

# Parent Handbook



Dear Parent(s),

This information package has been prepared to introduce you to our centre. This handbook along with our registration package encompasses our philosophy, policies and procedures. Please read it carefully and keep it for reference.

## BACKGROUND AND PHILOSOPHY

We offer childcare for children in the infant-toddler (0-36 months) and 3-5 age groups. We work in concert with families and the local community to develop children who are caring, capable and enthusiastic about the world around them. We embrace a play-based approach where children learn through play. Our program incorporates child-initiated free choice and teacher-initiated activities.

We incorporate equipment and toys into our program that provide texture, sound and offer a range of different sensory experiences; nurturing educators support the child while they are exploring, whether it's through finger painting, playing with blocks, listening to songs or engaging in story-time. We help children become comfortable and secure in a new group setting and independent of primary family members. As infant development emerges, additional learning outcomes such as self-feeding skills, labeling body parts and enhanced coordination are incorporated through play.

Transitioning from infants to toddlers, self-directed play becomes an important theme in this program with focus on language development, socialization, self-help and fine motor skills. Language development is promoted in a variety of ways such as labeling the surrounding environment, repetition of emerging vocabulary, in addition to other personalized goals; all of which contributes to toddlers becoming confident learners.

## STAFF PROFILE

For our infant-toddler program (0-36 months), our child to staff ratio is 4:1. All staff are trained and certified Early Childhood Educators (ECE) and in many instances have Infant/Toddler (IT) specialization (in addition to being ECE). For the Early Learners program (3-5 years old), we also maintain a smaller ratio for this age group (our child to staff ratio is 5:1).

All educators caring for children have completed basic courses in CPR and First Aid and have undergone criminal record checks and keep up with best practices through workshops and conferences.

## SETTLING YOUR CHILD INTO CARE:

Introduction into long daycare hours can be difficult for children and parents. Children's welfare and happiness are a priority for staff when welcoming new children to the centre and assisting families in settling into the centre environment. It is recognized that family needs vary in the orientation process and we will strive to meet individual needs as best as possible.

If it's the first-time attending our program, we follow a 3-day integration schedule (i.e. first 3 days of attendance) before commencing care full-time:

1st day = 1.5 hours

2nd day = 3 hours

3rd day = 5 hours

However, please note that this is flexible, and you can adjust it accordingly with staff at the centre. Moreover, if you wish to stagger the integration process over a longer period - you are welcome to do so and can coordinate with staff working on the floor (i.e. shorter visits spread over more days).

Nap times can be tricky and may differ from the schedule posted at the centre...especially younger children who may be taking two naps during the day at home. We take more of a gradual adaptive process by following the child's nap routine at home (such as two naps) initially (as best possible) and over time adjusting to our routine in the program.

The following outlines some helpful hints for parents on settling their child into care:

- Provide a favorite toy, blanket or comforter to support your child when they are separating from you. This can help your child feel more secure.
- If your child is unsettled, short visits will help your child gain trust with an unfamiliar environment.
- Interactions between educators and parents or educators and other children will serve as positive role models and provide reassuring experience for your child. This experience will help to establish trust in an unfamiliar setting.
- Try to talk/remind at home to your child about the centre. Mention the names of the staff and other children. Talk about the things the child will be able to do at daycare that are fun and enjoyable.
- Talk to the staff about your child, for example, what they like to do, foods they like and dislike and ways of settling them to sleep. This helps staff to get to know your child.

- When leaving your child it is best to make sure you say goodbye and then leave. Hesitating and not going after you have said your goodbyes, especially if a child is upset, only create confusion. Reassure your child that everything is alright and you will return later, this can help put them at ease.
- It is sometimes helpful to establish a routine when leaving. For example, giving your child a cuddle and handing them to a staff member.
- We recommend having a short drop-off time (staying 5-10 minutes) and returning back earlier if possible. At first, some children protest strongly while others may take a day or two to realize that you are leaving them and begin to protest after several days. Children soon learn that you do return and in the meantime, they are well cared for.
- If a child does become very upset or is unable to settle in, staff will reach out to parents and contact them for earlier pick-up.

#### **DAILY SCHEDULE (TENTATIVE - MAY VARY BETWEEN PROGRAMS]**

Please ask the staff of your classroom for their daily schedule – it may differ between programs & locations.

#### **SCHEDULE CHANGES & DROP-IN**

We require 60-day notice prior to modification or termination of service. Additionally, services can only be modified/cancelled at the end of the monthly billing cycle. For example, if 60-day notice is provided on May 1 (or prior), then full payment must be made for May and June [end of monthly cycle]. However, if notice is given after May 1, end of the billing cycle month would be end of July and thus payment for May, June and July is required).

If you are looking to reduce the number of days, we need 60-day notice for reduction in days (this does not apply if you are looking to adding additional days). For all schedule change requests (adding, reducing or termination), please contact the program coordinator ([program@littlemunchkindaycare.ca](mailto:program@littlemunchkindaycare.ca)).

We cannot swap days/make up days outside of your regular schedule; for example, if you are scheduled to attend Mon & Wed and did not attend one of the scheduled days (due to sickness, stat holidays, etc.), we cannot make that up by attending an additional day in the following weeks. Moreover, we cannot do one-time swaps (for example,



switching Mon & Wed to Mon & Thurs for that particular week). You can, however, choose to do a drop-in if you need additional days (in this example, that would be Thursday) if we have availability (see details below).

If you need an additional day (temporary/one-time) outside your regular schedule, we do allow for drop-in - we cannot guarantee spot availability, but you can check with your corresponding centre staff (please put the request in as early as possible, sometimes staff can let you know in advance and at other times, we can only confirm in the morning on the day of attendance).

Our drop-in charge is \$95/day (credit card payment only) and you can make the payment by scanning the QR code posted near the entrance door using your smartphone camera (ask staff for details). Please remember to show proof of payment (receipt/confirmation) to the staff on the floor to verify that the payment has gone through. Payments for drop-in must be made on the day of attendance.

We also offer evening and weekend programs.

## ARRIVAL

We will not be able to accept any child prior to 07:45 am. If your child will not be able attending (due to sickness, vacation, etc.) - please let us know before 8:45 am (or earlier if possible) via email to your floor manager (you will find the email contact information for your program on the registration form that you will complete) as well as program coordinator ([program@littlemunchkindaycare.ca](mailto:program@littlemunchkindaycare.ca)).

## DEPARTURE

Daycare closing time is 5:30 pm. For late pick-up, there will be a charge of \$15.00 for every 15 minutes...children must be picked up with-in 30 minutes after closure (i.e. 6 pm). Late charges can be paid directly to the staff member who is closing (cash only). All children should be at the centre no later than 9:30 am as it affects our daily schedule and activities. If you are arriving late, please inform the staff of your location (you will find the email contact information on the registration form that you will complete). If you require alternative arrangement (e.g. can only drop-off after 9:30 am), please contact the program coordinator ([program@littlemunchkindaycare.ca](mailto:program@littlemunchkindaycare.ca)).

## REPORTABLE INCIDENTS

The daycare will notify child care licensing within 24 hours after a child is seriously injured while under-care or if the child has a reportable communicable disease. In case of injury, requiring medical treatment, an incident report will be completed and submitted to the local health unit within 24 hours. All expenses relating to the injured child (ambulatory transport, etc.) will be the sole responsibility of the parents.

## SAFETY & EMERGENCY POLICY

Safety is a top priority. We conduct fire & earthquake drills monthly; emergency procedures and phone numbers are posted in the centre. The daycare is equipped with first aid kits and fire extinguishers. In case of emergency, parents or emergency contact person will be notified to pick up the child.

Alternative meeting location during extenuating circumstances (unsafe to remain at facility) is posted in the centre – please ask staff for details.

## CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT

Any suspected child abuse will be reported to Ministry for Children and Family Development

## SMOKING

No person is allowed to smoke within the premises of daycare.

## OUTDOOR PLAY

We do at least 60 minutes of outdoor play daily (rain or shine unless there is weather advisory due to extreme conditions) in our designated outdoor play area. We currently do not do field trips outside of our centre grounds due to the higher risk associated.