 mins.

Hot Weather

During extreme heat, outdoor play may be limited and will be monitored by the centre's director. Once the temperature goes above 30 degrees Celsius or there is a heat warning, the outdoor play will be terminated as it could expose the children to heat stroke.

Off-site Excursion Policy and Procedure

To ensure a safe and useful off-site excursion, staff are required to produce a written proposal to the Supervisor. Field trips are booked according to children's interests, parental input, as well as available community resources.

The proposal must include:

1. Location of the field trip
2. Method of transportation
3. Adult ratio required for field trip
4. Date of the trip
5. Time of departure and arrival
6. Cost of field trip
7. Reason for this particular field trip
8. What the children will be doing on this field trip

Our staff will direct the accompanying adults in supervision of the children with an emphasis on safety and keeping the children together as a group. One adult will be responsible for accompanying single children or pairs away from the group to the washroom.

We may take children on an off-site excursion activity only when the child's parent has been advised of the activity, including the transportation and supervision arrangements with respect to the activity, and the child's parent has consented in writing to the child's participation in the excursion activity. Parents are always welcome to join us on off-site activities. Please let a staff member know as soon as possible if you will be joining us.

Emergency Procedures

Our centre follows emergency procedures as prescribed by our Emergency Evacuation Plan and are clearly marked on a diagram in each room. Emergency procedures are practiced as per our centers FIRE DRILL PROCEDURE. Emergency procedures are recorded by the Supervisor on a monthly basis.

Emergency Evacuation

If evacuation of our center proves necessary, children will be evacuated to the evacuation site prepared by the local fire department chief. Parents will be contacted

and notified as soon as it is possible. Our staff will direct the accompanying adults in supervision of the children with an emphasis on safety and keeping the children together as a group.

When all clear is given

- 1) As soon as possible, the supervisor 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 child care centre, the supervisor must provide a notice of the incident to parents/guardians by email, a printed notice on the door and at pickup.
- 3) If normal operations do not resume the same day that an emergency situation has taken place, the supervisor must provide parents/guardians with information as to when and how normal operations will resume as soon as this is determined.

When unsafe to return:

- 1) Upon arrival at the emergency evacuation site, the supervisor will notify parents/guardians of the emergency situation, evacuation and the location to pick up their children.
- 2) Where possible, the supervisor will update the child care centre's voicemail box as soon as possible to inform parents/guardians that the child care centre has been evacuated, and include the details of the evacuation site location and contact information in the message.

After Emergency has ended:

1. The supervisor must debrief staff, children and parents/guardians after the emergency.
2. Emails and newsletters will be sent out to appropriate people (parents, staff, volunteers).
3. Within 24 hours of emergency situation, parents and guardians will be notified of what happens next through email and phone calls.

Immunization

Your child must have been immunized to attend our program and we ask that you send a copy along with your child's registration package. For information on what immunizations are necessary, please contact your doctor or your local public health office. If your child is not immunized, for either medical, conscience or religious beliefs, the Centre requires a completed affidavit, which has been notarized. In the event that your child is not immunized, and an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease occurs, your child will be excluded from attending the program for the duration of the outbreak.

Illness

When your child is ill and will not be attending the program, please inform the Centre Supervisor as soon as possible. This can be done via e-mail or phone call, please do not message on HiMama.

A child with diarrhea, a fever of 100.4 degrees or more, or with unknown marks or rashes will not be admitted to the program. A teacher has the right to refuse a child due to illness at their discretion. Children with pink eye (conjunctivitis) will also be sent home but can return once they have received eye drops for 24 hours.

We at Creek Childcare ask that all children be 24 hour symptom free/improving before returning to care. If a staff notices that the parent/guardian has brought back their child with any symptoms, or that the symptoms have not improved at all, the child will be immediately sent home for 48 hours, fees charged.

Children and staff should stay home, or will be sent home if they have one of these symptoms:

- Have a temperature over 100.4 degrees
- Have a communicable disease
- Are vomiting or have diarrhea
- Feel too unwell to participate in the usual daily activities (including outdoor play)
- Have an undiagnosed skin rash
- Have persistent pain
- When their nasal discharge is thick and yellow or green, and has been persistent
- a severe or persistent cough.

Children may return to the Centre when:

- Child has shown improvement for at least 24 hours of being sent home
- Parent/guardians have a picture of the antibiotics the child is being prescribed
- Parent/Guardians bring in the prescribed antibiotics to be administered after 24-hours use
- Parent/guardians have a doctors note confirming there were no confirmed illnesses or diseases/rashes

(For communicable diseases)

- stages of contagion for specific diseases have passed
- they have been under medical care and have written permission to return
- they feel well enough to participate in the Daycare routine

(For common disease)

- fever has been absent for 24 hours
- nausea and vomiting or diarrhea have subsided for 24 hours
- the recommended dosage for prescription medication has been followed for 24 hours

Medication

All medications given to your child must be accompanied by a Medication Record, please ask the Supervisor for this form. Creek Childcare staff cannot administer medication unless it is prescribed by a doctor and must be in the original container with the child's name, time, dosage, name of medication and doctor clearly labeled.

Creek Childcare centres will administer non-prescription medication to a child only if approved by a doctor and prescription medication to a child only if a doctor prescribes it. **Only** the Supervisor, Director or designate in the absence of both the Supervisor and Director will administer the medication.

Medications that are administered on a regular basis such as inhalers may be given by the full-time staff in the classroom but must include the same information labeled on the device being administered. Appropriate forms must be filled in and signed and kept on file both in the child's file and the child's classroom. This must be approved by the Supervisor.

No over the counter medications such as Tylenol, Advil, Motrin or Cough medication will be administered by any Creek Childcare staff unless accompanied by written recommendation by the child's doctor, and a signed parent/guardian consent form. This also applies to all homeopathic medication. Any questions can be brought to the Supervisor.

Sanitary Policy

All Creek Childcare staff will maintain cleanliness and hygienic practices according to the Public Health of Ontario regulations. All staff are to wash hands frequently and wash and sanitize high touch areas and items such as cots, tables, chairs, and toys.

In the case of an outbreak, all parents will be sent a letter advising of the communicable disease present in the centre, along with resources, or where to find resources and information. Parents must find alternate care if their child is diagnosed with the virus.

Serious Occurrences

Our Serious Occurrence Policy ensures that there is a plan to deal with any serious incidents that may affect the health, safety and well-being of children and those working directly with children, and that these serious incidents are addressed by the child care centre and reported to the Ministry of Education for review.

Under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, serious occurrences are defined as:

1. the death of a child who received child care at a child care centre,
2. abuse, neglect or an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child while receiving child care at a child care centre,

3. a life-threatening injury to or a life-threatening illness of a child who receives child care at a child care centre,
4. an incident where a child who is receiving child care at a child care centre goes missing or is temporarily unsupervised, or
5. an unplanned disruption of the normal operations of a child care centre that poses a risk to the health, safety or well-being of children receiving child care at the child care centre.

Sleep Supervision

Creek Childcare implements the following practices and procedures in order to ensure the safety, health and wellness of children who regularly sleep at the childcare centre. Sleeproom areas will be supervised by staff in compliance with the CCEYA ratios for sleep time.

Children's rest period will not exceed two hours. Each child is permitted to sleep, rest, or engage in quiet activities based on their needs. If a child is attempted to be woken after the two hours and will not wake up, the staff are to inform the supervisor and inform the parents of the extra sleep time.

While supervising sleeproom, staff will perform a direct visual check of each sleeping infant every 10 minutes (6 times per hour), toddler and preschooler every 20 minutes (3 times per hour). The visual check will include the staff member being physically present beside the sleeping child and looking for indicators of distress or unusual behaviours.

Observance of any significant changes in a child's sleeping patterns or behaviours during sleep, as well as the length of the child's nap, will be communicated to parents in the daily journal for their child via our HiMama communication app. A report will be sent to the parents phones at the end of the day regarding how much they slept, and how well they slept, if at all.

Supervision Policy and Practices

We ensure a strict adherence to staff/child ratios. Staff are expected to observe children's play at all times. This is to ensure proper supervision and also as a planning requisite. The Supervisor or Director will tour new staff throughout the Centre to include indoor and outdoor environments. Staff are held accountable with the importance of accounting for all children at all times and recording children's arrival and departure times.

Before and After School

In the case that a child fails to arrive at an arranged pick-up time or location, the child's parents and the Director will be contacted immediately. If so advised, available supervisors will search for the child. If the child is not located, 911 will be called for assistance.

Communication between those involved will be facilitated by the Director. An unexpected absence incident report will be forwarded to the Licensing Officer as soon as possible.

As a matter of practice, our staff are committed to the following:

- monitoring and supervising the children at all times
- knowing where emergency medications, scheduled medications, first aid kits, and emergency contact numbers are kept or stored
- being aware of all emergency procedures
- conducting regular and scheduled safety checks of our premises and equipment
- knowing which individuals are authorized to pick-up a child in the place of a parent recording when children arrive and leave the Out of School Program

Volunteer Policy

We encourage our parents, families and friends to volunteer. Volunteer assistance is particularly helpful when children are involved in an off-site excursion. To participate as a volunteer, a copy of a current Criminal Record Check with included Vulnerable Sector clearance must be given to the Director before participating in programming. Every volunteer or student must be supervised by an employee at all times according to our policies and procedures as required under section 11.1 of Ontario Regulation 137/15.

Safe Schools

Creek Childcare Before and After School programs are committed to assisting children in self-regulation, and building on the four foundations of How Does Learning Happen? We also want to foster a positive school climate in line with the Boards of Education policies. Children will be encouraged to problem solve whenever possible. However; if a child is in danger of injury or damage to the surrounding area is apparent, then staff will intervene. In a situation where a child is aggressive towards other children or staff, the staff member may be required to call the parent to pick the child up. Inappropriate language, bullying, intimidation, discrimination, disrespectful or aggressive behaviours cannot be tolerated. Every effort will be made to work together with our families and children to increase the child's self-regulation skills in order to prevent repetition of these behaviours. Please be aware however, that after repeated incidents of the above behaviours, your child may be suspended from the program or asked to leave

Waitlist

There is no cost to a parent or guardian to put their child on a waitlist for any site within our organization. The parent/guardian will be notified at that time, the length of the wait list and the availability of care. The parent/guardian may call the centre at any time to see enquire about their place on the waitlist and the possibility of care for their child. If a spot becomes available, the Director/Supervisor will call the parent/guardian and inform them of the start date. Preference will be given to children who already have a sibling enrolled in one of our centres.

Parents/guardians can fill out a waiting list form at any time on our website or by joining the Niagara Region “OneList”.

Our centres hold tours on Tuesdays and Thursday mornings from 10-11 am. Parents can bring their child, tour the centre and ask as many questions as they wish. If families are unable to come to the tour, parents can still fill out a waiting list form online but will be encouraged to tour the centre when they are able.

Your Child’s First Day

When you arrive for your child’s first day, we know it can be hard leaving your child with new people, especially if they have never been to a daycare before. We ask that you try not to stick around too long after drop off as that can make the child more upset than better. Our staff are all trained in emotional support and can welcome your child with open arms on their first day!

We ask that you supply your child with 2 or more sets of clothes, diapers, wipes and a spill proof cup or water bottle. Please label all articles of clothing and supplies as we have a number of children in your child’s group. Children may also bring a comfort item or blanket for sleep time only.

Concerns

If at any time you have questions or concerns please contact the Supervisor or Director and a meeting will be scheduled. All issues will be dealt with as quickly as possible.

We at Creek Childcare Centres would like to welcome you and your family to ours! We cannot wait to be in your lives!