



*Quality Foundations Childcare*

BELONGING ENGAGEMENT WELL BEING EXPRESSION

## 2024 Parent Handbook

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# Quality Foundations Childcare

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## Welcome to Quality Foundations Childcare!

Thank you for your interest in Quality Foundations Childcare.

This handbook has been designed to reveal the policies and procedures that Quality Foundations Childcare developed to ensure the highest possible standard for your child to experience. Please read the handbook carefully and feel free to bring any questions, concerns or comments to the supervisor or director.

### About Us

Established in 2016, QFC has proudly served the Waterdown community by providing quality licenced childcare to children from 6 weeks to 12 years old. Owner and Licensee Vera De Sa, a Registered Early Childhood Educator, has been involved with licensed childcare for over fifteen years and remains a hands-on component in the Quality Foundations Childcare team of educators.

Our facility boasts six large, well-equipped classrooms where your child will grow, develop and learn throughout their day.

We have two large outdoor playgrounds that provide space for gross motor exploration and natural imagination.

Your child can grow to their fullest potential at Quality Foundations Childcare.

Quality Foundations Childcare is proud to partner with the City of Hamilton and accepts Subsidy for care. Please contact your subsidy worker to learn more.

### Program Statement

Quality Foundations Childcare strives to provide positive early childhood experiences where children are seen as competent, capable of complex thinking, curious, and rich in potential and can grow socially, emotionally and physically in a safe, nurturing environment.

The Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA) provides the licencing standards which we must abide by, names the document "*How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*" (HDLH), as a professional resource in regard to learning through relationships for those working with young children and families. It is intended to support pedagogy and curriculum/program development in Early Years programs. HDLH is organized around four fundamental goals that are important for children to grow and flourish as independent individuals.

**Belonging** – every child has a sense of belonging when they are connected to others and contributes to their world.

**Well-Being** – every child is developing a sense of self, health and well-being.

**Engagement** – every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the work with body, mind and senses.

**Expression** – every child is a capable communicator who expresses themselves in many ways.

These foundations are embedded in our centre through our interactions with children, their families and the educators employed with us. All four foundations apply regardless of age, ability, culture, language, geography or setting.

We believe:

- That every individual inclusive of educators, families and community, involved in our services should be treated with dignity and respect; that they should have access to available opportunities and services within our community.
- That respect for family, cultural and community diversity is recognized in the development and delivery of service.
- That families and relevant others have the opportunity to take an active part in the growth and development of children, and to participate in the development, goals and operation of the services provided by Quality Foundations Childcare; informed, involved and confident participants are better able to advocate in the best interests of their families.
- That accountability is essential to the successful achievement of our programs and goals; we are accountable to the children and families to whom we provide services, to the community in terms of the services offered and the use of resources with which we are entrusted; this is the basis of trust and support necessary to maintain quality services and meet the needs of the children and families involved at Quality Foundations Childcare.

The following approaches will be implemented into our programs and reflect our beliefs:

**Quality Foundations Childcare will support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, childcare providers and educators by:**

- Encouraging emotional development and provide opportunities for independence while respecting individual needs,

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- Educators will display compassion through posture, voice tone and physical contact,
- Educators will get down to the child's level when communicating with them,
- The ideas of children, families and educators will be heard and validated
- Educators will ask parents relevant questions upon drop off and pick up to gather information about the child's day.

## **Quality Foundations Childcare will promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being by:**

- Providing opportunities for fine and gross motor play experiences inside the classroom and outside on the playground,
- There will be a balance of quiet activities and active play throughout the day,
- We provide nutritious snacks and meals that comply with Canada's Food Guide, and ensure safe and hygienic food handling practices,
- Infants will follow their own schedules for sleeping and eating,
- Children are encouraged to serve themselves during meal times,
- Every classroom has a quiet area which the children will be able to use at any time throughout the day to support emotional regulation,
- Each child has their own cubby to store their belongings and their own cot/crib labelled for their own use,
- Educators perform health checks upon arrival to ensure that the children are well enough to participate in the program,
- Educators are aware of their role and responsibilities to respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect,
- Activities will be planned and spontaneous throughout the day,
- Children will be supervised at all times,
- All educators working in our center must have up-to-date Standard Level First Aid and CPR; a clear Criminal Reference and Vulnerable Sector Check and a minimum of two educators will have updated Food Handler's Certification,
- We work closely with the Hamilton Public Health Unit, Fire Department etc, to ensure the safety of all at Quality Foundations Childcare.

## **Quality Foundations Childcare will support social development, by providing opportunities for sharing and co-operating, guiding positive interaction and promoting self-regulation.**

- Staff will help children through conflict using negotiating and problem-solving skills

- Staff will engage with children one on one and as a group to demonstrate appropriate social interaction
- Staff members will be engaged with the children for most of the time during play
- The design of the classrooms will allow for small and large groups and individual activities
- Routines are built into the schedule for the day to promote self-regulation
- Staff members will respond quickly to children when upset, and validate their feelings
- Children will be encouraged to feel what they are feeling with staff support
- Staff members will redirect children if the behaviour becomes difficult
- Staff members will engage children in conversation during snack and meal times

**Quality Foundations Childcare will support each child's development through planning and creating a positive learning environment which provides child initiated and adult supported experiences which foster exploration, play and inquiry.**

- Staff will plan their curriculum based on the interests shown by the children the previous week
- Staff will plan most of their curriculum for the next week, but will allow for spontaneous activities to happen as the week progresses
- Staff will enhance their indoor and outdoor environment with age-appropriate activities that encourage manipulation, construction and creative expression
- Staff will allow children to explore freely when engaged in an activity
- Staff will ask open ended questions to children to try and understand their thought processes, instead of imposing their ideas onto them
- Staff will provide a planned provocation weekly to foster children's inquiry and exploration
- Children will be encouraged to explore all areas of their environment, allowing play materials to be used in an appropriate manner
- All areas of the classroom will be open to the children at all times
- Staff will enhance the children's play by engaging in conversation with them

**Quality Foundations will foster the engagement of and ongoing communications with parents about the program and their child/ren day by:**

- We view parents as the child's first teachers. To support the involvement with community partners, we view them part of our team,
- Educators will greet families as soon as they enter the room and will communicate with them in regard to their child and their day at the center,
- Parents receive a daily report that provides information of the primary needs such as feeding, sleep and diapering via our parent app Parent Communication App,
- Classrooms will post their weekly programming and monthly events,
- A monthly newsletter is provided to each family via email or Parent Communication App,
- The supervisor has an open-door policy which invites parents to communicate issues when they arise; all necessary steps are taken to follow through on parent feedback and/or concerns,
- Once a year, families will be asked to complete a survey with regards to the effectiveness of our center in meeting their needs as well as their children's needs,
- Parents will be made aware when an illness/communicable disease is occurring at the center,
- Educators complete documentation in the form of Learning Stories, and post them for families to read,
- Parent events happen throughout the year to encourage relationships with families and among families,
- When required, staff and management along with parents and support staff will have meetings in regard to children's behaviours,
- Educators will welcome support staff into their classrooms and take into consideration the development of all children when programming,
- When required, educators allow adjustments to their programming to benefit all children's needs,
- The center welcomes volunteers and students into the center to gain knowledge about our field.

**Quality Foundations Childcare will support staff, students/volunteers in relation to continuous professional learning; we will encourage our staff to engage in workshops and other means of professional development.**

- The supervisor will take copies of the educator's certificate of completion for their files. These workshops will be taken into consideration when considering educators for wage increases,
- We hold bimonthly mandatory staff meetings, which includes professional development opportunities,
- Supervisor will continually monitor and mentor educators and will conduct Coach and Development documentation on each educator throughout the year,
- Supervisor will conduct yearly performance appraisals on each educator,
- Management will stay well-informed of the ever-changing field and keep staff updated as necessary.

*Quality Foundations Childcare educators will document and review the impact of the strategies set out for the above guidelines.*

## **Our Curriculum**

Quality Foundations Childcare bases its philosophy of how children learn around the four foundations of How Does Learning Happen?

We encourage every educator in the building to utilize the four foundations in everything they do. From ensuring their sense of belonging with photos of them at play and with their families in the classroom; supporting the child's right to express themselves through creative expression and verbal/non-verbal communication; engaging with each child every day and finally ensuring the physical, emotional and social well-being of the children in our care.

Programming is completed through daily observations and through supporting each child with their social, emotional and physical milestones. We program with interest-based activities; studies on early childhood learning have determined that play-based learning using interest-led programming supports early brain development.

### **Infants (6 weeks to 18 months)**

We offer full time, full day care for infants. Our experienced Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECE) and non-RECE's provide compassion and warmth to our youngest age group. Stimulating and nurturing activities are implemented daily to support our infants growth and development. The infants in our care are given the opportunity to explore the social atmosphere of licensed childcare, while also receiving the love, affection and comfort from our caregivers.



Our educators work closely with the families enrolled to create a daily schedule that is similar to the schedule they have at home including feeding, nap and play times. Upon your arrival for your first play visit you will be asked to fill out a daily schedule from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm – this will serve as a guideline for your child's first few weeks in care.

The infant classroom engages in two hours of outdoor time daily, receives morning and afternoon snack as well as a hot lunch. If your child is not eating solid foods yet, breast milk and/or formula can be served to your child if you provide it. Written instructions must accompany the formula/milk and any additional infant snacks you provide.

**Educator:child ratio – 1:3;** maximum of 10 infants in the classroom.

## **Toddlers (18 months to 30 months)**

Quality Foundations Childcare has two toddler classrooms. We offer full time, full day care for toddlers. Our program gives toddlers the freedom to explore growth in a safe and stimulating environment. Educators both RECE and non-RECE provide thoughtful guidance to our toddlers as they discover the social and emotional world around them.

Time is spent both indoors and outdoors; daily activities include provocations (thought-provoking activities that encourage uninhibited intellectual growth); creative experiences both educator and child led; imagination stations that have enough materials for the children to explore their newly-developing imitation and imagination skills.

Nap/rest period is provided for two hours daily; morning and afternoon snacks are provided along with a hot lunch prior to nap time. We provide toilet learning routines and communicate daily with families to assist in the process at home as well.

**Educator:child ratio – 1:5;** maximum of 15 toddlers per classroom.

## **Preschool/Kinders (30 months to 4 years)**

Our facility has two preschool classrooms and one kinder classroom for a 1:13 ratio for those children over 44 months. We offer full time, full day care for preschoolers.

Preschool children are ready to learn every day. Our loving educators both RECE and non-RECE plan for and implement a stimulating, creative and

intellectual program that offers a variety of activities to keep this busy age group engaged. This is done by utilizing daily provocations; educator and child-led creative experiences; a dramatic centre that is filled with child-sized imitations of the real-life objects they use for pretend play; seizing opportunities to further letter and number recognition, early mathematic skills such as sorting, classifying and counting and by using songs throughout the day to make the day enjoyable.

Nap/rest period is provided for two hours daily; morning and afternoon snacks are provided along with a hot lunch prior to nap time. We provide toilet learning routines and communicate daily with families to assist in the process at home as well.

**Educator:child ratio – 1:8;** maximum of 24 preschoolers per classroom; **Kinders: 1:13 ratio** with a maximum of 15 in the room.

## About Our School

Quality Foundations Childcare is open Monday to Friday excluding Holidays (explanation below). The centre opens at 7:00 am and closes at 6:00 pm.

## Fee Status

As of November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022 Quality Foundations Childcare has chosen to opt-in to the Canada Wide Early Learning Child Care (CWELCC) plan. This means there will be a reduction in our 2023 fees. Participation in CWELCC will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure Quality Foundations Childcare can continue to provide quality care.

You will see throughout this handbook the phrase “base fee” and “non-base fee”. The terminology is used to determine what is subject to the CWELCC discount and what is not. Base fees are the required fees to run the centre and non-base fees are additional fees added. Base fees are subject to further discounts as the CWELCC program evolves and continues.

## Late Fees

Picking up your child prior to closing time is important for several reasons. The educators at the facility work hard throughout the day and look forward to returning to their own families in a timely manner. Prompt pick up allows for the educators to clean and organize for the following day, setting up provocations and preparing their materials to ensure your child receives top quality care. Lastly your child thrives on predictability and consistency – the end of the night

can be a challenge for children to understand as they watch their peers go home. Please ensure you are giving yourself enough time to pick up prior to closing; if you are unable to make it on time please plan with family members, neighbours or friends and ensure you are informing the educators by phone or Parent Communication App prior to their arrival. Quality Foundations Childcare charges a non-base fee of \$1/minute per child past closing time Monday to Thursday and \$5/minute per child past closing time on Fridays.

## Holidays

Quality Foundations Childcare is **closed** on statutory holidays.

New Years Day, Family Day, Good Friday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Civic Holiday, Labour Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

In the event that a holiday falls on a weekend, a day in lieu will be had; please check Parent Communication App and monthly calendars for more information.

## Professional Development Days

Quality Foundations Childcare participates in **two (2)** city-wide Professional Development days throughout the year. The dates change each year, but management will give families notice, and QFC will be closed on those days.

## Fee Schedule

Full time is the only enrolment accepted from infant care to kinder care. Rates are per day; invoices are due on or prior to the first of each month. **A non-base late fee of \$45 will be applied to all invoices unpaid 72 hours (three days) after the invoice has been issued.**

Program	Base Fee (Monday to Friday)	Fee with CWELCC discount
Infant	\$67	\$31.66
Toddler	\$53	\$25.04
Preschool/Kinders	\$50	\$23.63

**\*\*Rates are subject to change annually based on CWELCC participation**

***Payment is required in full for all scheduled days including sick days and statutory holidays.***

## Enrolment Status

Enrolment in the Canada Wide Early Learning Child Care plan has led to some new developments at Quality Foundations Childcare. We are no longer able to provide part time or flexible care options to families; this decision has been made to ensure Quality Foundations Childcare can continue to provide consistent, quality care to the families of the community it serves. Quality Foundations Childcare will also no longer allow make up or switching of days to accommodate for holidays and/or family schedule changes. This is to support our goal of consistent staffing.

## Registration Process

Once you have decided to join our centre, there are two ways to go about registering. If you are looking for immediate placement, you will pay a registration fee, a deposit and the tuition for the days to be used.

The registration fee as of 2023 is a base fee of \$125 and is a one-time, non-refundable fee. This fee is subject to the CWELCC discount.

The deposit is ten days of tuition paid in advance – this is placed into a credit ledger and used for your final invoice. In order to use this deposit, you must give us 1 (one) month notice of withdrawal. If you have a remaining balance, you will be invoiced accordingly for your final month. The deposit is not subject to the CWELCC discount until the date it is used; at that time the current CWELCC discount will be applied.

If you are looking for a date in the future, you have the opportunity to secure a spot. You will fill out a registration form, pay the registration fee and the deposit. This will guarantee you a space, but it comes with a decision. If you decide prior to your enrolment that you are not going to enroll, (for instance if you move, your employment needs change etc) you will not be able to get your deposit or registration fee back. Extenuating circumstances can be discussed with the management team.

## Centre Daily Schedule

Quality Foundations Childcare believes that children are competent and capable. We strongly believe that children can accomplish anything if given the time and patience to try. This means our schedule is not concrete but is flexible to meet the needs of each child.

We do request that you arrive at the centre prior to 9:00 am. Our programming starts prior to 9:00 am and late arrivals can disrupt your child's ability to adjust for their day. If you have an appointment or are otherwise unable to make the 9:00 drop off, please call the centre, or send us a message via Parent Communication App so we can prepare for your child's arrival.

We also require a phone call or message via Parent Communication App if your child will be absent, prior to 9:00 am each day your child will be absent.

## **Arrival and Departure**

Research tells us that children thrive on consistency and reliability in their lives. Knowing this, we ask that you plan your time of arrival to be around the same time each day, prior to 9:00 am.

To support your child's growing sense of independence we ask that you allow him or her to undress themselves as much as their abilities allow. Once undressed and changed out of their outdoor clothing, please ensure your child is escorted directly into the classroom and is not left in the hallway unattended. Taking a moment to connect with your child's educator – a visual connection at minimum or a conversation with your child's teacher will ensure your child is greeted and set up for success for the day.

Daily departure is required to be done by designated individuals only. If you or your child's secondary contacts are unable to make the pickup, please ensure the centre is informed of the approved individual you have sent in your place. We ask that you inform us in writing or verbally of the change prior to their arrival. All individuals that pick up must be 16 years of age or older.

Ensure you are making a connection with the educator in the room to ensure they are aware of your departure. Ideally a conversation with your educator can be had to hear about your child's day; however some days are busier than others and a simple wave will help your classroom educator keep track of who is leaving and when.

## **Meals and Snacks**

At Quality Foundations Childcare we meet your child's nutritional needs for the duration of their time with us. We provide an early morning and mid-afternoon snack as well as a nutritionally balanced hot lunch daily. Our hot lunches are provided by Real Food for Real Kids, an acclaimed catering company that

boasts large portions, locally sourced ingredients and provides delicious alternatives for all food and dietary restrictions.

Menus are posted in each classroom and at the front of the childcare centre. Our menu is seasonal and on a four-week rotation.

All meals and snacks are served in the classrooms and the educators use this time to teach our children about healthy nutrition, table manners and to establish healthy eating habits.

## Allergies

Please inform us of any allergies or dietary restrictions at the time of enrolment (or as soon as you are made aware afterward). Should your child require an epi-pen to manage an allergy, the supervisor of the centre will support you while creating an Individual Anaphylaxis Plan.

We are a nut-free facility and ask that parents do not send any food from home unless otherwise arranged with the centre. Please ensure your child does not bring food into the centre so that we can all keep every child safe. In the event of birthday celebrations or special occasions, you may be permitted to bring a treat into the classroom – please check with the classroom educators and/or supervisor prior to make sure all dietary needs are considered.

## Off-Premise Activities

Quality Foundations Childcare educators use the environment around them to support programming daily. On occasion our educators will take the children out into the community for walks and exploration of local parks. When possible ratios will be lowered for off-premise walks and extra staff will support.

## Daily Rest Periods

Sleep is a natural component to a child's development. Every child in our facility who receives care for 6 or more hours per day is provided with a rest period that does not exceed two hours in length. Every child is permitted to sleep, rest or engage in quiet activities based on the child's needs.

## Outdoor Play

The Ministry of Education specifies that children who receive childcare for more than 6 hours per day are required to have a minimum of two hours of outdoor play. Our facility utilizes our oversized outdoor space to have a morning and an

afternoon outdoor period. Weather permitting, these periods may exceed the allotted time or be shortened to ensure the well-being of the children.

## What to Bring

Each week we ask that you bring in the following items:

1. Extra clothes
2. A water bottle or sippy cup
3. A blanket for nap time (sleep sack if you have an infant under 12 months enrolled)
4. Outdoor shoes/boots (weather/season dependant)
5. Outdoor clothing (coat, snow pants, mittens/gloves, hands and neck warmers)

On your child's final day of each week please take your child's water bottle/sippy cup, blanket, any extra clothes that need replacing and outdoor shoes home. This will give you an opportunity to ensure all items return cleaned and ready to use the following week.

## Health and Wellness Policy

To ensure we are operating in a healthy environment, we must follow certain protocols when a child is not feeling their best. We appreciate the challenges that it may cause you if you're unable to send them to our centre, but in the end we must consider the well-being of all of our families.

Sometimes your child will be sent home from our care. The following circumstances will require you to pick up your child immediately; if you are unable to pick up within one hour of notification, we request you have a trusted individual pick up instead (and please notify us of who this is):

- **EYES:** Children with discharge from one or both of their eyes need medical care. Children may not return to the centre until their eyes are discharge free for 24 hours (or if medication has been administered for the same period).
- **VOMIT/DIARRHEA:** Any instance of vomit for reasons other than coughing or choking must be picked up. Two instances of diarrhea in one day will require immediate pick up from the centre. Your child may return to care 48 hours after their last instance in either case. Unfortunately, we are unable to distinguish a virus that your child may have from food that may



not agree with them – we must make the difficult decision to send the child home until they are able to return.

- **FEVER:** If your child has a fever of 101° F (38.3° C) or higher, we will be calling for a pickup. If your child has a fever close to, but not quite 101° F, we will monitor closely and let you know what is happening.
- **OTHER COMMUNICABLE DISEASES:** Chicken Pox; Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease; Impetigo; Measles, Mumps, Rubella – All communicable diseases require your child to remain home for varying days – please connect with the management team of Quality Foundations Childcare so you can have an accurate time frame for returning to care.
- **LICE:** If lice or nits are found on your child, we will require a pickup right away. Return to care is allowed as soon as your child is free from nits or live lice.

Please keep your child home if they're experiencing any of the above symptoms or if they appear to be unusually fussy, cranky, or generally unwell.

We reserve the right to make the decision on your child's attendance. We must ensure we are thinking of the entire centre's wellness when we are considering sending a child home. A doctor's note may be required to have your child begin attending again – the management team will advise and be able to guide you in the right direction.

Your child will be expected to participate in every area of our program upon return so please ensure he/she is able. Pediatricians recommend fresh air and exercise for children, even when they are recovering from an illness. If your child is well enough to return to the centre he/she will benefit from our outdoor play program.

## Medication Policy

There will be times when your child requires a prescription to be administered at the centre. We ask that you follow these guidelines:

All medication must be in the original container with a prescription label. The label must contain your child's name, name of the medication, date prescribed, instructions for dosage and physician's name.

Please provide an administrative device (syringe, measured cup etc).

Over-the-counter medication, such as Tylenol/Advil/Benadryl will not be administered unless prescribed by a doctor.



Homeopathic medication must have your child's name clearly marked on it, date of purchase and expiry date and must be in the original container.

An **Administration of Medication** must be filled out for all medication to be administered. Please allow time to do so during drop off. You are required to hand the medication over to your child's classroom educator, the supervisor, or the licensee. *Please do not leave any medication in your child's backpack or cubby.*

## Life-Saving Medication

If your child requires a life-saving medication (an inhaler, epi-pen etc) these also require prescription labels. You will work alongside the supervisor or licensee to ensure an anaphylactic and/or medical plan is filled out prior to the medication being stored.

## Accident Reporting

Bumps and bruises are part of the natural process in growing up; at Quality Foundations Childcare we believe that every child is competent and capable – this means we give children the time to explore their abilities rather than do things for them or ask them to refrain from risky play. Educators are always close at hand ready to support, comfort or catch – but try as they might, accidents do happen.

Any accident involving the head – from a gentle bump on a shelf to a major accident involving first aid, we will contact you. Typically, we will send messages via our parent app with a photo but if need be we will call to inform you of the situation. Every parent is different in how they want handle injuries so we want to give you all of the information for you to make an informed decision about the well being of your child.

Minor injuries will sometimes not warrant an accident report – however we always give you the opportunity to decide. It is our duty to inform you of any incidents throughout the day – however if you choose not to have an accident report done, we will take note.

Major injuries that require first aid (applying ice, cleaning a wound etc.) will be communicated with an accident report. The educator in charge of your child at the time of pick up will present the report to you and ask for a signature. Copies will be sent to you via our parent app or hard copy if you prefer.

Accidents are also logged/noted in the child's classroom log and in the supervisor daily log.

## **Playground Safety**

The playground can be a wonderful place for the children to explore. Studies show that physical activity outdoors is beneficial to a child's health and well being. The playground at Quality Foundations Childcare is large, well maintained and always ready to invite your child's imagination to run free. The playground is set up with as few visual obstacles possible to ensure 100% supervision 100% of the time. Educators are encouraged to spread out and play on varying areas of the playground to ensure maximum supervision.

## **Vacation Time**

We understand that vacation time with your family is an important priority for you, fees will continue to apply so that spaces will be held for your return.

## **Inclement Weather and School Closures**

Throughout the year there may be times when the weather creates an unsafe environment for travelling to or from the childcare centre. These decisions are not made lightly and we take every situation into consideration before making the difficult decision. If the weather turns and becomes a safety issue while the school is operating, the licensee and supervisor may decide to close the school early. Parents will be contacted regarding the early pick up and will be asked to come as soon as possible. Management must keep the safety of our families and our staff in mind when making these decisions.

If a decision is made prior to the school opening (a snow day for instance) it will be communicated to you via our parent app. Please ensure you are checking the app prior to leaving your home so that you do not put yourself at risk. Decisions will be made prior to 6:30 am and will be communicated at the same time. If you are in doubt, please reach out via the app and management will answer you as soon as they can.

## **Policies and Procedures**

### **Waiting List Policy**

Quality Foundations Childcare will strive to accommodate all requests for the registration of a child at the childcare centre.

Where the maximum capacity of a program has been reached and spaces are unavailable for new children to be enrolled, the waiting list procedures set out below will be followed.

No fee will be charged to parents for placing a child on the waiting list.

## **Procedures**

### **Receiving a Request to Place a Child on the Waiting List**

- The licensee or designate will receive parental requests to place children on a waiting list via phone or email

### **Placing a Child on the Waiting List**

- The licensee or designate will place a child on the waiting list in chronological order, based on the date and time that the request was received.
- Once a child has been placed on the waiting list, the licensee or designate will inform parents of their child's position on the list.
- Determining Placement Priority when a Space Becomes Available
- When space becomes available in the program, priority will be given to children eligible to move from one room to another.
- Staff members who require a space for their child are given next priority;
- Current or previously enrolled families attending QFC are enrolled or placed next.
- Once these children have been placed, other children on the waiting list will be prioritized based on program room availability and the chronology in which the child was placed on the waiting list.

### **Offering an Available Space**

- Parents of children on the waiting list will be notified via phone call that a space has become available in their requested program.
- Parents will be provided a timeframe in which a response is required before the next child on the waiting list will be offered the space.
- Where a parent has not responded within the given timeframe, the licensee or designate will contact the parent of the next child on the waiting list to offer them the space.

### **Responding to Parents who inquire about their Child's Placement on the Waiting List**

- Licensee or supervisor will be the contact person for parents who wish to inquire about the status of their child's place on the waiting list.
- Licensee or supervisor will respond to parent inquiries and provide the child's current position on the list and an estimated likelihood of the child being offered a space in the program.
- Maintaining 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 and therefore only the child's position on the waiting list will be provided to parents.
- Names of other children or families and/or their placement on the waiting list will not be shared with other individuals.

## Prohibited Practices

Every licensed childcare centre is required to adhere to the prohibited practices as defined in the Ontario Regulations for Childcare.

### **Prohibited Practices are defined as (Section 48 of O. Reg. 137/15):**

No licensee shall permit, with respect to a child receiving child care at a child care centre it operates or at a premises where it oversees the provision of child care:

- corporal punishment of the child;
- physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
- locking the exits of the childcare centre 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;
- use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
- depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or

- inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.
- No employee or volunteer of the licensee, or student who is on an educational placement with the licensee, and no person who provides home childcare or in-home services at a premises overseen by a home childcare agency shall engage in any of the prohibited practices set out above with respect to a child receiving child care

If an employee, volunteer or student is in contravention of the program statement or is guilty of performing a prohibited practice, the following will happen:

- Discussion with licensee and supervisor
- A verbal warning
- A written warning that will be retained in the employee file
- Suspension without pay pending investigation; and/or
- Termination of employment.

Quality Foundations Childcare prides itself on the care we provide to children and families. It is a requirement of all who provide care that they follow the Child Care and Early Years Act which outlines the practices that are allowed and prohibited.

## **Emergency Management Policy**

Quality Foundations Childcare has an Emergency Management Policy that outlines what expectations of all educators, volunteers and students within the building are to follow in the event of an emergency. This policy outlines emergencies ranging from a lockdown (where a threat is occurring within the centre), Hold & Secure (a threat is occurring within the vicinity of the centre but NOT inside); a bomb threat; disaster require evacuation (flood, fire, power failure); external environmental threat (gas leak, oil spill, chemical release etc); and a natural disaster (tornado, earthquake). Steps are clearly outlined so that educators are aware of all procedures required.

Parents will be notified of the emergency situation in the following ways:

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 centre, the supervisor must provide a notice of the incident to the parents/guardians via the parent app.

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 it is determined.

## Supervision of Students and Volunteers

Quality Foundations Childcare welcomes both placement students and volunteers into the various classrooms in our centre. We believe it is a valuable part in gaining experience in a quality childcare program.

Students and volunteers are always supervised by an employee and are never permitted to be alone with any child or group of children. They are never counted in ratio and must always be accompanied by an educator when children are around.

Students and volunteers are required to provide documentation of a valid Vulnerable Sector Check; up-to-date Standard First Aid and CPR certificate; sign off on all policies and procedures; are trained on individual medical and/or anaphylactic plans; maintain professionalism, confidentiality and implement policies and procedures while in the facility.

Students are paired with an experienced Registered Early Childhood Educator to ensure they are receiving feedback and quality guidance while they are at our centre.

## Safe Arrival and Departure Policy and Procedure

Quality Foundations Childcare has implemented a Safe Arrival and Departure Policy that outlines the importance of connecting with families within a timely manner should their child not attend the centre with no prior communication. This is to ensure that your child has made it safely from their home to the centre. Centre staff will reach out via our parent communication app if we have not received any communication by 9:30 am. If no response has been received by that time, a phone call will be made to primary, secondary and if needed, emergency contacts. Please ensure you are avoiding this process by letting us know all days absent as soon as you can.

## Parent Concerns

### 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 licensee, supervisor and classroom educators 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 two (2) 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, 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/childrensaidthereportingabuse/index.aspx>

## Procedures

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><b>Program Room-Related</b> E.g: schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to the classroom staff directly or the supervisor or licensee.</p>	<p>Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised or arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within two (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</p>
<p><b>General, Centre- or Operations-Related</b> E.g: child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to the supervisor or licensee.</p>	<p>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</p>



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:
<b>Staff, Supervisor, and/or Licensee-Related</b>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to the individual directly or the supervisor or licensee.</p> <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>information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.</p> <p>Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.</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>
<b>Student- / Volunteer-Related</b>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student or the supervisor and/or licensee.</p> <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</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 licensee.

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

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

## Contacts

Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care Help Desk	1-877-510-5333 or <a href="mailto:childcare_ontario@ontario.ca">childcare_ontario@ontario.ca</a>
College of Early Childhood Educators	1-416-961-8558
Ministry of Health	1-416-327-4300
Ministry of Labour	905-273-7800
Ministry of Environment	1-416-235-5743
Fire Department	905-546-3333
Police Department	905-628-0992
Ontario College of Teachers	1-416-961-8800
College of Social Workers	1-416-972-9882

## Duty to Report

If any person, including those who perform professional duties with respect to children, has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has suffered or is at risk to suffer physical, emotional or sexual harm, the person has a duty to report the suspicion directly to their local children's aid society (CAS). If a parent/guardian expresses concerns, the parent is advised to contact CAS and the person who has been made aware of the concern is also required to report to CAS.

We are required by law to follow the above declaration at Quality Foundations Childcare. Our sole responsibility is to ensure the safety and well-being of the child therefore our educators are encouraged to follow the **Serious Occurrence Policy and Procedure in regard to Allegation of Abuse and/or Neglect.**

## Withdrawal/Discharge from Care

We require one-month notice if you need to withdraw from the centre for any reason. Notice is required in writing so that we can adjust your invoices and apply the security deposit to your final invoice. Despite this requirement, we understand that sometimes life happens in different ways. We try to work with you as best we can, so please ensure you are remaining in contact with the supervisor and licensee regarding withdrawing from the centre.

In rare cases we reserve the right to discharge a child or family from our care. This happens after every effort has been made by both the licensee/supervisor, the teaching team at Quality Foundations Childcare and the family has been made. We must take all things into consideration – the health, well-being and welfare of the children enrolled and if a child is posing a threat of safety or is overly disruptive (with as many supports as possible), we may make the difficult decision to discharge your child. Every effort will be made to avoid this situation and it will not come as a surprise to the family.

In the event of unpaid fees, we may also discharge a family from care – please always communicate with the licensee and supervisor – if payments prove to be a challenge do not hesitate to reach out. Situations always arise and we do not want you to feel embarrassed about this – we would rather work with you than discharge you because we were unaware of a situation.

## **Future Changes**

The management team of Quality Foundations Childcare reserves the right to change our policies and procedures as outlined in this handbook based on direction from the Ministry of Education, Public Health or changes in our operational needs. Any changes or updates will be communicated to all current families as they occur.