



# **THE LITTLE SCHOOL**

Centre for Integral Development

**PARENT INFORMATION AND POLICIES HANDBOOK**



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## The Little School

Our story began in 1985 when Elsa Valdes and Enrique Roman founded The Little School, Centre for Integral Child Development. The strong emphasis on the educational contents of its program became the centre's trademark from the beginning.

The Little School became a non-profit, charitable organization in 1989, receiving funding from the City of Ottawa. It is licenced under the regulation of the Ministry of Education, and it operates under the direction of an elected volunteer Board of Directors, comprised of parents of children attending the daycare and community members.

This handbook is provided to all current families and any parent considering enrolment. It is also available on our website. Any revisions to the handbook will be sent to families electronically, with hard copies available on request.

## Licensing: Standards, Legislation and Inspections

In Ontario, anyone who cares for six or more unrelated children under the age of 10 must be licensed by the Ministry of Education. This includes centre-based child care.

Licensed childcare programs must meet and maintain specific provincial standards set out in the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA). These standards provide for the children's health, safety and developmental needs.

At least once a year, staff of the Ministry of Education make unannounced inspections of all licensed childcare programs to:

- make sure that provincial standards are being met
- issue and renew licenses
- investigate complaints
- monitor operators who are having difficulty meeting licensing standards.

Licensing reports for all home-based and centre-based licensed child care programs are available on the [licensed child care finder](#).

Please refer to the Ministry of Education website for detailed licensing information:  
<https://www.ontario.ca/page/operating-licensed-child-care-program#section-0>

## Philosophy

*"The child learns through play, and through playing, the child learns that learning is fun."*

The main objectives of the Little School are:

- To achieve balanced physical, social, intellectual and emotional development of the child
- To help the child to know their capabilities for optimum learning and self-development
- To help the child develop all their skills and abilities in a balanced and harmonious manner
- To make learning fun and foster a love for learning that will last a lifetime

## Program Statement

From our earliest days, play is how we relate to the world and each other. When children have plenty of opportunities to learn playfully, they do what they do best: pursue their natural curiosity. And, as they do, they build skills and aptitudes they'll keep for life. The Little School offers the child an environment conducive to learning.

The Little School recognizes that every child is unique, offers individualized attention to every child, and follows a program designed to help the children develop various skills. Although the program is clearly structured and carefully followed by the teachers, it is implemented in a way that allows each child to learn at their own pace.

The program has monthly objectives based on the children's interests, as observed by the educators, divided into weekly sub-objectives. These are achieved in two ways: free play and group activities. The daily materials, games and play opportunities are related to the children's interests. Each child can choose what to do, when, where, and how during free play periods.

In alignment with the Minister of Education's Policy Statement on Programming and Pedagogy, our Programs are guided by "How Does Learning Happens," Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years, and "Early Learning for Every Child Today: A Framework for Ontario Early Childhood Settings (ELECT).

**"How Does Learning Happen"** is based on four essential foundations:

- **Belonging:** a sense of connectedness to others, an individual's experiences of being valued, forming relationships with others and making contributions as part of a group, a community, or the natural world.

- **Well-being:** the importance of physical and mental health and wellness incorporating capacities such as self-care, sense of self, and self-regulation.
- **Engagement:** which suggests a state of being involved and focused. When children can explore the world around them with their natural curiosity and exuberance, they are fully engaged. Through this type of play and inquiry, they develop skills such as problem-solving, creative thinking and innovating, which are essential for learning and success in school and beyond.
- **Expression or communication (to be heard and to listen):** takes many different forms. With their bodies, words, and use of materials, children develop capacities for increasingly complex communication. Opportunities to explore materials support creativity, problem-solving, and mathematical behaviours. Language-rich environments support growing communication skills which are the foundation for literacy.

Program Goals	Approaches
To promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health and safety workplace inspections are part of our daily and monthly routine.</li> <li>• Our menu meets the expectations set out in the Canada Food Guide. Our cook takes advantage of the change in seasons to create seasonally inspired menus.</li> <li>• Individual Action Plans are developed for children with life-threatening food allergies in partnership with the child's parent/guardian.</li> <li>• Food, allergies and medical concerns posters are visible for all staff, students, and volunteers to review and follow.</li> </ul>
To support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, childcare providers and staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff consistently model positive social interactions in an empathetic and supportive manner. The program's early childhood educators are knowledgeable in early childhood development and best practices.</li> </ul>

<p>To encourage the children to interact and communicate positively and support their self-regulating ability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The educators recognize that children use their bodies, words, senses, and environment to develop capacities for increasingly complex communication. Freedom to express emotions in a safe and secure environment allows children to practice appropriate responses to their emotions. As the children learn about themselves and the world around them, the educators model and support the evolving communication development through self-regulation and collaborative problem-solving activities.</li> </ul>
<p>To foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The educators facilitate the children's play and skill-building by setting up a developmentally appropriate environment based on their current interests, their families, and the educators. Through continual observation of the children interacting within the environment and ongoing reflective practices, the educators make intentional changes to the environment, promoting never-ending experiences of exploration, inquiry, skill development and learning through play.</li> </ul>
<p>To incorporate indoor and outdoor play, active play, rest and quiet time into the day, and consider the individual needs of the children receiving child care.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The daily schedules offer a balance of active and quiet play opportunities for both indoor and outdoor environments.</li> <li>• The children have a daily rest period, allowing for a nap or quiet individual downtime.</li> <li>• The educators set up the environment with various play areas (e.g. active/quiet), and the children are encouraged to choose areas that best fit their feelings.</li> </ul>
<p>To document and review the impact of the approaches set out in the program goals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TLS will support all employees, students, and volunteers with implementing this statement through ongoing discussion and reflection during their careers or placement. The Program Statement will be reviewed annually and as changes arise.</li> </ul>



<p>To foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TLS believes that each family is unique, and establishing solid partnerships with them enhances our ability to meet the needs of the children in our care. Staff welcome families into our environments and value their perspectives. Communication is an integral part of each day. Sharing information through posted program plans, message boards, learning stories, email, and daily conversations support this essential partnership between families and the staff.</li> </ul>
<p>To plan and create learning environments and experiences to support each child's learning and development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The educators develop play-based program plans initiated from anecdotal and formal observations of the children. The environment is set up to be supportive and</li> <li>• responsive to each child's journey along the social, emotional, cognitive, and physical developmental continuum.</li> </ul>
<p>To provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing communication with the children in our care allows the educator to get a true sense of what they would like to do with their time in the program. By asking the children what toys/equipment/materials they would like access to, the educators can gather those items and support the play that evolves from them.</li> <li>• Observation is crucial tool educators use to help identify what emerging interests could be imminent for an exploring and inquiring Child. The educators have access to extensive resources which allow for 'at moment' and 'responsive' program implementation.</li> </ul>
<p>To involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff actively seeks out and supports collaboration with community partners to benefit all children, families, and team members. Some of our partners include Farley Mowat Public School and OCDSB staff, Children's Integration Support Services, Algonquin College, The City of Ottawa, Service Coordination, and The Children's Aid Society.</li> </ul>

<p>To support staff or others who interact with the children at TLS concerning continuous professional learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuous professional learning is integral to our commitment to children and families. We seek out, encourage and support all of our staff to engage in opportunities as they arise.</li> </ul>
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## Hours and Days of Service

The Little School is open year-round from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm, Monday to Friday, except for the following days:

<b>Month</b>	<b>Statutory Holidays</b>
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Year's Day</li> </ul>
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family Day</li> </ul>
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good Friday</li> <li>• Easter Monday</li> </ul>
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Victoria Day</li> </ul>
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canada Day</li> </ul>
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civic Holiday</li> </ul>
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Labour Day</li> <li>• National Day of Truth and Reconciliation*</li> </ul>
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remembrance Day*</li> </ul>
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thanksgiving</li> </ul>
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Christmas Day</li> <li>• Boxing Day</li> </ul>

\*The Little School will be open on the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation and Remembrance Day and will regard those days during the Christmas Holidays closure from Christmas to New Year.

When Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve fall on a working day, TLS closes at 1:00 pm.

TLS will also close on the following days in 2023 for the Professional Development of our staff:

<b>Month</b>	<b>Professional Development Days</b>
March	• 17th
June	• 2nd
September	• 1st
November	• 24th

## Waitlist Policy

The Little School's enrollment process works with the City of Ottawa Child Care Registry and Waitlist (CCRAW). Families looking to register a child at TLS must register on the CCRAW.

Some priorities that we consider when inviting new families to join us are the following:

- Meet the needs of the children currently enrolled;
- Children of The Little School Staff;
- Siblings of children currently enrolled.



Children registered on CCRAW will be offered a space based on the order of application date wherever possible. The Little School must consider other enrolment factors, including the child's needs, program capacity, and age. When a spot becomes available in a program, we will contact the parents for a meeting to discuss the child's needs and what the program can offer. If both parties consider it a good fit, we will proceed with the registration process, which will be online.

## Registration

Wherever possible, we ask parents to complete all forms required by the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA) (included in your registration package) four weeks before the child's first day in the program. These forms will be kept in the child's file. The parents must keep the program informed of any changes to phone numbers, addresses, emergency contacts, immunizations, and the child's state of health.

## Integration into the Program

Integration into the Program will be at a minimum of three days and on an individual basis as determined by the Supervisor in consultation with Parents. It may be extended over a period of up to a maximum of 5 days.

## Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care System

The Little School has enrolled in the CanadaWide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) System. The Federal government committed to investing in a national childcare system with all provinces and territories and Indigenous organizations.

Funding under the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (CWELCC) System will be used to build and leverage the success of Ontario's existing early learning and child care system by increasing quality, accessibility, affordability and inclusivity in early learning and child care.

Since we became part of the CWELCC System, our fees have been reduced by 25% and will continue to reduce until getting to \$10.00 per day. We will send updates to Parents/Guardians via HiMama or email whenever the government authorizes reductions to fees or any changes that would affect you and your family in any way.

Our current fees, effective January 1, 2023, are the following:

<b>Program</b>	<b>Monthly Fee</b>
Infants	\$873.22
Jr. Toddlers	\$702.70
Toddlers	\$702.70
Preschoolers	\$601.47
Jr. Kindergarten	\$601.47
Sr. Kindergarten	\$601.47

## Fee Payment Policy

This section is only relevant for full-fee families. If your child is enrolled under a subsidy from the City of Ottawa, you need to contact them directly if you have any payment questions.

### **Program Fees:**

- The Parents/Guardians will be charged on the first day of the child's attendance and on the first day of each month after that.
- Full charges will be levied regardless of absence, including holidays or illness.
- There is no discount for siblings enrolled in other programs at Mothercraft Ottawa.
- Fees are subject to change with a minimum of two (2) months' notice

### **Accounts:**

- An account will be established for each family, as per our Accounts Receivable Policy.
- Receipts for income tax purposes will be issued at year-end.

### **Payments:**

- Automatic Monthly Bank Withdrawal is the only accepted payment method. Upon your child's registration to the centre, you will receive a Direct Withdrawal Consent Form, which authorizes The Little School to charge your account with the monthly fees. Payments are typically processed on the 1st day of the month.

### **Late, Non-Payments:**

- The Little School reserves the right to discontinue child care when an account is 90 days overdue. However, in particular circumstances, TLS may, in its absolute discretion, agree to make alternative payment arrangements on a case-by-case basis. However, TLS shall be under no obligation to do so.

## Withdrawal and Discharge

Four (4) weeks (twenty (20) business days) of written notice must be provided to The Little School before a Child is withdrawn from the program. If such notice period is not provided, the parent agrees to provide The Little School with payment in place of notice for this same period. The parent would forfeit any paid time and pay the remaining balance equal to four weeks.

The Little School reserves the right to discharge a child if:

- In the absolute discretion of the Supervisor, the child is not adjusting to the setting after a reasonable period;
- After exhausting all teaching resources at The Little School's disposal, The Little School is unable to address the needs of the child;
- The child continues to display behaviour which endangers the health, safety and security of other children or staff; or
- The policies, as outlined in the Contract and Parent Handbook, are not being followed.

## Late Pick Up

Our educators are counting on you to pick up your child (ren) on time, as they also have personal and family obligations to meet. We understand that weather and traffic delays happen; however, we appreciate you calling the program to let them know.

Families who pick up children past the centre's closing hours (6:00 pm) will be subject to a \$10.00 late fee every fifteen minutes. Staff will note the pick-up time, and you will be charged. An

invoice will be provided for late fees, and payment is required within five working days. Habitual late pick-up may result in your child being asked to leave the program.

- Before commencing care, the Parents/Guardians must provide The Little School with the names and telephone numbers of at least two emergency contacts who may be called upon to pick up the child if the parent is unable to pick up the child at the scheduled pick-up time;
- The Parents/Guardians must advise the Supervisor or Assistant Supervisor when such telephone numbers or emergency contacts change. The Little School will ask parents to update and verify the contact information at least once a year and every time a child moves to a new program.

Parents are expected to be ready to leave the Child Care Centre building with their child (ren) no later than the end of scheduled hours of operation.

The first and second times a Parent is late, the educator in the program will speak with the parent, clarify the reason for the lateness and review the policy with the parent. The parent will sign a Late Parent Record form to acknowledge the situation. The educator will notify the Supervisor.

If the parent is late a third time, the educator will again speak to the parent. The parent will sign a form to acknowledge the situation. The Manager will contact the parent by phone/or in writing to address the difficulties and arrive at a solution that may result in service termination.

## No Show

A Parent is considered a no-show when they do not appear on-site at The Little School thirty (30) minutes after their scheduled pick-up time without contact with family or any of the emergency



contact people. In the event of a no-show, the Educator and child(ren) will remain on the premises and contact the Office Staff on shift. If this is necessary, management will make alternative arrangements for the child.

If we have not heard from the parent/guardian/emergency contact 1 ½ hours after closing or scheduled pick-up time, the CAS will be contacted, and the child will be released to their custody.

## Arrival and Departure

The safety and well-being of your child (ren) is our highest priority. We require that children be personally escorted to the program in the morning and picked up at the end of the day by the parent/guardian or designate.

Please ensure that you speak directly to the educator at arrival and departure, as the educator records the time before the parent leaves the program. Children are not permitted to leave the program unattended.

## Custodial Issues

In the case of separated parents, The Little School staff cannot deny access to either parent unless a copy of the legal custody documents is on file in the program, clearly stating the custody and access rights. If the parent who does not have legal access to the child at that time attempts to pick up the child, staff will contact the parent who does have access, to obtain approval to release the child.

## Reporting Child Abuse

From time to time, we are faced with some complicated situations in the Child Care Centre. We may see a mark on a child in an unusual place, witness what we deem may be an abusive situation or observe a type of behaviour or play that is not consistent with a child's normal range of experience. In these circumstances, we are legally bound to report these situations to the Children's Aid Society (CAS). We cannot judge or decide what child abuse is; we must leave that to a CAS worker. We are not allowed to contact parents first.

We must emphasize that in our experience at The Little School, we have rarely had reason to call CAS. When we have, the worker has always been a warm, caring person who deals with the child at their level. They are willing to spend time, give explanations and reassure the child, parents and teachers where appropriate. A paramount objective of Ontario's Child and Family Services Act "is to promote the best interest, protection and well-being of children."

We can assure you that the utmost confidentiality will be maintained by staff, and only those persons directly involved will know of the call to CAS. Once we have contacted CAS, the matter is closed from our end, and we are not privy to any further information from CAS unless it involves us directly. We hope you will understand our due diligence and legal responsibilities and that it will not impact our close, supportive relationship with all our parents.

## Guiding Children's Behaviour

The Little School staff, students, and volunteers encourage and support the development of positive social interactions, allowing children to develop self-regulation and problem-solving skills as they learn about themselves and the world around them. By establishing positive adult-child relationships, TLS staff guide a child's behaviour in a positive and supportive manner.

The Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, S.O. 2014, c. 11, Sched. 1 and specifically Regulation 137/15 indicate the following prohibited practices:

- corporal punishment of the child;
- physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other devices for discipline or instead of supervision, unless the physical restraint is to prevent children from hurting themselves or someone else and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
- locking the exits of the child care premises to confine the child, or confine the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of The Little School 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

## Immunization

The Ottawa Public Health Department encourages parents to update their children's immunization records online at [www.ParentinginOttawa.ca/Immunization](http://www.ParentinginOttawa.ca/Immunization)

We are required by the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA)* to have up-to-date immunization records on file for the children in our care. Parents must provide the childcare office with an up-to-date copy of the child's immunization record. The child will not be accepted into the program until this record is provided. Please notify the office of any new immunization your child may receive.

If you choose not to immunize your child, contact the Public Health Immunization Program at 613-580-6744, ext. 24108.

## Children's Health

When is a child too sick or contagious to attend The Little School? This question may present itself during your child's enrolment in the program. To protect the other children and the staff, your child cannot attend if they:

- a) Have a temperature of 38.4 degrees Centigrade (101 degrees Fahrenheit) or over. Children must be symptom-free for 24 hours before returning to the program.
- b) Have not been fever free for 24 hours. Children must be symptom-free and without fever-reducing medication for at least 24 hours before returning to the program.

- c) Have vomited at daycare or within the last 48 hours (vomiting is more severe than an infant's "spit up"). Children cannot return to daycare until they experience a full waking day after the last day with any episodes of vomiting. For example, your child vomited at 9:00 Monday morning. There are no further episodes of vomiting. Your child will need to stay away from daycare for all of Monday AND Tuesday (as the one full waking day after the last episode).
  
- d) Have diarrhea at daycare or within the last 48 hours (diarrhea is abnormally loose, watery bowel movements that are much more frequent than usual). Children will be sent home from the program upon the third incident of diarrhea during the day (if the centre is in Outbreak Mode or diarrhea can't be contained in the diaper, they will be sent home after the first incident). Children cannot return to daycare until they experience a full waking day after the last day with any episodes of diarrhea. For example, your child had a last bout of diarrhea on Sunday at 6:00 in the morning. Your child will only be able to return to daycare on Tuesday at the earliest, assuming there are no episodes of diarrhea on Monday (Monday would be the one full waking day).
  
- e) Have been on prescribed medication for less than 24 hours for a condition requiring exclusion from the program according to the City of Ottawa *Guidelines for Communicable Diseases and Other Childhood Health Issues for Schools and Child Care Centres (CCC)* <http://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/professionals-and-partners/cd-guidelines-ccc-schools.aspx>. Your child must be symptom-free and able to cope with all aspects of the program.
  
- f) Have a rash that has not been identified by the parent or physician or seems to be worsening.

- g) Have a severe cold with fever, sneezing and heavy nasal drainage.
- h) Seems sick without any apparent symptoms. In this case, the child may act and look different and be unusually tired, listless or irritable.

## Medication Policy

We have strict procedures concerning administering medication to children in the program. To ensure the health of your child, the steps listed below must be followed:

- a) Medications – prescription and over-the-counter must be in the original bottle and packaging. The child's name must be clearly labelled on the bottle and packaging.
- b) Medication will only be administered once the Parent or Guardian has completed a Medication Authorization Form. These forms must be filled out with specific instructions as to medication, administration time, dosage, etc. We are required to follow the guidelines on the medication packaging. We cannot administer medication under instructions such as "if you feel it is necessary." **EXCEPTIONS:** Medications to ease asthma and allergic reactions will be administered as necessary once the Parent or Guardian has outlined clearly the conditions requiring medication.
- c) Medication to control pain must be given at a specific time. If a low-grade fever persists for longer than 24 hours, your child will need to stay at home until fever-free (without using fever-reducing medications) or return to the program with a note from your doctor. At no time can a Child stay in the program with a fever of 101 degrees Fahrenheit (38.4 degrees Centigrade) or over.

- d) Medications will be stored in a locked container in the refrigerator or designated cupboard, as required. It is the parent's responsibility to take the medication home at night. Epi-pens and puffers will be kept at daycare.
- e) Do not leave Tylenol, decongestants, vitamins or prescription medication in your child's belongings.
- f) We cannot keep Tylenol on the premises in case your child develops a fever unless we have a note from the doctor stating that it is medically necessary.
- g) You will be notified immediately if your child becomes ill while in care. If we cannot reach a parent within a reasonable time, we may call the emergency contacts. You will be required to pick up your child from care within one hour of notification of illness. The staff will keep sick children isolated from the other children when required until the parent arrives.

## Nut Free Policy

Our Programs and playgrounds have been designated as no-nut zones due to children and staff having life-threatening allergies to nuts. No nuts or food containing nuts (oils, butters, etc.) are allowed on the premises at any time. This includes chocolates, chocolate bars, candies, cookies, baked goods, peanut butter sandwiches, etc.

## Nutrition

Our program provides morning and afternoon snacks and a main meal at lunch. The snacks and lunch are prepared by our Child Care Centre Cook. Menus are posted in each program.

## Children with Allergies

The Little School will make every effort to enrol children with life-threatening allergies and create an environment that minimizes the risk of exposure to allergens. This policy recognizes that the risk of accidental exposure can be reduced.

Before enrolment, the Supervisor and Supervisor Assistant will discuss each child's needs with the parent to determine if the centre can safely manage the allergy. The centre reserves the right to refuse registration if it is determined that the allergy is not safely manageable.

Each child with an anaphylactic allergy has an *Anaphylaxis Individual Treatment Plan*, which includes emergency procedures and has been developed in collaboration with the Child's Parent.

Should the center be unable to safely provide food for the child, the Assistant Supervisor and the parent will discuss options to meet the child's nutritional needs.

The parent must notify the Supervisor of any changes to the child's allergy, and they will review the plan at least annually and at any anytime when there is a change to the treatment plan.



The *Anaphylaxis Policy* and all *Anaphylaxis Individual Action Plans* are reviewed with all staff/students/volunteers who work with the children before commencing employment or placement annually and whenever there is a substantive change.

All staff working with children must be knowledgeable and able to identify the following:

- Signs and symptoms of life-threatening allergies
- How to respond to life-threatening allergies
- How to prevent and reduce exposure for children with life-threatening allergies

### **Reducing the risk of exposure**

The following strategies are intended to minimize the risk of exposure to the allergen for the anaphylactic child without depriving them of everyday participation in the daily program.

#### 1. Identification and Communication Practices

- Anaphylaxis Individual Action Plan and our Allergy, Medical and Food Concern cards are visibly posted (or readily available) in the areas where the children may be present and in food preparation areas.

#### 2. Meal Time Practices

- Children and staff wash their hands before and after eating.
- Tables are disinfected before and after eating.
- Children are not allowed to share food, utensils or containers.
- Where possible, children with allergies will sit with a regular staff member when eating.

- Children with anaphylactic allergies will only eat food prepared/provided by the child care centre or their parents unless there is written consent from the Child's Parent (s).

### 3. Other Practices

- Avoid allergens in activities and materials such as play dough, stuffed toys and art.
- The Little School staff are not allowed to eat food containing nuts on the premises. If it should happen, proper steps should be taken to wash hands, brush teeth, etc.
- Staff will be aware that nuts can be buried in the play yard by squirrels, etc. and will look for evidence of such when doing the daily yard check during outdoor play.

## Outdoor Play

Outdoor play is essential for the children and is a big part of our program. The children will enjoy our lovely, secure play yards twice a day as long as the weather allows and our outdoor ratios can be maintained. (The Ministry of Education requires a 100% ratio to be maintained while in the playgrounds.) Parents are required to ensure that their child is appropriately dressed for the weather. Children can play in puddles and dig in the sand and the mud. Neighbourhood walks may occur spontaneously.

## Clothing and Footwear

Children should have an extra set of clothing on site. For your child's health and safety, appropriate closed-toe footwear should be worn to keep them safe and reduce the risk of losing

balance/slipping/tripping. Footwear should be appropriate for the setting and not be at risk of falling off.

## Toileting

Given that the ratio of children to educators increases (more children per educator) starting in the preschool program, we ask parents to help us introduce "the potty" to the children during their time as Jr Toddlers and Toddlers. The educators in these programs will reach out to you to share some tips and information about potty training, and we hope to work with you to have the children ready to start the Preschool Program without diapers.

## Rest Period

While not all children need a mid-day nap, young children benefit from periods of quiet relaxation to balance their active play.

The need for rest and sleep varies greatly at different ages and even among children of the same age; however, rest is an essential part of the day for all children.

The Educators work with the families to prevent the disruption of standard sleep patterns at home. Infants under 18 months will sleep according to their developmental needs, as outlined by the parents.

Children over 18 months who attend the program for more than 6 hours per day will have a rest period after the mid-day meal. Children are not required to sleep but are encouraged to rest

quietly. Comfort toys from home are welcome. The rest period will not exceed 2 hours in length. The children are permitted to sleep, rest or engage in quiet activities based on their needs.

## Accident Reports

If your child has an accident while in our care, the Educators will fill out an accident report for you to read and sign when you arrive to pick up your child. A picture of the accident report will be sent to you via HiMama. Parents may request a hard copy of the accident report. The original reports are kept in the child's file.

## Emergency Management

We have an Emergency Management Policy that provides clear direction for staff to follow and deal with emergencies. We have a designated evacuation site. In an emergency, parents will be notified as soon as possible by one or more of the following methods: phone, email or HiMama.

## Fire Drill

Fire evacuation plans are posted in each room and at every exit. Fire drills are practiced monthly. The children are only expected to leave the building for a fire drill if the weather is good. If you arrive with your child during a fire drill, please stay with them until the drill is completed and the children return to their Programs.

## Inclement Weather

In the case of inclement weather, you will receive a message through HiMama advising if the daycare will remain closed and when it will reopen. The Little School commits to sending this message as much time in advance as possible; however, depending on the severity and the weather development, there could be instances where you would be notified a few hours before the centre is supposed to open.

## Medical Treatment

Every effort will be made to contact the parents or their alternates in case of an emergency. Sometimes this is not possible, and immediate treatment is necessary. If your child is hurt or becomes seriously ill while in care, they may be treated at the hospital's emergency room as required.

## Parents' Issues and Concerns

The Little School is committed to providing a transparent process for parents/guardians and staff when parents/guardians bring forward issues/concerns.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to participate in the Programs actively and regularly discuss what their child (ren) is experiencing. As supported by our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, and staff. We foster

the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children.

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by The Little School. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns promptly following the guidelines below:

1. Confidentiality

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially. 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).

2. Conduct

The Little School maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication and role-modelling for children. Harassment and discrimination will, therefore, not be tolerated from any party.

If a parent/guardian, provider or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the Supervisor or the Assistant Supervisor.

3. Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a child

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

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

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

For more information,

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

**Steps for Parents/Guardians to present any issues/concerns:**

Issues and concerns may be addressed verbally or in writing to The Little School staff. We believe in most instances, the best and most appropriate person to address a concern related to program issues is the staff person for the program for which the parent/guardian has a concern. Other concerns related to the organization or general operations are better addressed with the Supervisor.

Further detail on the most appropriate staff to report an issue or concern is outlined below.

Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally or in writing upon request. Throughout the resolution process, we will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within two business days (s). All parties involved with the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

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

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:
<p><b>Program Room-Related, e.g.,</b> schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the program staff directly, namely the Educator or Head Educator as appropriate;</li> <li>or</li> <li>- the Supervisor/Assistant Supervisor.</li> </ul>
<p><b>General, Centre- or Operations-Related, e.g.,</b> child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Supervisor/Assistant Supervisor.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Staff or Agency Related</b></p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the individual directly or</li> <li>- the Supervisor/Assistant Supervisor.</li> </ul> <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the Supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>



<p><b>Student / Volunteer-Related</b></p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Supervisor/Assistant Supervisor.</li> </ul> <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of students or volunteers that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the Supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>
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**Steps for The Little School in responding to issues/concerns:**

- Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised or
- Arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within two business days. Document the issues/concerns in detail. Documentation should include the following:
  - the date and time the issue/concern was received;
  - the name of the person who received the issue/concern;
  - the name of the person reporting the issue/concern;
  - the details of the issue/concern; and
  - any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and information given to the parent/guardian regarding the next steps or referral.
- Provide contact information for the appropriate person to address the matter.
- Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within two business days or as soon as reasonably possible after that. Document reasons for delays in writing.
- Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent (s)/guardian(s) who raised the

issue/concern.

- Documentation will be stored in the appropriate secure location as it relates to the issue (e.g. staff issue stored in locked personnel files)

If the parent/guardian continues to feel there has not been a satisfactory response or resolution, they may escalate the issue or concern verbally or in writing as follows:

- 1) Program Educator or staff person
- 2) Head Educator
- 3) Supervisor
- 4) Board President

The Board President will respond to issues/concerns only after all preceding individuals in this list have had the opportunity to respond and the parent/guardian feels the issue still has not been sufficiently addressed.

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

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

## Serious Occurrence Reporting/Posting

All licensed Child Care Centres and licensed Home Child Care Agencies must report serious occurrences to the Ministry of Education.

Many factors may lead to a serious occurrence report and could include but are not limited to:

- Serious injury to a child;
- Fire or other disaster on site;

A serious occurrence does not necessarily mean that an operator is out of compliance with licensing\* requirements or that children are at risk in the Child Care Program.

On November 1, 2011, the Ontario government introduced a new policy requiring licensed Child Care Centres and licensed Home Child Care Agencies to post information about serious occurrences at a Centre or a home location. To support increased transparency and access to information, when a serious occurrence happens, a "Serious Occurrence Notification Form" must be posted at the centre or home located in a visible area for ten days.

\*Child care licensing inspection findings may be accessed through the Licensed Child Care Website, which is available at [www.ontario.ca/ONT/portal61/licensedchildcare](http://www.ontario.ca/ONT/portal61/licensedchildcare).

## Photographs

Photos and videos are taken to share with the parents of the children in the photo or video.

Parents are not allowed to take pictures of children in the program other than their own without the expressed written permission of that child's parent/guardian and the Program staff.

## Volunteers

Anyone (*including parents and family members of children registered in a Mothercraft Program and over the age of 16*) who wishes to volunteer at The Little School is required to submit a Police Records Check - Vulnerable Sector before volunteering. Only volunteers with a clear Police Records Check will be permitted to volunteer. A volunteer letter may be obtained from the Supervisor to have the Police Records Check processed by the Ottawa Police Department at no cost. Direct unsupervised access (i.e., when the adult is alone with a child) is not permitted for anyone who is not an employee of The Little School. Volunteers may not be counted in the staffing ratios.

## Students

In cooperation with high schools, community colleges and universities in the area, TLS may provide practical experience for students in early childhood education, child care, family day care and nursing, etc. These students enhance the staffing and permit individualized care and special activities which might otherwise not be possible. These students work under the direct supervision of the staff at all times. Students may not be counted in ratios.

## Supervision

Child staff ratios will be maintained according to the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* (CCEYA):

<u>Program</u>	<u>Indoors</u>	<u>Outdoors</u>
Infants	3:10 (3 educators per 10 children)	1:3
Junior Toddlers	1:5 between 8:30 am and 5:00 pm (1 educator per 5 children) 1:8 before 8:30 am and 5:00 pm (1 educator per 8 children)	1:5
Toddlers	1:5 between 8:30 am and 5:00 pm (1 educator per 5 children) 1:8 before 8:30 am and 5:00 pm (1 educator per 8 children)	1:5
Preschoolers	1:8 between 8:30 am and 5:00 pm (1 educator per 8 children) 1:12 before 8:30 am and 5:00 pm (1 educator per 12 children)	1:8
Junior Kinders	1:8 between 8:30 am and 5:00 pm (1 educator per 8 children) 1:12 before 8:30 am and 5:00 pm (1 educator per 12 children)	1:8
Senior Kinders	1:10 between 8:30 am and 5:00 pm (1 educator per 10 children) 1:24 before 8:30 am and 5:00 pm	1:10

## Proof of Identity

The staff may not release the children in care to anyone other than the Parent/legal guardian without the Parent/legal guardian's written authorization. If someone else is picking up the child, then the staff must be notified by the parent before the child leaves the program. Anyone picking up the child may be asked to provide photographic identification if the staff is unfamiliar with the individual; this includes parents. Please come prepared with identification.

## Access Fobs

We have a security system at the main entrance with cameras and controlled access from a remote receiver inside. You must obtain a key fob at the office to access the building. A \$20.00 deposit per fob is required, which will be reimbursed to you upon your child's withdrawal. If you lose your fob, please obtain another one, and report the one you lost to the office.

Please use your fob and do not ring the bell unless necessary. We appreciate your cooperation.

## Unacceptable Behaviours

The following behaviours by children and adults are unacceptable.

- All forms of bullying (physical, verbal, emotional, social or cyberbullying), including intentional, hurtful and repetitive comments, actions or visual displays, are

unacceptable.

- Harassment is unwelcome, including behaviour that degrades, demeans, humiliates, or embarrasses someone that a reasonable person would know.
- All forms of abuse (sexual, physical or psychological), including verbal, in writing or otherwise, are not permitted.
- Discrimination against any person or group because of their race, colour, ancestry, nationality or place of origin, ethnic background, religion, age, sex, gender-determined characteristics, sexual orientation, marital and family status, source of income, political belief and physical or mental disability.

The consequences of these behaviours will be the following:

- For staff members: Termination of employment
- For Children: Discharge from the program
- For Parents: Discharge of their children from the program

## Contact Us

<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Email Address</b>	<b>Extension Number</b>
Supervisor	Laurel Boutet	<a href="mailto:tls@thelittleschool.ca">tls@thelittleschool.ca</a>	722
Assistant Supervisor	Robyn Graham	<a href="mailto:tls@thelittleschool.ca">tls@thelittleschool.ca</a>	720
Administrator	Katia Farfan	<a href="mailto:admin@thelittleschool.ca">admin@thelittleschool.ca</a>	721

If you wish to contact any of our Educators in the Programs, please send a HiMama message, and they will reply as soon as they have a chance. Please remember that our educators are part of ratios, and children are their priority.



## Acknowledgment Form

This statement acknowledges that I received a copy of the PARENT INFORMATION AND POLICIES HANDBOOK 2023. I have read the handbook, and I understand its contents. I fully understand that I must be familiar with and comply with these policies. I further understand that the policies stated therein are guidelines that can be modified by the Center if necessary.

This acknowledgement form and the rest of the registration information must be signed and returned to the Center before my child's first day of attendance.

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian 1 Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian 1 Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date (dd/mm/yy)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian 2 Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian 2 Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date (dd/mm/yy)



## Diet Form

My child, \_\_\_\_\_, is allowed to consume the following while at daycare;  
please select all that apply:

- Vegetarian Diet
- Vegan Diet
- Halal Meat
- Non-Halal Meat


For any specifications regarding your child's diet, please get in touch with Robyn Graham, Assistant Supervisor. Refer to page 36 to find her contact information.