



POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

PARENT HANDBOOK

Revised as of November 2024

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Harmony Community School Centre was formed in 1978 as a non-profit community-based childcare centre. It is operated by qualified staff and administered by a volunteer Board of Directors. All staff with an Early Childhood Education Diploma are also registered with the College of Early Childhood Education (RECE's). The Day Care also works closely with St. Clare School, the Toronto Catholic District School Board, the Ministry of Education and the City of Toronto. Harmony Childcare Centre is licensed by the Ontario Ministry of Education and inspected yearly by an Early Childhood Licensing Specialist. We meet and maintain provincial standards set out in Ontario Regulations 137/15 *made under the* Child and Early Years Act, 2014 concerning programming and operations as well as standards set by the Health and Fire Departments. Harmony Childcare Centre is licensed to provide care for children between the ages of 2½ to 12 years.

The Ontario government is committed to increasing transparency and parent access to information about licensed child care programs. You can now find licensing inspection findings on the Licensed Child Care Website which is available at www.ontario.ca/ONT/portal61/licensedchildcare as well as finding information about our programming's Assessment for Quality Improvement on www.toronto.ca/childcare

PROGRAM STATEMENT:

Our Philosophy

Harmony Childcare Centre believes that children learn through play. The aim of our program is to provide an inclusive environment where every child, regardless of abilities, may have the opportunity to experience social, emotional, physical and intellectual growth. We understand that children learn in a variety of ways, so we offer many types of learning opportunities during indoor / outdoor play, active play, rest and quiet times and within all programmed daily activities. Our staff is dedicated to supporting this by delivering a caring and responsive program which focuses on active learning, exploration, play and inquiry. Children are viewed as competent and capable; they are active participants in the program and, through observations, affect the programming that is being planned and implemented. Activities emphasize current skills and focus on furthering skill development. Staff encourage self-esteem, self-regulation, self-respect and respect for others with the intention that this will allow individual children and groups of children to interact in an appropriate manner.

At Harmony it is integral that we foster and nurture trusting relationships and a sense of belonging with our children and families. We will do this by honoring and respecting all beliefs, cultures, languages and experiences represented in our community. By including aspects of this in our programming, children will learn to care about others, understand other's feelings, co-operate, share, express opinions, resolve conflicts and develop self-worth.

Harmony Childcare Centre's staff endeavors to provide a stimulating program that offers services to children, families and the community within the framework of the Child Care and Early Years Act. Our program uses the common framework in "How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years (2014). We will support children to achieve goals and will meet the expectations for our programs by building on the foundations for healthy growth and development. The five areas of development are:

- physical (gross and fine motor)
- social (awareness, respect, ability to share and cooperate)
- communication (verbal and non-verbal)
- self-esteem (self-awareness and positive self-image)
- cognitive (comprehension, problem solving and skill acquisition)

The four foundations that are considered essential to optimal learning and healthy development for children and are represented in our programming:

- belonging – a sense of connectedness to others
- well-being – focusing on the importance of physical and mental health and wellness
- engagement – being involved and focused through exploration, play, inquiry and skill development
- expression – (or communication) to be heard, as well as listened to (bodies, words, use of materials)

Our staff are knowledgeable, empathic, skilled and caring individuals who provide an educational curriculum based on ongoing observations of the children's play and interactions. They plan and create a positive, nurturing and creative environment which fosters learning and exploration.

We believe that capturing and documenting our practice is a form of reinforcement of the learning process for educators, family and children. In this respect, portfolios are created for each child, observations are available for review and reference, monthly newsletters are provided, photographs are taken to document children's learning and activities and program plans are posted with our guiding document for parents' reference.

Our Strategies (Goals)

The strategies used to achieve our program statement are guided by the work done on Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years ("How Does Learning Happen"). We understand that learning and development happens within the context of relationships among children, families, educators, and their environments. As stated in our Philosophy, Harmony understands that for children to grow and flourish, the four following foundational conditions need to exist:

- A sense of Belonging,
- A sense of Well-Being,
- Opportunities and support for Engagement, and
- Opportunities and support for Expression.

We will adopt the following 11 strategies to create these conditions:

- a) Promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children;
- b) Support positive and responsive interactions among children, parents, childcare providers and staff;
- c) Encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate;
- d) Foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry;
- e) Provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences;
- f) Plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported;
- g) Incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, into the day, and give consideration to the individual needs of the children receiving childcare;
- h) Foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children;
- i) Involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children and their families and staff;
- j) Support staff, home childcare providers or others who interact with the children at a childcare centre or home child care premises in relation to continuous professional learning; and
- k) Document and review the impact of the strategies set out in clauses (a) to (j) on the children and their families.

How We Will Meet Our Goals

- a) All staff will promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children by:
 - providing a clean and safe environment
 - offering lunch and snack menus based on Canada's Food Guide and accommodating any special dietary needs
 - access to drinking water throughout the day
 - limited transitions and reducing unnecessary disruptions to play
 - eliminating any environmental issues that may cause undue stress to the child
 - eliminating hazards that may cause injury or harm
 - all staff will be familiar with all information concerning any medical conditions, exceptionalities, allergies, food restrictions, medication requirements and parental preferences in respect to diet, exercise, rest time and general care instructions

- b) All staff will support positive and responsive interactions among children, parents, childcare providers and staff by fostering collaborative and cooperative relationships that are based on trust. Harmony will...
- hire qualified, responsive and well-trained staff that support families as primary caregivers and understand the needs of children as individuals
 - promote a sense of belonging by including them in our programming by modeling positive communication and developing joint partnerships in learning
 - work collaboratively with parents and our community partners with the mutual goal of providing the best possible services to families and for children to meet their maximum potential
- c) All staff will encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate by acknowledging that each child is competent, curious and rich in potential. Staff will....
- support self-regulation which helps children with the ability to gain control of bodily functions, manage powerful emotions and maintain focus and attention
 - provide positive learning environments and experiences that are focused on play-based learning
 - encourage, support and foster children's communication and self-expression
 - support the child's home language through books, signs and using familiar words to strengthen the child's overall language skills and build a sense of self
 - model positive behaviors and provide stability and consistency throughout the daily program
- d) All staff will foster children's exploration, play and inquiry by providing a variety of activities and an environment rich in content which:
- encourages choices
 - focuses on active play-based learning
 - provides opportunities to articulate ideas, construct, challenge and expand their understanding and learning
 - uses and experiments with a variety of materials
 - allows children to investigate, ask questions, solve problems and engage in critical thinking
- e) All staff will provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences by...
- using daily observations to plan and create programming and a positive learning environment that is based on children's interests and supported by the staff in the room
 - introducing new ideas, interests, concepts, skills and experiences to expand on children's learning and experiences

- f) All staff will plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported by recognizing that the environment is considered the "third teacher" and "is valued for its power to organize, promote relationships, and educate. It mirrors the ideas, values, attitudes and cultures of those who use the space." (HDLH? 2014 Malaguzzi, 1993)
- staff will organize the space depending on room composition / layout, make sure furnishings are appropriate and provide a variety of materials
 - provide spaces (both indoor and outdoor) that invite investigation, imagination, thinking, creating, problem solving and make meaning out of experiences
 - ensure space contains interesting and open-ended materials that children can use in many ways
 - provide opportunities for periods of long, uninterrupted play with few transitions which promote a calmer environment where children become more engaged
 - provide opportunities for connections to and interactions with the natural world where children can explore, care for and interact
- g) All staff will incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, into the day, and give consideration to the individual needs of the children receiving childcare by:
- planning for two hours of outdoor play (weather permitting) daily to allow children the opportunity to run, jump, climb, take turns and participate in group activities which promote good health, social skills and the development of coordination and strength
 - planning for activities as an extension of the indoor play space by bringing indoor materials outside to enrich and extend learning
 - provide two hours sleep time (at minimum one hour rest time) with opportunities for quiet activity time as well as making accommodations if necessary / as needed based on individual needs and / or parent preferences
- h) All staff will foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children by...
- maintaining relationships that are respectful, caring, empathic and trusting
 - sharing knowledge with each other to ensure success of the child - parents / families are experts on their children, they know their children best and have influence on their learning and development
 - taking into consideration each child's needs in respect to their family composition, values, culture and language - this enriches relationships between day care, families and community

- involving, including and inviting parents (and extended family) in various events and/or activities in our program
 - offering opportunities for parent feedback and involvement which is used to improve our program and services
 - providing monthly newsletters and sharing information / regular updates by email
 - maintaining a website with current and relevant information for quick reference
- i) All staff will involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children and their families and staff by involving and engaging local community partners in supporting children, families and staff. This will be seen in our program when...
- staff take children on community walks and visit our local pet store, bakery, fabric store, etc.
 - local dentists are invited to speak to the children about dental care
 - staff invite our Community Police Officers to come in to speak to the children about safety
 - information on available services in the community is posted on our Parent Board
 - Resource Staff visit the centre and offer guidance and support to staff, children and families
- j) Harmony will support staff in relation to continuous professional learning by hiring qualified staff, offering competitive wages and opportunities for professional development and training through workshops, seminars, etc. We have non-discriminatory hiring practices and believe that all staff who are hired and work here are valuable and crucial to the success of our program. All staff are respected, supported and treated fairly. In turn, staff...
- foster children's inquiry and creativity
 - plan their program based on their daily observations and children's interests
 - plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences which support a child's learning and development
 - work closely with children (and parents) to extend learning by encouraging children to build upon their existing knowledge
 - recognize and support the uniqueness of every child, engage with children as co-learners during play, provoke their curiosity and guide positive interactions, support emotions in a positive way, know when to intervene and stimulate thinking

Staff will commit to regularly reflect on practices as they engage in new learning experiences, both individually and with colleagues. Staff will commit to building and

maintaining a climate of trust, honesty and respect in the workplace, working collaboratively 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.

Documenting and Reviewing

- k) Harmony Childcare Centre will document and review the impact of the strategies set out in clauses (a) to (j) on the children and their families. Harmony understands that pedagogical documentation is a way for our program staff to learn about how children think and learn.
- All staff, students and volunteers will read and sign the Program Statement...
 - 1) Prior to employment
 - 2) Prior to interacting with children
 - 3) When the statement has been changed or modified
 - 4) On an annual basis
 - The Director, once confident that staff, students and volunteers fully understand and are aware of their responsibilities and implementation of the Program Statement, will review all sign-offs and sign the review sheet to indicate that the process has been completed. These records will be kept for 3 years.
 - Each classroom will maintain a binder containing observations, plans and documentation to support their understanding of the program statement.
 - Copies of the documentation, relevant to each child, will be shared with that parent or guardian

The staff will reflect on *How Does Learning Happen?* by...

- working through the reflection exercises in the document (p. 28 HDLH, 2014)
- reviewing their observations and engaging children in meaningful activities
- maintaining communication with parents
- building trusting relationships with the families in our centre

The Director will meet on a regular basis with each team to establish a clear understanding of the Program Statement, to support staff in their delivery of the Program Statement and to assist staff in self-reflection. The Director will view each staff member as competent and able and will ensure that they are heard and respected, have time to reflect on their performance, their contributions to the environment and the growth and development of each child in their care.

The Director will observe staff in their daily interactions with the children to ensure that they align with our Program Statement and beliefs around positive adult-child interactions.

In the event that the Director, or immediate Supervisor, observes or is made aware of any practice that is in contravention of our Program Statement or any of our other Policies and Procedures, the issue will be addressed with the staff member according to the strategies outlined in our Disciplinary Policy.

In addition, all Early Childhood Educators 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 and performance.

Harmony Childcare Centre endeavors to provide a program that promotes children’s growth in all areas of development and wants to ensure that they have a safe and positive learning experience while in our care.

References in this document are from:
 How Does Learning Happen? Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years 2014
 The Extended Day Program – Ministry of Education, Ontario
 Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014

Reviewed and Approved by Harmony’s Board of Directors: September 30th, 2016

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES ARE AS FOLLOWS. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU THOROUGHLY UNDERSTAND THE CONDITIONS OF ADMITTANCE AND ATTENDANCE.

DAYS AND HOURS OF OPERATION:

Both full-day and half-day programs are offered year-round Monday to Friday from 7:15 a.m. to 6:15 p.m. A before and after-school program, with a lunch option, is also available for JK/SK and school-aged children.

Programs that are offered for children between the ages of 2½ to 5 years:

PROGRAM TYPE	AGE GROUP	DAY OF THE WEEK	DURATION OF THE PROGRAM	INCLUDES:
Full Time Full Day	Pre-School	Monday to Friday	7:15 a.m. to 6:15 p.m.	AM and PM Snack Hot Lunch
A.M. Half-Day (5 days)	Pre-School	Monday to Friday	7:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.	AM Snack and a Hot Lunch
P.M. Half-Day (5 days)	Pre-School	Monday to Friday	11:30 a.m. to 6:15 p.m.	Hot Lunch and a PM Snack

PLEASE NOTE: For the pre-school group, full-day includes sleep time from 12:30 p.m. till 2:30 p.m. Children are required to stay on their cot for the first hour, if not asleep after this time, they can get up and participate in quiet activities (colouring at the table, reading/looking at a book, etc.)

PLEASE NOTE: Morning Snack for the Pre-Schoolers is served until 8:45 a.m. We recommend that children eat a healthy breakfast at home prior to coming to Day Care.

Parents, please make every effort to have your child at day care prior to this time. If, on any given day, this is impossible, please call and let the staff know no later than 9:00 a.m.

Harmony Childcare Centre offers these programs for children ages of 4 to 12 years:

PROGRAM TYPE	AGE GROUPS	DAY OF THE WEEK	DURATION OF THE PROGRAM	INCLUDES:
Before and After School with Lunch (5 days)	JK/SK and School-Age (grade 1 & up)	Monday to Friday	7:15 am – 8:30 am 11:15 am – 11:45 am 3:30 pm – 6:15 pm	AM Snack PM Snack
Before and After School without Lunch (5 days)	JK/SK and School-Age (grade 1 & up)	Monday to Friday	7:15 am – 8:30 am 3:30 pm – 6:15 pm	AM Snack PM Snack

Hot Lunch is available to the JK/SK and School-Aged children at an additional cost.

Packed Lunches are provided for school trips (if your child is part of our Hot Lunch Program) and for everyone during March Break and Summer Program excursions.

Please Note: The children say, “Grace Before Meals”, all together at the table, before starting lunch. Besides this prayer, there is no other religious content in our programming and/or activities.

The Day Care opens at 7:15 a.m. for the Before-School program. The children are released into the school-yard at 8:15 a.m. (weather permitting), the JK/SK’s stay in their classroom in the Before School Program till 8:30 a.m. At 8:15 a.m., there is a school teacher supervising the yard. School ends at 3:00 p.m. and the After-School children come down to the Centre at that time. Parents have until 6:15 p.m. to pick up their children or late pick up fees will apply (\$5.00/minute late). If a child is not picked up by 6:15 p.m. and contact is not established by 6:30 p.m., the Children’s Aid Society and Police will be notified.

When you bring your child to Harmony, we require that you accompany him/her into the daycare and down the stairs to his/her room. Please make sure that the staff is aware that your child has arrived.

We also ask that all children be escorted into and out of the daycare by someone 18 years of age or older. Parents must fill out and sign an “**Authorization for Youth Escort**” form for anyone under the age of 18 who will be dropping off or picking up their child(ren) from the daycare. These forms are included in the Registration Package and can be filled out as part of the registration process or when the need arises. We will not release children to anyone under the age of 18 unless authorization is complete.

FEES:

As a non-profit organization, we depend on your prompt payment of fees – whether full fee or subsidized.

Fees need to be paid according to the Fee Schedules that can be found online, and a copy is provided by email as well. Subsidized fees are due as indicated on the Payment Summary provided by the City of Toronto Children's Services. Subsidized fees will be attached to the youngest child in care and are payable unless service is not available and/or Harmony indicates / notifies you otherwise. Fees can be paid by e-transfer (info@harmonycc.ca), cheque or cash. **A late-charge of \$10.00 per week, per child will be charged if fees are not paid by the first of the month.** Submitting post-dated cheques at the beginning of the month or scheduling a monthly e-transfer will prevent late payments. **Parents will also be responsible for paying an additional charge of \$25.00 on all cheques returned NSF.** Non-payment of fees will result in the withdrawal of childcare services. For income tax purposes, a receipt for fees paid will be issued at the end of February for the previous year.

Please read, sign and return Harmony's Payment Policies (included at the end of this document) – this must be submitted prior to your child's first day of day care.

Please refer to our website for our current Fee Schedules (www.harmonychildcarecentre.ca).

REGISTRATION:

Once a spot has been confirmed and accepted, you will be required to make the first month's payment to secure it – this payment is ***non-refundable***. The completed registration package must be submitted one month prior to the first day of care.

JK/SK and School-Age fees apply once your child enters that room in September. For the Summer Program, you are required to pay the fees corresponding to the program (age group) they've been in since September of that school year.

PLEASE NOTE: There will be at least a four-week notice period prior to any type of fee increase. All changes to your child's attendance will be implemented at the beginning of the month. We require at least two weeks' notice of any changes to your child's care needs.

MOVEMENT TO THE NEXT AGE GROUP: Movement into the next age group (JK Room or School-Age Room) occurs in September. Movement into the school-age room is also dependant on space being available in that group and is not guaranteed even though your child is enrolled in our SK program. If a spot is not available, parents will have to wait for an opening. Priority will be given in order of your original admittance date into the daycare and/or special needs. Once your child turns 12, their last day of care will be on the Friday of the week of their birthday *or* if there is space available in that room, they will be able to stay until the end of the school year.

VACATION TIME (MANDATORY):

Vacation time, when fees are not payable, will be two weeks in total. One (1) week during the Christmas Break (this will be the second week of the two-week closure, determined by the TCDSB's school year calendar) and one (1) week – the first week in July (Canada Day week or the week after, if

it falls during a school week). Full fees are due for any additional vacation time (weeks and/or days) you take your child out of care. According to Public Health regulations, the day care needs to maintain a healthy and safe environment. During the two-week closures, the day care will be thoroughly cleaned – dusted and cleaned (fixtures, shelves, windows, under furniture), carpets will be shampooed and disinfected (Public Health Standards maintain that carpets are cleaned twice a year minimum) and the floors will be scrubbed, waxed and polished.

P.A. DAYS:

Children who are enrolled in our program are permitted to attend the Day Care on St. Clare School's scheduled P.A. Days. The fee for non-instructional days has been factored into the daily fee and therefore included in the monthly fee total. On these days your child will receive morning snack, lunch and an afternoon snack. If your child does not attend on PA Days, regular weekly fees are still due. As mentioned, PA Day fees can be found on the Fee Schedules which are posted on our website, www.harmonychildcarecentre.ca

HOLIDAY FEES:

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS

The Day Care closes for *two weeks* during the Christmas Holidays. During this time, full fees are required for one week only – the first week of closure. The second week (the week going into the New Year) is considered one of your mandatory vacation weeks for the year, no fees are due this week. (This covers Staff pay for Statutory Holidays). Simply put, you pay for all of December and don't pay for the first week of January. The school distributes their School Year Calendar in September of every year. Our Christmas Holidays/Break are in line with St. Clare School's Christmas Holiday Schedule.

MARCH BREAK / SUMMER

The Day Care is open full-time during the March Break. Please refer to our website for our current March Break and Summer Fee Schedules (www.harmonychildcarecentre.ca). Fees are also listed on the March Break and Summer Programs.

Only parents of children in the JK/SK and School-Age programs may reduce the number of days their child(ren) attends during the March Break and/or Summer (minimum 3 full days – JK/SK or School-Age). Your regular fees are payable if your child does not attend during the March Break or Summer.

SUMMER HOLIDAYS (JULY AND AUGUST)

If you decide that your child will not be participating in our Summer Program, you must continue paying regular fees in order to keep your child's spot for September. If fees are not paid, and you still require childcare, you will need to go back on the wait list – dated the last day of your child's attendance at Harmony – and wait for a spot to become available.

STATUTORY HOLIDAYS:

Harmony Childcare Centre observes the following holidays:

New Year's Day	Family Day	Good Friday	Easter Monday
Victoria Day	Canada Day	Civic Holiday	Labour Day
Thanksgiving Day	Christmas Day	Boxing Day	

PLEASE NOTE: Full fees are payable on these days.

You cannot switch days to avoid or make up for these days.

IMPORTANT: Should Harmony Childcare Centre be forced to close for a day or be required to close due to any natural disaster or emergency (flood, gas leak, fire, power failure, water shortage, etc.) fees are still payable. In case of a lengthy closure, Harmony will re-locate.

ADMISSION:

Once a spot becomes available for your child, an appointment will be arranged prior to enrollment to familiarize you and your child with the daycare and staff. At this time, we will answer any questions, inform you of our Registration Process and refer you to our website where you can find our Parent Policies and Procedures as well as all other information pertaining to our program. Once you accept the spot, the first month's payment for the program you are enrolling in is required. This payment is non-refundable. Your child's spot is secured once this first payment is made (due within a week of accepting the spot) and the amount paid will be applied to your fees once your child begins care with us. The complete registration package, including the medical / immunizations, must be filled out and submitted at least four weeks prior to your child beginning daycare. *When possible*, we prefer to gradually introduce the child to our childcare centre by lengthening the amount of time the child spends in his/her new environment. Therefore, if possible, over the course of the child's first week at the centre, the child will stay a little longer each day. This process makes the transition from home to centre a more positive experience for both parents and children.

The following forms must be completed and returned before your child is admitted into the program – they can also be found on our website, www.harmonychildcarecentre.ca

Use this checklist to ensure you have all forms filled out prior to your appointment with the Director/ Admittance Staff:

- Parent and Family Background Information Form
- Background Information Form
- Emergency Contact Information Form
- Medical and Health Care Information Form (2 pages)
- Parent Consent for Medical Treatment Form

- Harmony Childcare Centre – Authorizations
- Consent for Informal & Ongoing Sharing of Information
- Authorization for Youth Escort Form (if applicable)
- Smoke-Free Policy and Procedures Form
- Parent Agreement to Fee Payment Form
- Agreement between Harmony Community School Centre and Parents Form
- Immunization Information Form & *provide copy of Yellow Immunization Card from Doctor*
- Fee Payment Policy for all Programs
- Child's Emergency Information Sheet (not attached to Registration Forms)
- TCDSB Authorization for the Exchange of Information (only if your child attends school)
- Half-Day Rules and Regulations Form (if your child is in this program – Pre-S, JK/SK only)
- Request for Immunization Information (City of Toronto, Public Health Form)
- Parent Agreement (last page of this booklet – to be signed and returned)
- Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy Sign-Off Sheet
- Rules and Regulations Form for Half Day Program (if applicable)
- Harmony's Asthma Information Sheet (if applicable)
- Non-Prescription Medication Form (when applicable)

Please inform us immediately of any medical conditions your child may have: asthma, anaphylactic or any other type of allergy, food sensitivity, on medication, special needs, etc.

WITHDRAWALS / DISMISSALS:

If you wish to withdraw your child from daycare, two weeks' advance notice must be given to the Director. If notice is not received, full fees will be charged for the two-week period. A permanent space cannot be guaranteed if you wish to temporarily withdraw your child and then return to care. To hold your child's spot, continuous payment of fees is required. If you decide not to pay fees, your child will lose their spot, their name will be placed at the end of the wait list and you will need to re-register them when the time comes. Sibling priority is also lost when withdrawing your child from care.

DISMISSALS / TERMINATION OF SERVICES:

Harmony Childcare Centre reserves the right to terminate services if policies are not followed, fees are not paid or if the program is unsuitable for the child -- i.e. in such instances that a child's behaviour is repeatedly disruptive to the program or threatens the safety of other children and staff (in reference to our Behaviour Management Policy – which can be found in the Parent Handbook

binder in our Main Entrance). Every effort will be made to amend unacceptable behaviour prior to dismissing the child from the program.

Harmony has a ***Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy*** which can be found on our website.

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Harmony Childcare Centre's mandate is to provide a safe and respectful environment for the children in our care. When children break the rules, it makes it difficult to fulfill this. Therefore, we must ensure that when this occurs the situation is dealt with appropriately. Disruptive behaviours include visible and/or verbal disrespect given to teachers and other children, refusal to participate in the program, name-calling, disregard for classroom rules, harmful behaviours (towards themselves, others or property) and bullying.

The process Harmony follows when dealing with these types of incidences is detailed below:

1. Currently, when a child is being disruptive, the following procedures take place:
 - The teacher takes the child aside and explains why the behaviour is unacceptable.
 - The parent of the child is informed upon pick-up.

2. Depending upon the seriousness of the incident, the following steps are included:
 - The child is separated from the other children in the group.
 - The child is taken away from the activity and/or unable to *fully* participate in other activities planned for the day – modifications and/or accommodations may be put in place to help with self-regulation and successful play interactions
 - An incident report will be filled out by the teacher, which is to be signed by the parent and will be kept on file.

3. Repeated disruptive behaviours, after all possible options have been explored:
 - A letter of warning is issued to the child's parent(s) that outlines previous incidences. The letter will also explain that the next serious incident (to be determined by Director/Supervisor) will result in possible suspension of the child from the childcare centre for one to five days – therefore the letter specifies terms and conditions of continued enrollment. At this time, the Director will meet with the parent(s) of the child (child and/or classroom teacher(s) may be present).
 - If behaviour persists, withdrawal of childcare services – this decision is made by the Director in consultation with the Board of Directors

WITHDRAWAL OF CHILDCARE SERVICES DUE TO PARENT BEHAVIOUR

While on the premises of Harmony Childcare Centre, the following is expected:

1. Everyone must be treated with respect, including children, staff, volunteers and parents.
2. You must carefully choose the words you use while in the centre. Refrain from loud and angry voices, rude, crude or threatening remarks.
3. All concerns and/or complaints that cannot be dealt with by room staff should be brought to the Director or designate and should not be addressed in front of the children or in the classrooms.
4. Parents are not to approach / address children about an upsetting incident with their child.
5. Any deviation from the above will result in a written warning. At this stage, a meeting may be held with the concerned parties, the Director and other officials (Board Members).
6. The Board of Directors will be notified of the situation.
7. If the parent's inappropriate behaviour re-occurs and/or continues, the parent and their child(ren) will be withdrawn from the centre resulting in the termination of childcare services
8. Any threat of violence or any violent act against any person at the day care centre (child, staff, parent, volunteer, etc.) will be immediately reported to the police and is a reason for *immediate* withdrawal of the child(ren) and parent from the day care centre as well as *immediate* termination of childcare services.

Our aim is to work with parents and families in the best interests of the child(ren) in our care. At times, meetings will be set up with you to discuss issues, concerns and/or possible changes to the services and care provided. Parents are asked to work co-operatively with staff to ensure that everything possible is being done to correct any problems and/or difficulties and that issues are being handled fairly and quickly. If a parent refuses to co-operate with this process, and inappropriate behaviours are persistent and on-going, services will be withdrawn. Any appeal for re-instatement of a withdrawn child may be brought to the Board of Directors.

ARRIVAL TO THE DAY CARE

Regular routines establish a child's sense of security. It is therefore recommended that you try and maintain fixed hours to drop-off and pick up your child.

The day care opens at 7:15 a.m. If your child is left in the centre before 7:15 a.m. a fee of \$5.00/minute will be charged. The staff arrive a little early and need this time to set up for the day – check messages, prepare for snack, etc.

The children begin their daily program with morning snack which ends at 8:15 a.m. for JK/SK & School-Age children attending the Before-School program and 8:45 a.m. for the Pre-School groups.

PLEASE NOTE: Morning *Snack* is provided for all age groups. Regardless, all children should be eating a *healthy breakfast* at home before coming to Day Care.

JK/SK children in the FDK Before School Program will be dropped off in their classrooms when the school bell rings. School-age children (Grades 1 & up) will be released from the morning program at 8:20 a.m. and are responsible for walking to their designated school yard. At lunch (if they are in the Hot Lunch Program) and at the end of the day, school-age children are responsible for making their way to Harmony's school-age rooms. Should they be held back in their classroom after school, it is their responsibility to notify us or have their teacher notify us that they will be down late.

All children should be in the centre by 9:00 a.m., so they are able to participate fully in the program. In accordance with our Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy, if your child is absent or is going to be in after this time, it is your responsibility to email or call the centre and notify us. If you arrive after this time, and your child's group is on a scheduled walk or away from the premises, you can:

1. Meet up with your child's group on their walk.
2. Wait with your child at the daycare centre until your child's group returns to the centre.
3. *Or...*Your child can be left with another group or with another staff – this may not always be an option if the other groups are out as well, or they have met their ratio capacity.

Please Note: Even with notification of a late arrival, staff will not stay back or delay a walk / trip / excursion to wait on your child's arrival.

DAILY ROUTINE:

In establishing a routine and providing children with a sense of knowing what to expect and what is going to happen each day allows them to feel more secure and helps them adapt to various daily experiences and challenges.

Our daily schedule is posted outside each classroom. It may change on occasion due to special circumstances and times will vary slightly in the Fall/Winter and Spring/Summer to accommodate outdoor play times – there is working copy outside each classroom depending on the seasons. We will indicate any changes on our program plans which are posted on the boards outside each room.

A visual daily schedule (or individual class schedules) is also posted in every classroom so children, teachers and parents can refer to it.

Outdoor Play times vary in winter / summer and may be lengthened, shortened or cancelled depending on the weather.

DEPARTURE FROM THE DAY CARE:

Unless the Day Care is previously notified, only a parent or person specified on the admission forms may pick up a child. If someone other than the parent is picking up a child, they should be introduced to the staff (if possible) and/or provide identification upon arrival. We ask that staff is made aware each time any change is made to *regular* pick-up arrangements – even though the person who is picking up your child is specified in the registration package.

Also, if any staff member has reason to believe that the designated adult picking the child up from the day care is under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, the child will not be released into their care. If the adult under the influence insists on taking the child off the day care premises, the staff is required to telephone a child protection agency and the police.

We also ask and recommend that all children be picked up by someone 18 years of age or older. Parents must fill out and sign an “**Authorization for Youth Escort**” form for anyone under the age of 18 who will be picking up their child (ren) from the daycare. This form can be found on our website (www.harmonychildcarecentre.ca) or you can ask the staff for a copy. We will not release children to anyone under the age of 18 unless authorization is complete.

Let us please work together to guarantee the safety and well-being of every child.

When picking up your child, please get him/her ready quickly and quietly so as not to interrupt programming that is still ongoing.

PLEASE NOTE: Our centre does not have the authority to deny a primary caregiver access to his or her child(ren) without a court order. To deny access, the centre must have a current copy of the court order on file.

LATE PICK-UP FEE POLICY:

The Day Care closes promptly at 6:15 p.m. There is a late fee policy of \$5.00/minute if children are picked up after 6:15 p.m. A late fee slip will be filled out by the staff person on duty and signed by the parent or the person who picks up the child. If you have delegated the picking up of your child to someone else, the parent/guardian is still responsible for any late fees owing. Also, please respect our staff’s personal lives and arrive on time.

If a parent is consistently late, child(ren) may be withdrawn from the program. This policy enforces Ministry guidelines that children are not in Day Care for longer than 9 hours and that children are not being neglected and are spending enough time with their family.

PLEASE NOTE: It is important that parents and staff communicate to find an alternate solution if lateness becomes an issue.

HEALTH POLICY

The following factors have been considered in developing our Centre's Health Policy:

- The inability of a child who is ill or not feeling well to cope with the day's program
- The need to protect children from communicable disease / outbreaks
- The need for guidelines to assist parents in deciding whether to bring in a child who is "not quite well" to daycare
- The responsibility and commitment of parents who work full-time

POLICY REGARDING SICK CHILDREN:

In the best interest of all children attending Harmony Childcare Centre, a child should be kept at home when exhibiting any of the following symptoms:

- a cold that hinders day to day functioning (phlegm/congestion, yellowish/green discharge from nose)
- a sore throat, persistent coughing
- an earache
- discharge from the eyes or ears
- swollen neck glands
- fever
- digestive upset – vomiting or diarrhea
- unexplained rash or skin eruption

These signs and symptoms are obvious and indicate that the child is unwell. The child should be kept away from the centre until the child is symptom-free for at least a 24-hour period; temperature has been normal for at least a 24-hour period (without fever-reducing medication) and/or the child has been taking prescribed medication for a 24-hour cycle. This means that if a parent is picking up their child from day care with any of the above symptoms, said child may not return to care the following day. Harmony's 24-hour policy must be adhered to and cannot be overruled by a doctor's note. If there is a declared "outbreak", Harmony may ask that your child be kept at home for 48 hours as per Toronto Public Health Guidelines, especially in instances of an Outbreak.

When a child is ill and cannot attend Day Care, the centre should be notified by telephone by 9:30 a.m. It is also suggested that parents prepare and arrange for emergency backup childcare in anticipation of these situations. Fees are payable even though your child is ill.

If a child appears unwell, **staff have the right to refuse admittance. Depending on the situation, we will request a medical note and/or request immediate pick-up of a child who is ill or not capable of full participation in the program for any other reason.** If a child becomes ill while in attendance, the child will be isolated from the other children until the parent arrives. This is for your own child's well-being as well as others in the day care. If a parent is not available, the emergency number and contact person will be called.

Contagious Disease:

If a child is suspected of having any contagious / communicable disease, the child must not be in the Centre. If symptoms develop during the day, the parents will be notified and asked to pick-up and take the child home immediately. The child will not be able to return to care until there is a note from the doctor stating that the child's condition is no longer contagious.

Should a child require medication when he/she returns to daycare, parents need to fill in and sign a Medication Authorization Form. All medication must be prescribed by a doctor and needs to be in its original container. **Please see, Health and the Administration of Drugs.**

Immunization Records – must be on record, current and kept up to date for your child to attend daycare.

HEALTH AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF DRUGS:

The Day Nurseries Act requires children to spend a minimum of two hours each day in outdoor activities. If your child is not well enough to go outside, then he/she is not well enough to attend daycare.

Any child who has been absent from the daycare due to a communicable disease will not be re-admitted until a doctor's note is provided. A child who shows signs of fever, diarrhea or vomiting will not be admitted. A "Resource Manual on Communicable Diseases" is available for parents. Where a doctor prescribes medications, the child may not attend Harmony for at least a 24-hour period – please follow our "Policy Regarding Sick Children" guidelines. The policy is to ensure the control and prevention of infecting other children and/or staff in the centre.

If your child is going to be absent due to illness or for any other reason, please contact the daycare before 9:30 a.m.

GIVING A CHILD MEDICATION:

A parent must fill out and sign a Medication Authorization Form for a staff member to administer medication prescribed by a doctor. Included on the form is authorization and information regarding the dosage and the time the medication is to be administered by staff. **Parents who bring in prescribed medication must make sure it comes in its original container and that it is labeled with the child's name, time of administration, dosage and date. We will not administer "over the counter" medicine unless it is accompanied by a doctor's note with specific and clear instruction on dosage and time of administration and our "Non-Prescription Medication" form which is available for your doctor to fill out. For a copy of this form, please ask staff or print it from our website, www.harmonychildcarecentre.ca**

PLEASE NOTE: Harmony Community School Centre is not responsible for any allergic reactions your child may have to medication.

We will not administer medication that:

- is not prescribed by a doctor
- has not been authorized by a parent (by filling out the Medication Authorization Form)
- is not in its original container
- is prescribed to another child (brother or sister)
- has not been labeled with proper information (non-prescription)
- is expired

Please make sure medication is not left in your child's knapsack/school bag/cubby. This is not only potentially dangerous to your own child, but also for other children in daycare and/or school.

All medicine is stored in a locked storage box in the refrigerator or non-refrigerated locked storage box in a cupboard / cabinet out of reach of children. The keys to these boxes are available to the teachers only and are not accessible to the children.

Medications for ongoing medical conditions (i.e. asthma) need to have a form completed by the doctor and/or parent that provides instruction for administering the medication to your child. This form needs to be updated yearly, or as necessary.

ANAPHYLACTIC ALLERGIES / MEDICAL NEEDS POLICY:

Anaphylaxis is a serious allergic reaction and can be life-threatening. The allergy may be related to food, insect stings, medicine, latex, exercise, etc. The Anaphylaxis Policy is intended to help support the needs of a child with severe allergies and provide information on anaphylaxis and ensure parents, staff, students and visitors to the day care are aware of existing allergies and plans.

Our Centre's Anaphylaxis Plan / Individualized Plan for a Child with Medical needs is designed to:

- Ensure that children at risk are identified
- Ensure strategies are in place to minimize the potential for accidental exposure
- Ensure staff, students and volunteers are trained to respond in an emergency

Plans will include:

- Steps to reduce the risk of the child being exposed to any triggers/situations that could make a medical condition worse or cause an allergic reaction or another medical emergency
- A description of any medical devices the child needs and instructions on how to use it
- A description of procedures to follow in case of an allergic reaction / medical emergency
- A description of the support a child needs
- Any additional procedures to follow when a child with medical needs is evacuated or off-site

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to:

- Inform the day care of their child's allergy (anaphylactic, asthma) and/or medical need

- Complete medical forms and meet with the Director and teachers to complete the Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan or Individualized Medical Plan in a timely manner
- Advise the day care if their child has outgrown an allergy, no longer needs an EpiPen or medical needs no longer exist
- Have the child wear a medical identification bracelet
- Replace EpiPens prior to expiring, replace medical devices as needed

Parents are asked to consult with teachers before sending food to the daycare. Home baked goods may not be brought into the childcare centre. Any store-bought food brought into the centre must be in its original container, sealed, labeled “peanut / nut free” and include an ingredients label. Parents will also be notified, if necessary, of potentially life-threatening allergies, foods and/or agents that should not be brought into the centre.

During the registration process, the Director or Supervisor will interview the parent/guardian and enquire on whether their child has an anaphylactic, life-threatening allergy and or medical need. At this time, we will also make note of any other existing allergies and whether the child also suffers from asthma – which makes an anaphylactic reaction more severe.

If the child beginning day care does have an anaphylactic allergy or medical need, the Director will review the centre’s policies with the parent and/or guardian and set up a meeting with parents, Director and staff to develop an individual plan with emergency procedures prior to the child beginning the program. An EpiPen must always be kept at the daycare and will be transported with the child on excursions. The daycare will require the parent/guardian’s consent that allows the daycare staff to administer the allergy medication in the event their child has an anaphylactic reaction. For FDK and School-Age children, the school’s policy is that the child always carry the EpiPen on them.

Allergies – It is important that parents inform staff and Supervisors of any allergies that their child may have and what reactions to expect. Food allergies and/or sensitivities need to be specifically detailed for snack and lunch purposes. If your child has food allergies, a form from your child’s doctor must be completed before admission and updated annually or as necessary. Any medication recommended by a doctor (i.e. EpiPen, Benadryl) must always be on the Centre’s premises (cannot be taken home and returned each day) or child cannot and will not be admitted. A Non-Prescription Medication Form must be completed and signed by the child’s doctor and kept on file for any seasonal / yearly allergy control products. This form can be found on our website, www.harmonychildcarecentre.ca

Attempt to Meet a Peanut Free Environment – Harmony will endeavor to avoid peanut/nut products on the menu. If you have any concerns regarding your child’s allergies and/or diet, please contact the Director. The Centre wants to ensure that all children are protected against food allergies. Please do not bring snacks to the Centre or allow your child to finish their breakfast at the Centre unless approved by the Director.

Birthday / Event Celebrations – Children’s birthdays will be celebrated in a simple yet joyful manner. Parents may provide a cake or snack (not homemade) for this occasion. Food items brought into the day care must be “peanut/nut free”, in their original container with an ingredients label. A small celebration will be held at snack time on the day of or close to the birthday. It is mandatory that parents follow policies regarding food allergies.

SMOKE-FREE POLICY:

Smoking (cigarettes, vapes, cannabis, etc.) is prohibited within all areas of Harmony Childcare Centre. The Centre prohibits all staff, students, volunteers and/or parents and relatives/friends of the children enrolled at the day care to enter the premises and/or remain on premises with a lit or unlit cigarette or holding a pack of cigarettes (where they are visible to the children in our care). This will also be enforced in and around all areas where children play – i.e. playground. This policy has been legislated by law – Smoke Free Ontario Act. Should this occur, the said person will be asked to leave the premises.

EXTENDED ILLNESS/SICK LEAVE:

Full fees are due when your child is home due to illness, regardless of length of time away.

If your child has been absent due to a communicable disease, a doctor's note confirming wellness must accompany their return to daycare.

PEDICULOSIS (LICE) POLICY:

Harmony Childcare Centre will arrange for a Public Health Nurse to visit the Day Care to check for head lice *when needed*. Should you be informed that your child(ren) has pediculosis it will be your responsibility to treat it that same day. (These are trained nurses, so the likelihood of error is very low). If you begin treatment (shampoo) immediately and remove all eggs / nits (comb through hair and pick out eggs) that same night, your child(ren) may return to daycare the following day – but treatment should be continued. In seven days, you will be required to redo the treatment as instructed. Once the Public Health Nurse re-visits the daycare, if your child is found with pediculosis a second time, you must provide a note from a nurse stating that all lice/nits have been successfully removed and is then able to return to daycare. The note must be handed in to a daycare staff person.

ACCIDENTS OR ILLNESS:

If your child becomes ill or has an accident at the centre, staff will provide immediate care and/or first aid. We would then contact parents / guardians. If you cannot be reached, we will call the emergency contact person on file. If your child is injured while in care at the centre, the staff will

prepare an Accident Report Form for your signature. If your child has an accident or injury at home, we would appreciate being informed when the child comes into our care the following day.

PLEASE NOTE: All staff are trained in Standard C First Aid and CPR

EMERGENCIES AT THE BEGINNING OF THE DAY:

If a staff member arrives at the centre and finds that there has been damage, a break-in or some breakdown in systems, they will decide (with consultation with the Director / Staff Supervisor / Board of Directors) on the best and safest arrangements possible for the children coming into the daycare. The Supervisor or senior qualified teacher shall assume responsibility and will contact the Head Caretaker of the school, the police or qualified trades people as determined by the type of emergency. Depending on the seriousness of the emergency, the Supervisor or teacher may decide to ask parents not to leave their children at the daycare for that day. Fees are still payable. For lengthy closures, the day care will be relocated.

EMERGENCIES AT THE END OF THE DAY:

If a child is ill or has been injured at the end of the day when the parent is in transit and therefore cannot be reached, and if the teacher feels that the child should be taken to the hospital, the teacher will accompany the child to the hospital and will also ensure that a staff member remains behind to inform the parent of the circumstances and the location of the child. Otherwise, a detailed note, outlining the circumstances and the location of the child, will be left on the door where the parent can see it. If possible, the daycare staff will try and reach the person at the emergency number to inform them of the situation.

Relocation Locations: St. Clare Church (1118 St. Clair Ave. W.) or Stella Maris (31 Ascot Ave.). Parents will be notified by telephone or email.

Harmony has Emergency Management Policies and Procedures and a statement regarding how parents will be notified if an emergency occurs. This policy can be found on the parent page of our website.

POSTING OF SERIOUS OCCURRENCES:

Our priority is the safety and well-being of the children in our care. The Staff at Harmony do their utmost to provide a safe and nurturing environment for every child. Despite this, serious occurrences / incidents can sometimes take place.

The Ontario Government has introduced a new policy (November 01, 2011) that requires licensed childcare centres to post information about serious occurrences that occur at the centre. This form, outlining information on the serious occurrence, will be posted on Harmony's Parent Board for 10 days from the initial occurrence or from the most recent update. Please respect that for

confidentiality reasons, there will be no “identifiers” on the posting...i.e. names of children or teachers, age group, room, etc. This posting will only give parents information about the incident and outline follow-up actions and outcomes.

Should you require more information on this policy, or on what constitutes a Serious Occurrence please speak with the Director or refer to the policy which can be found on our website.

FIRE DRILL / LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES:

The daycare practices Fire Drill Procedures with the children monthly. We also participate in St. Clare School’s scheduled fire drills as well as their lockdown drills. In the instance of a real fire, our emergency shelter is St. Clare Church. Should that location also be in jeopardy, we will walk to Stella Maris Elementary School, 31 Ascot Ave. The Director (or Staff Supervisor in their absence) will always have the emergency binder with each child's emergency information on hand and will contact every parent regarding the situation. Children who participate in sleep time will be required to keep their shoes on during their nap so they are prepared should the teachers need to get them up and out of the school for an emergency (whether it is a scheduled practice or the real thing).

It is therefore *very important* to notify us with any changes to the “Emergency Information Sheet” that we have on file for your child.

CLOTHING AND POSSESSIONS:

Children should come to the centre in their "work" clothes so that they can concentrate on their projects/activities and not on trying to stay clean. Your child should be dressed in clothing that is appropriate for physical activity and the weather (outdoor temperatures). We suggest that children wear clothing that is comfortable and easily handled by little fingers. This is important so that we can encourage their self-help skills and help them develop a sense of independence. Also, we ask that shoes have rubber soles and are properly fitted, which allows them freedom and safety of movement for full participation in all activities. Children with shoes that do not meet this criterion may be excluded from participating in activities due to safety concerns.

The following is a list of articles a parent needs to bring to daycare. Please make sure that all items are labeled and replaced when necessary:

- enough diapers and wipes weekly (for children in diapers)
- two *full* changes of clothing, season / weather appropriate
- a blanket and cuddly toy (for children who have a sleeptime)
- appropriate outdoor clothing

Children, regardless of age, may experience “accidents” and should therefore have a second full set of weather (season) appropriate clothing at the daycare in case of accidents (getting soiled with food, paint or wetting themselves). Staff will place soiled clothing in a plastic bag in the child's cubby.

Please check their cubbies daily and replace anything that is brought home. Should your child not have a full change of clothing in their box, you will be notified and required to come in to provide a change or your child will have to stay in their wet and/or soiled clothing. We will not borrow clothing from other children.

Please label all clothing and other articles clearly with your child's name. Do not send your child to the daycare with any money, food or toys unless otherwise specified by the daycare staff or St. Clare School. **We are not responsible for any lost items.**

If your child has a sleeptime at the Day Care, blankets / cot sheets will be sent home every Friday to be washed and returned the following week.

THE EXTRAS: Scarves, hats, mittens (no strings please) – These are items that almost always get misplaced. The reason is that they don't have a place. One way to keep things together is to teach children to place the items in their coat sleeves. This is good for two reasons: One, the child cannot get his/her coat on without being confronted with the items that need to be worn outside; second, in most cases the items won't fall out of the coat.

SLEEP TIME OR REST PERIOD:

The sleep room is for pre-school children. Sleep time is from 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. *Ontario Regulation 137/15* made under the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* requires that pre-school children who receive care for six hours or more a day have a rest period not exceeding 2 hours in length. At Harmony, after resting for 1 hour, children who are not asleep and wish to get up, will be allowed to engage in a quiet activity – i.e. look at a book, colour at a table, do puzzles, etc.

Since the start of Full-Day Learning, parents of children in JK/SK no longer have a “sleep time” during the March Break or Summer. If at any time, parents feel that their child needs to sleep/rest (due to a late night, busy schedule), this request will be accommodated by Harmony staff.

Each child in our sleep room has their own cot. Parents are required to purchase a nap mat with blanket and pillow (available from the daycare) and can provide a soft, cuddly, quiet toy (i.e. teddy bear) from home – please no talking/singing toys. As per our Sleep Room and Rest Policy (which can be found on our website) sleep / rest time is supervised by qualified staff who perform periodic visual checks of the children – walking around the sleep area and around every cot (checking on children, adjusting blankets, etc.). During visual checks (done approximately every ½ hour), if staff observe any significant changes in a child's sleeping pattern or behaviors, parents will be informed, and adjustments will be made to the frequency / manner of the visual checks. Any observances, instructions and changes made will be noted in our daily book to be shared with other staff dealing with that room / sleep time.

OUTDOOR PLAY

WEATHER ADVISORIES – SMOG/HEAT or COLD/WINDCHILL ALERTS:

Harmony Childcare Centre believes that children should be exposed to fresh air and sunlight. Aside from the natural benefits this provides, it is also an opportunity to experience the outdoor environment and learn about it. It is also a requirement under *Ontario Regulation 137/15* made under the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* that children participate in outdoor play (weather permitting) for at least two hours each day. Harmony's Daily Schedule programs for one hour in the morning and one hour in the afternoon. *If possible*, alternate arrangements will be made for children who are unable to participate in outdoor play – a physician must advise of this in writing.

During very hot or cold months, Harmony's policy on outdoor time is as follows. The Director / Supervisor informs the daycare staff of any advisories. If there is an extreme weather alert, the children's outdoor time is shortened or cancelled. During the summer months, parents are responsible for applying sunscreen in the morning prior to dropping off their children at daycare. The staff will re-apply as needed throughout the day. We will not apply bug spray, please do not bring it in. We will do our best to limit the outdoor time during hot weather to before 11:00 a.m. and after 3:00 p.m. – when the sun is less intense. We encourage that every child, especially in the summer, come to daycare with a labelled water bottle – the staff will refill as needed.

Clothing in the summer should include – sun hat/cap, bathing suit, sunscreen, towel, comfortable walking shoes, running shoes (children are not to wear sandals / open toed shoes / loose fitting crocs) on walks, in the playground or in the gym).

Clothing in the winter should include – mittens or properly fitting gloves (no strings), scarf / neck warmer, snow pants, hat (no strings), boots, coat (no strings), extra socks, extra pants and a pair of indoor shoes – boots are not permitted indoors.

NUTRITION AND MEALS

The daycare serves nutritious, hot lunches as well as morning and afternoon snacks. These include servings from all the Food Groups represented in Health Canada's Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide. Children's special dietary needs and allergies are posted in the classrooms and in the food preparation area. If your child(ren) has food restrictions due to allergies, medical conditions, sensitivities or personal observances, please inform the Director during the registration process or as soon as an allergy becomes known so that alternates to their snacks / lunch can be arranged. These types of changes take about a week to implement. Lunch and snack menus are posted in the entrance area of the day care as well as on our website. Lunch is based on a four-week rotation schedule and is provided by Wholesome Kids Catering.

The owner is a Registered Dietitian, and they have Public Health food and premise inspections yearly. We get copies of the reports for our records which are posted near the Menu Board in the main entrance of the daycare.

For our complete Nutrition Policy, please visit www.harmonychildcarecentre.ca and find it under the Parent Information tab.

BAGGED LUNCHES:

Pre-School, JK/SK and School-Aged children will be served Harmony's catered lunch on PA Days, March Break and Summer Program days. Children **cannot** bring a bagged lunch into the day care.

During the March Break and Summer Program, lunch is included in the program fees, so bagged lunches are not necessary and should not be brought into the centre unless previously approved by the Director. Exceptions, after a discussion with parents, will be arranged if staff observe a child is not eating / is extremely particular with our lunch offerings.

Exceptions will only be made in such cases where the daycare is unable to provide a substitute where a food allergy or sensitivity is present. At these times, parents are asked to only provide the portion of the lunch that their child is unable to eat. Prior to bringing in any food (snack and/or lunch) into the day care, the Director's approval must be given, and nutritional guidelines (listed below) need to be followed.

Nutritional Guidelines:

1. The alternate lunch item must meet the Health Canada's Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide requirements.
2. A list of food allergies is posted in classrooms. Parents required to bring in a food alternative will be made aware of the allergies present in the day care and ensure they do not include any of these foods.
3. The day care will provide milk or water at the child's request.

Ways to ensure Your Child Makes Good Choices and Eats Well:

1. Eat more vegetables, fruit, *whole grain* products, lower-fat milk products, fish, lean meat and alternatives such as beans, lentils and tofu.
2. Eat fewer processed and packaged foods and limit fast foods and fried foods.
3. Read and understand nutrition labels.
4. Cook, bake and prepare foods with healthier types of fat.
5. For more information and to help you make the best choices for your family, visit www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide

The staff will be vigilant in monitoring the food alternatives coming into the centre and take appropriate action when concerns regarding the nutritional value of a food/snack is in question.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES:

Children have the right to quality care that is safe, healthy and provides learning opportunities to promote their growth and development. Our strategies are based on a child's age and level of development and encourage self-regulation. Our goal is to help the children in our care achieve a sense of self-discipline and inner control by talking about inappropriate behavior and understanding the consequences of their actions. The role of the teacher is to support a child's sense of self-worth while providing opportunities for the child to learn appropriate ways to interact with others. We're hoping that the children in our care will grow to have a greater understanding of concepts such as health, safety, and respect for others and property.

When situations arise, we encourage children to verbalize their feelings and to listen to the other views involved. The teacher then helps the child(ren) find a solution to their problem through sharing, taking turns, redirection or alternatives to the undesired behaviour. In ongoing situations, removal from play/activity (maximum 5 minutes) may be used to allow the child to think about their actions. We hope to teach children positive ways of solving problems and the ability to understand the logical consequences of their behaviour.

All children are addressed and approached in a positive way and at their appropriate age level. We try and prevent and/or anticipate problems, conflicts and accidents and work together to create a happy and safe environment. Please realize, though, that accidents and injuries sometimes do occur since children will be children and not all situations are avoidable.

PRINCIPLES OF CREATIVE DISCIPLINE:

- A teacher's job is not to control the child, but to teach the child creative ways of controlling themselves (self-regulation).
- A child misbehaves when they don't feel good about themselves. We try and identify the cause of the child's unhappiness and help them feel more positive.
- Proper planning can circumvent behaviour problems. We set up or plan interesting child-oriented areas in the centre. Children are given choices of activities previously planned by the teachers.
- If we (teacher and/or parents) change our actions or reactions, the child may change theirs.
- Loving children is not enough. We need to provide opportunities for them to feel worthwhile and useful.
- We must be kind but firm. The children count on us to maintain order, but it needs to be a reasonable kind of order. They need to be given responsibility to become responsible - i.e. tidying up, teacher's helper...
- Timing is important in helping children learn. Discussing behaviour when we (children or ourselves) are upset is usually not productive.

When using creative ways to deal with behaviours, teachers point out the inappropriate action rather than making the child feel that they have been "bad." e.g. "Jill, I do not like the way you are playing with Jack. It is not nice to grab toys from our friends. Can you tell/show me a better way to play?"

PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES (PROHIBITED FORMS OF BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT)

FORBIDDEN and/or UNACCEPTABLE STAFF BEHAVIOURS ARE...

- Corporal punishment...hitting (directly or with an object) or spanking the child;
- Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a highchair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing 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 for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child to an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of emergency management policies and procedures;
- Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine their self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
- Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
- Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

The centre staff is guided by our **Behaviour Management Policy and Guidelines**. Each member of staff is required to review and sign it each year. A Behaviour Management Evaluation is completed on each member of our staff three times a year. A complete copy of the Behaviour Management Policy is available on our website (www.harmonychildcarecentre.ca) and in our Parent Handbook binder in the main entrance of the day care.

GUIDELINES FOR DE-ESCALATING VOLATILE SITUATIONS:

Harmony's Behaviour Management Guidelines for staff include strategies in dealing with difficult situations and/or challenging behaviours in children. These guidelines are reviewed annually with staff and behaviour management monitoring is completed three times a year.

Harmony provides care to all children and children come to our centre with varying needs, characters and personalities. As a result, incidences of inappropriate behaviour may occur at the day care. It should be recognized that in extreme situations (wherein a child is endangering his/herself or others) staff might find themselves having to respond to a crisis situation using physical guidance as

a method to defuse and/or de-escalate a volatile situation. Guidance (moving the child to a safer, quieter environment; moving other children into another area away from danger; giving the child space and time needed to calm down) will only be used to guarantee the safety of all involved and in a manner not intended to harm the child in question.

As of May 2004, all staff must be instructed on “Guidelines for De-Escalating Volatile Situations in a Child Care Setting”. These guidelines will become part of our current Behaviour Management Guidelines, which are reviewed annually by all staff.

The guidelines include:

Examples of Dangerous Behaviours and/or Situations

- punching, kicking, biting, hitting, throwing toys, etc.

Types of Physical Guidance in Situations of Imminent Danger

- gently guiding them away, picking a child up (Pre-S) to remove them from the classroom or the area of conflict / volatile situation

Procedures for Dealing with these Types of Behaviours

- removing the child from the room, having two teachers present, etc.

Children who have Witnessed Disruptive Situations – how to support them?

- explain in a positive and supportive manner during circle/group time the feelings involved and positive/appropriate ways to express them

Documenting the Incident – an Incident Report will be filled out by the staff who physically guided the child away from the volatile situation (if it is considered a Serious Occurrence, the Director or senior staff on duty will report through CCLS, Ministry of Education). Harmony’s District Consultant – Toronto Children’s Services should also be made aware of any Serious Occurrence.

The Child’s Parent(s)

- a meeting with parents will be set up where we determine strategies, support needs

A complete copy of the guidelines is available, upon request, from the centre supervisor.

DUTY TO REPORT

Responsibility to report a child in need of protection: CFSA s.72(1)

If a person has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is or may be in need of protection, the person must promptly report the suspicion and the information upon which it is based to a children’s aid society and/or a family and children’s services organization.

Ontario’s Child and Family Services Act (CFSA) defines the term “child in need of protection” and sets out what must be reported to a children’s aid society. This includes physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect.

The CFSA recognizes that persons working closely with children have a special awareness of the signs of child abuse and neglect, and a particular responsibility to report their suspicions, and so makes it an offence to fail to report. Any professional or official who fails to report a suspicion obtained in the course of his or her duties is liable to a fine of up to \$1,000.

PLEASE NOTE: This Act requires **any person** with a suspicion of child abuse to immediately report it to the Children's Aid Society and then to the centre's City of Toronto Childcare Representative and Ministry of Education Licensing Specialist / Program Advisor. Although recommended, staff do not need to discuss the suspicion with the Director prior to reporting.

PARENT ISSUES AND CONCERNS – POLICY AND PROCEDURES:

PURPOSE

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

DEFINITIONS

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

Staff: Individual employed by the licensee (e.g. program room staff) – RECE'S, ECA'S and Assistants

POLICY – GENERAL

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our childcare centre and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing within 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 Harmony Childcare Centre and will be addressed accordingly. 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 but preferably followed up by email. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally and followed up by email confirmation. 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 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 Director, Staff Supervisor, licensee and/or Board of Director.

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:
Program Room Related EG: schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.	Raise the issue or concern to - the classroom staff directly OR - the supervisor or licensee.	- Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised OR - arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within 3 business days.

College of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario College of Teachers, College of Social Workers etc.) where appropriate.

For Contact Information, please check full policy on our website www.harmonychildcarecentre.ca

For Regulatory Requirements: Please see full policy on our website www.harmonychildcarecentre.ca

INTENT

This provision is intended to provide licensees and parents with a clear and transparent procedure to follow when a parent has brought forward an issue or concern they wish to have addressed by the licensee.

POLICY FOR THE SUPERVISION OF VOLUNTEERS AND PLACEMENT STUDENTS:

Harmony Childcare Centre will ensure that no child will be supervised by a person under the age of 18. Also, *all* volunteers and/or placement students under and/or above this age will not have direct unsupervised access to children. Also, volunteers and students are not employees of the childcare centre and therefore not counted in the staffing ratios. Volunteers and students are also required to provide a Criminal Reference Check under the “volunteer” category.

Only employees, who have met all employment requirements, will have direct unsupervised access to children.

PARENT COMMUNICATION AND INVOLVEMENT:

The essence of a good relationship between a family and the daycare is ongoing communication. It is only by working together that we can provide the best possible care and environment for your child(ren).

Upon registration, parents provide the Centre with information that allows the staff to get to know the child – background, personality, habits, interests, likes and dislikes and health conditions. Although a child may feel a little anxious when he/she first joins the centre, the staff and parents will work together to help the child make a successful transition.

The staff are available for discussion about your child. More formal interviews can be arranged on request. Parents are encouraged to participate in the program and are invited to join in some of the activities planned. Our Centre appreciates any contribution to program ideas and materials or parent participation in special program events.

A newsletter and / or calendar is prepared once a month that contains information about children’s activities, notice of upcoming events in the childcare centre, the community and other information related to child development. Our website is also available for quick access to this information.

It is essential that staff be able to locate parents should an emergency or illness arise during the day. An alternate telephone number should be recorded in case parents are not available at their usual number.

PLEASE NOTE: Immediately inform the daycare of any changes to your address, home or work numbers or other emergency information.

Parents should discuss with us any events that occur in the home that may affect the child at daycare – a death in the family, the impending birth of a child, a marital separation, an extremely frightening experience, a remarkable achievement, etc.

At no time in a child's life is a close relationship between home and childcare / school more important than during these early years. We hope that our Centre will become an integral part of each child's extended family.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS (PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE):

Harmony has a voluntary Board of Directors who support the Director and Staff in the operation of the childcare centre. They also ensure the proper delivery of services and information to parents and community members regarding issues of general interest. The Board helps establish policies and procedures and works along with the Director in managing and maintaining quality service and fiscal responsibility.

Throughout the year, several board meetings are held to discuss areas of importance and significance. Discussions include financial management of the childcare centre, program-planning/ideas, program improvements, staffing, professional development, topics for guest speakers/workshops, issues that are identified by parents, social events for children and parents, sharing family customs, and planning for fundraising events.

You are invited to become a member of this amazing group of individuals that meet throughout the year. This is a great way to meet other parents and staff who are involved at the centre. Please feel free to ask the Director for more information and for the dates and times of upcoming meetings.

SPECIAL EVENTS / EXCURSIONS:

Trips may be organized during the March Break or Summer to visit various places of interest. A notice will be posted informing parents of the destination, time, date and cost (if any) of the excursion. Permission forms that require signed permission for your child to attend trips/excursions will be required – verbal permission will not be accepted. On excursions where parents accompany the daycare, they are required to pay for their own transportation and any ticket/entrance fee costs. Also, a “Volunteer Policy for Trips and Outings” must be reviewed and signed by all parents/guardians attending daycare outings.

The summer program tries to make full use of summer events going on in the community as well as in the general Toronto area. We do our best to keep the costs low and the excursions interesting, varied and suitable for the children.

PLEASE NOTE: Since our summers are extremely busy, all teachers are needed to accompany the children on excursions to guarantee safety. If a substantial number of parents do not want their children to participate in an excursion, we will: 1. Reconsider the excursion / trip or 2. Arrange for a teacher to remain behind. Otherwise, parents who do not wish for their child to participate in an excursion will need to make alternate arrangements for the care of their child for that day. Childcare fees are still payable if *you* decide not to have your child participate/attend.

Harmony Childcare Centre schedules regular visits to the Dufferin and St. Clair Public Library. During these visits, the library staff provides an instructional program, and the children are invited to look at books. The Day Care staff chooses books to take out that may correspond to the focus or learning units for the upcoming weeks. Story Books are a great way to communicate with children. If there is a certain topic you would like for us to discuss in a group setting, such as during our story time, please let us know, i.e. sharing, safety, a new baby in the family, the dark, a death in the family, etc.

All of the above special events are subject to cancellation due to bad weather.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the above Policies and Procedures please discuss them with the Director or e-mail us at info@harmonycc.ca

THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAY

The curriculum in many centres is characterized by emphasis on individual and small group learning experiences utilizing the child's natural means of learning through play. Many are committed to a play-based program because "Play is not the mere passing of time, play is life... it combines action and thought, it gives satisfaction and a feeling of achievement. Play touches all aspects of life..."

01. Play is a vehicle for learning.
02. Play provides an imaginary world a child can master.
03. Play provides a base for language development.
04. Play offers opportunities for mastery of the physical self.
05. Play is a voluntary activity that offers freedom of action.
06. Play has the power to build interpersonal relations.
07. Play allows for decisions and choices and refines a child's judgment.
08. Play has an element of adventure and furthers interest and concentration.
09. Play allows for investigation of the material world.
10. Play is a way of learning adult roles.
11. Play is vitalizing and a dynamic way of learning.

The process of learning should be fun for it is the greatest game in life.

PARENT / GUARDIAN AGREEMENT

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING AGREEMENT VERY CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING:

The conditions of this Agreement provide protection for our parents /guardians, children, staff and Harmony Childcare Centre as a non-profit organization. In order to ensure that we can provide the services that your children are entitled to, it is essential that the financial status of the Centre be stable. The Centre's salaries and overhead expenses cannot be reduced because of "Absentee Losses" in income. In essence, this Agreement is a parental guarantee to the Centre that you will financially support the enrollment space guaranteed for your child. By signing this Agreement, parents / guardians are also acknowledging and agreeing to abide by all the Policies, Procedures and Guidelines outlined in the Parent Handbook.

AGREEMENT TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Registration Deposit:

The Parent/Guardian agrees to pay, upon acceptance of a childcare spot, the first month's fees. This fee is payable within a week that the spot has been confirmed and accepted and is non-refundable. It will be applied to fees when the child starts care.

Fees:

The Parent/Guardian agrees to pay fees as per the Fee Schedules and guidelines posted online. The Parent/Guardian understands that there are no deductions for absence, including Government Holidays. Late submission of fees results in a \$10.00 per week per child late charge.

Withdrawal:

The Parent/Guardian agrees to provide, in writing, a two-week notice of withdrawal and understands that failure to do so will result in having to pay the bi-weekly amount of fees after withdrawal without proper notification.

Receipts:

The Day Care agrees to provide, at the end of each calendar year (end of February of the following year), an official receipt for the total amount of fees paid during that year.

Absence:

The Parent/Guardian agrees to pay **full fees** if the child is absent and / or is on vacation.

Illness:

The Parent/Guardian and Harmony agree that if, in the opinion of the staff, the child has a fever or communicable disease the child will not be accepted into the Centre that day or the next. This policy helps to control the spread of childhood illnesses to your child. The Parent/Guardian also agrees to keep the child at home for 24 hours after their temperature returns to normal. A 24-hour cycle of prescribed medication/ antibiotics must be completed before a child can return to day care.

Vacation:

Parent/Guardian understand that there are 2 mandatory vacation weeks given when no fees apply. These weeks are the second week of the 2 weeks break at Christmas and the first week of July (Canada Day week- unless school is still in session- then it's the following week). Childcare fees are due for any additional vacation weeks or time taken.

Government Holidays:

The Parent/Guardian agrees to pay for all Government Holidays for which the Centre is closed. Days cannot be switched to avoid or make up for these days.

Medication:

Both Parent/Guardian and Day Care agree that medication will be given only in accordance with the Day Care Medication Policy.

Early Drop-Off or Late Pick-Up Charges:

The Parent/Guardian agree that if a child remains in the Centre before or past the scheduled times of opening/closing, or beyond the time of the program the child is registered in, the Parent/Guardian will pay, at the time of pick-up, extended care charges at the rate of \$5.00 / minute.

Return Cheque Charges:

The Parent/Guardian agrees to pay for any additional service or bank charges incurred on all cheques returned NSF. If more than three cheques are returned NSF the Parent agrees to pay fees in cash or by certified cheque. E-transfers are now accepted using info@harmonycc.ca

This Agreement is subject to change if deemed necessary and advisable for the best interest of the Centre, with two weeks' notice of change given to parents. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Director.

DATED: Month_____ Day_____ Year_____

I hereby acknowledge receipt of a copy of the Agreement and consent to the terms and conditions of the Policies and Procedures herein.

YOUR CHILD/REN'S NAME (please print): _____

PARENT SIGNATURE: _____

HARMONY COMMUNITY SCHOOL CENTRE NOVEMBER 2024