Muskoka Family Focus School Age Programs

www.muskokafamilyfocus.ca

Office:(705)-645-3027

Gravenhurst, Bracebridge, Port Sydney, Huntsville, Emsdale

Revised July 1, 2026

Huntsville Programs
Supervisor: Angela Feltis(705) 644-1858

Pine Glen Public School: (705) 783-0176
Emergency Shelter: Faith Baptist Church

Spruce Glen Public School: (705) 783-0180(jk/sk) (705)-783-1634 (SA)
Emergency Shelter: Muskoka Grounds Care

Riverside Public School: (705) 783-4566(SA) (705)-641-9201(jk/sk)
Emergency Shelter: Green's Haulage

St. Mary's: (705) 786-6787
Emergency Shelter: Faith Baptist Church

Huntsville Public School (705) 787-5474
Emergency Shelter: Circle K (corner of Main St.)

Irwin Memorial Public School: (705) 349-2093
Emergency Shelter: Community Centre/Library

Evergreen Heights Education Centre in Emsdale: (705) 783-4207
Emergency Shelter: Highlands Children's Centre (beside the school)

Port Sydney Program
Supervisor: Sarah Shields (705) 641-0977

VK Greer Memorial Public School: (705) 783-1044
Emergency Shelter: Heart of Muskoka (restaurant – 92 Muskoka Rd. 10)

Bracebridge Programs
Supervisor: Jenn Brush (705) 644-1520

Monsignor Michael O'Leary (MMOL): (705) 641-1269(jk/sk) or(705)-641-9502(SA)
Emergency Shelter: Food Basics Grocery Store

Bracebridge Public School: (705) 783-5139(SA) or (705)-641-0475(jk/sk)
Emergency Shelter: St. Joseph's Catholic Church

Gravenhurst Programs
Supervisor: Sarah Shields (705) 641-0977

Gravenhurst Public School: (705) 644-1143
Emergency Shelter: Shoppers Drug Store

Muskoka Beechgrove Public School: (705) 644-3167 or (705)-644-1143
Emergency Shelter: Gravenhurst Children's Place

KP Manson Public School: (705) 644-1752
Emergency Shelter: Teresa Malone's Home (1145 Graham Rd Severn Bridge)

Program Statement:

Our (Early Learning and) Child Centres and School Age Programs strive to provide a positive learning environment for your child to enhance his or her level of development through play experiences and the guidance of professionally trained Registered Early Childhood Educators (and Assistants) who are members of and in good standing with the Ontario College of Early Childhood Educators. Employees, students and volunteers will review this program statement prior to interacting with the children and at least once annually and when this statement is modified.

We believe children are "competent, capable, curious and rich in potential".

Our Early Learning Centres use the *How Does Learning Happen, (HDLH) Ontario's Pedagogy for The Early Years - 2014*[1] as the document to guide programming and pedagogy[2]

For the children, their families and our employees, our program strategies are designed to foster physical, social, emotional, intellectual, creative and spiritual development by offering experiences that promote:

a) Health, safety, nutrition and well-being;
b) Curiosity, creativity, initiative and independence;
c) Self-esteem, confidence and decision making capabilities;
d) Respect for themselves, others and their environment;
e) Encourage responsive feelings of friendship and consideration;
f) Communication and interaction to foster positive responsive relationships;
g) Self-regulation and co-operation;
h) Inquiry based play through child initiated exploration and adult-support experiences;
i) A well balanced daily schedule that includes active indoor and outdoor play as well as rest/quiet time that provides consideration to individual needs;
j) Integration of children with challenging needs. Along with the assistance of various resource services in the community, we strive to meet the needs of all children.
k) Document and review the impact of the strategies set out in (a) to (j) on the children and their families.

As stated in the *How Does Learning Happen?* document, “Learning and development happens within the context of relationships among children, families, educators and the environment.” Our qualified staff, students and volunteers guide the early learning environment to promote the Four Foundations of *How Does Learning Happen?* These four foundations include: Belonging, Well-Being, Engagement and Expression. Our staff, students and volunteers use these foundations to provide a nurturing environment that creates a vision for all children’s future potential. Our staff, students and volunteers are supported to participate in continuous professional learning. They are required to document and review the impact of the strategies as stated above on the children and their families. Our staff, students and volunteers are also monitored throughout the year to ensure that all components of this program statement are implemented in the operation of each program.

Our goal is to provide a secure and safe learning environment through enjoyable experiences for all children attending our program. We involve local community partners and allow those partners to support children, their families and our staff, students and volunteers.

[1]The HDLH document can be found on the Min. of Ed. website: www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/HowLearningHappens.pdf
[2] Pedagogy - The method and practice of teaching, especially as an academic subject or theoretical concept.

Program Statement Goals Approaches

Health, Safety, Nutrition and Well Being (a) (g)

- Employees, students and volunteers create positive eating environments
- Employees, students and volunteers are responsive to children's cues
- Stimulating, safe environment available for intentional active play that supports individual children`s abilities
- Challenging experiences in available that support varied abilities in order for children to practice self-regulation skills and work towards mastering a skill
- All meals, snacks and beverages must meet the recommendations in the Canada's Food Guide
- Child health check completed daily (on attendance)
- Safe, calming and nurturing environment
- Self-regulation and co-operative skills encouraged
- Children are dressed appropriately for the weather

Inquiry Play Based Programming (b) (h) (i) (k)

- Well balanced daily schedule
- Outdoor time (2 hrs) with activities offered OR indoor physical activity during inclement weather
- Indoor physical activity
- Creative opportunities available
- Diverse age appropriate books available
- Science/nature exploration available
- Music/language opportunities available
- Block play available
- Sensory experiences offered
- Dramatic play opportunities available
- Co-operative opportunities offered to children
- Area available for spiritual reflection ie: cozy tent
- Quiet/rest period offered with appropriate activities
- Program plans current and posted based on the interests of the children
- Various documentation is visible to support the pedagogical learning of all children

Interactions with Children (c) (e) (f) (j)

- Tone of voice is calm and nurturing to the children
- Genuine interest shown to each child
- Children are listened to and respected to help foster positive reciprocal relationships
- Children are supported with positive reinforcement to build self-esteem, self-confidence and to nurture decision making skills
- Children's emotions are recognized and responded to with empathy through responsive communication between Educators and children
- Educators, students and volunteers at child's level role modelling and encouraging independence, curiosity, initiative and self-help skills through reciprocal age appropriate conversation
- Educators, students and volunteers communicate with children to identify feelings/emotions encouraging friendship and consideration of others ie: 'bucket filling' and inclusion of all
- Educators, students and volunteers encourage children to be respectful of others and themselves
- Frequent age appropriate verbal interaction with children to foster a sense of security
- Frequent appropriate physical contact with children
- Appropriate use of body and verbal language to foster positive communication and relationships
- Each child greeted (by name) and acknowledged
- Children encouraged to meet individual developmental goals
- Children with special needs are integrated including the development and implementation of Individual Program Plans (IPP)
- Focus is on children as opposed to the adults in the room

Interactions with Families and Our Community (f) (j) (k)

- Families are greeted daily by name in a friendly welcoming manner (eye contact)
- Family inquiries answered or redirected/referred
- Communication between Educators, students, volunteers and families is respectful to foster positive relationships between the children, parents and Educators
- Families are encouraged to participate in the program ie: scheduled visit, drop in, call, etc.
- Respect for individual differences, sensitivity to differing parenting styles, culture, etc…

Sanitary Practices (a)

- Staff, students and volunteers follow all recommendations by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit
- Children helped to wash before eating, after toileting, outdoor play, and as needed
- Surfaces cleaned and disinfected as appropriate
- Equipment/toys cleaned and disinfected per policy
- Cots cleaned and disinfected, linens laundered at least weekly
- Children assisted/encouraged to use sanitary practices when using the toilet

Safety Practices (a)

- Children supervised AT ALL TIMES
- Cleaning supplies inaccessible to children
- Children sitting while eating or drinking

Environment (d) (g)

- Educators, students and volunteers use the environment as a 'third teacher' ie: children are involved in room set up
- Respect for the environment is woven into all activities throughout the day
- The environment is designed to accommodate varied children`s sensitivities and arousal states and to allow for a calm, focused, alert state as well
- Toys/equipment to promote all areas of development – inquiry play based learning
- Toys/equipment suitable to developmental levels

Food Handling (a)

- Allergies listed – employees, students and volunteers aware of allergies, list up to date
- Staff, students and volunteers sit with children during meal times and it is a friendly social time
- Good eating habits and manners encouraged
- Children are assisted when needed
- Children are encouraged to serve themselves
- Proper food eating techniques modelled (use of utensils, dishes, cups)
- Proper use of dishes ie: wet food must be on a plate or in bowl

Kitchen Maintenance and Duties (a)

- All meals, snacks and beverages must meet the recommendations in the Canada's Food Guide
- Culturally diverse options offered
- Individual food preparation opportunities offered to children ie: fruit sticks
- Healthy meals and snacks are being prepared with as much 'homemade' food as possible ie: homemade granola bars
- Low fat, aspartame, trans fat and high sodium food are not included in our menus
- Homogenized milk is being served to children under 2 years of age
- Water is offered and available throughout the day
- Kitchen floor swept daily
- Cleaning and disinfecting happens regularly throughout the day
- Cleaning checklist is completed daily, weekly, etc.

Employee/Program Structure: The program is staffed by qualified personnel including Registered Early Childhood Educators and Assistants approved by the Ministry of Education. Each program is licensed by the Ministry of Education and follows the guidelines set out in Child Care and Early Years Act. Programs operate based on the School Year Calendar. The educators create and maintain a daily routine which is posted in each program.

Where there are enough children enrolled to warrant having the group separate into two groups, we will offer a Full Day Kindergarten (FDK) program for students in JK up to Grade one. The Program Supervisor will notify you of this.

Hours of Operation: The **After School Program** operates daily from the end of school day bell until 6:00 p.m. throughout the school year. The **Before School Program** (where available) operates daily from 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. where they are released to the school. These programs follow the relevant school year School Board Calendar (TLDSB, SMCDSB or NNDSB) These programs do not operate on PA days, Christmas Break, March Break or Statutory Holidays(Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year Day, Family Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Civic Holiday, Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day)
In Gravenhurst and Huntsville we may operate a full day program during the summer months when there is sufficient enrolment. For the summer of 2025, we will be operating a summer school age program in Huntsville and Gravenhurst.

We may close two days per year for our Educators to participate in professional learning opportunities. Parents will be notified in advance of such closures. All programs will be closed to allow our Educators to participate in this opportunity and parents will not be billed for this day.* ***The 2026-27 professional learning day for the fall is Friday October 23, 2026 at this time. Please make alternate arrangements for care that day all programs will be CLOSED.*

Admission and Discharge: If you are interested in enrolling your child(ren) in the **Before or After School Program and/or Summer School Age Program** please register in advance. When space is available, we accept children from 3.8 years of age to 11 years of age. If your child is turning 12 during the current school year, we cannot accept him/her. To register, you may speak to the program Educator or call the Administration Office at 645-3027. There is an annual administration fee of $30.00 per family. This payment is added to your first invoice. This will also be pro-rated for those who register after September. Registration is completed annually to update information. We require registration of a minimum of 2 days per week, these 2 days must be the same 2 days every week.

Payment:
All accounts are handled electronically. Accounts are paid by preauthorized debit (P.A.D.) only biweekly. Invoices will be emailed to your email address biweekly. In the event a payment is returned to us due to NSF, there will be a $25.00 fee charged to your account. We reserve the right to discontinue care if payment is not received. You will not be billed for statutory holidays or any other days the school and or our program is closed. Parents are billed for days their children do not attend the program due to illness, vacation or for any other reason. On inclement weather days, the program is open, therefore you will be billed. Refunds or credits will not be given for services already received. Refunds and/or credits may be offered on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the management team.

Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement
Ontario signed an agreement – Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (CWELCC) in March 2022 that will lower licensed child care fees to an **average** of $10 per day by September 2025. Muskoka Family Focus has made the decision under the guidance of our Board of Directors to opt into this agreement. Families who have children enrolled in licensed child care where the agency has opted into the agreement with the Province will see a 25% reduction in fees retroactive to April 1, 2022, with an additional 25% reduction for 2023. The current fee reduction from the province is a total of 52 % with a cap of not more than $22.00 per day for 2025. ***This fee reduction applies only to children who are under 6 years of age and/or who will still be 5 years of age at the end of June 2025.**

Termination of Care: We require 2 weeks' notice in writing to the program Supervisor, when withdrawing your child from the program. If 2 weeks are not given in writing, you will be billed for the 2 week notice period. If termination of care is required from Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place, parents will NOT receive a refund for services already received. The 2 weeks' notice in writing will be waived.

Fee Structure Please call 705-645-3027 for a pre-authorized debit form to have one emailed to you.

Base Fees:- CWELCC fees effective January 1,2025, non-CWELCC *effective Jan 1 2026*

Board	Age Group	Program	Base Fee	Program/ Age group	Base fee
TLDSB	Grade 1& over	ASP	$12.50	BSP	$8.00
TLDSB	JK/SK	ASP	$11.75	BSP	$7.75
TLDSB	JK/SK	Both B&A	$12.00	Grade 1 & over	$20.50
SMCDSB	Grade 1& over	ASP	$12.75	BSP	$8.25
SMCDSB	JK/SK	ASP	$12.00	BSP	$8.00
SMCDSB	JK/SK	Both B&A	$12.00	Grade 1 & over	$20.75
NNDSB	Grade 1 & over	ASP	$13.00	JK/SK	$12.00

Legend: ASP=After School Program, BSP=Before School Program, Both B&A= both Before and After School Program, Base Fee= the fee including CWELCC discount where applicable.

Non-Base Fees: $25.00 NSF charge, $1.00 per minute late fee charge, $30.00 administration fee charge.

Financial Assistance: The District of Muskoka can provide financial assistance for families who are eligible. You may call the District Office Community Services department at 645-2412 or 1-800-461-4215 Monday through Friday and ask to speak to an intake worker.

Arrival and Departure: To ensure the safe arrival of your child(ren), program Educators will need to know in advance of any change in your child's schedule. If your child will not be attending the program due to illness or will be arriving late please inform the program facilitator by calling the number on the cover of this document. This is the Educator's cellular phone, which has a message centre. Messages are checked at the beginning of the program and the phone is in use while the program is open. Your child will not be permitted to leave the program with anyone other than those documented on the release consent form UNLESS written permission is received or in an emergency, a telephone call may be acceptable. Anyone picking up your child must be 13 years or older. Educators will ask for identification from the person who is picking up the child. **The Educator will call/text to confirm your child's absence.**

Before School Program Only: children will be released from our care at the school's 'morning bell time' and proceed to the outdoor playground or to their classroom depending on individual school schedules.

Pick Up Info: The person must be on the registration form as an approved pick-up person. Please remember to bring your ID when picking up if the educator does not know you already, they will ask. In the case of a separation between parents, both parents will need to agree to the authorized people on the pickup list. If legal court documents specify otherwise, then that is what will be followed. Any changes to the authorized pick-up list must be in writing. Parents must provide us with any legal documents pertaining to their custody arrangements and provide updates as they happen. Our Educators will take the necessary action to protect the children in our care if there is suspicion the parent or person picking up the child is under the influence of alcohol or drugs including recreational marijuana. An alternate person will be contacted to pick up the child. CAS and or the OPP may also be contacted if co-operation is challenging, or our Educator(s) feel the child is in need of protection.

Closing Time and Pick-Up: If you are unable to pick up your child by 6:00 p.m. please authorize someone else to do so. No child will be released to a person not authorized **in writing** by you. Names of authorized people must be indicated in the Release Consent section of the registration form.

- The program closes promptly at 6:00 p.m. A **$1.00 per minute fee will be charged to parents who are late**. This amount will be billed on your invoice.
- If you are late 3 times, we reserve the right to discontinue care.
- Please call the program phone if you foresee being late, perhaps some arrangements can be made.
- Try to be punctual; our Educators have families to get home to.
- If by 6:00 p.m. a parent has left no message, The educator will attempt to contact parent. If a parent is un-reachable the emergency person named on your registration form will be called to pick up. If this person cannot pick up the child at once, the C.A.S may be called. If by 6:30 pm there has been no communication with the parent/guardian or emergency contact C.A.S. will be called.
- Our Educators will take the necessary action to protect the children in our care if there is suspicion the parent or person picking up the child is under the influence of alcohol or drugs including recreational marijuana. An alternate person will be contacted to pick up the child. CAS and/or the OPP may also be contacted if co-operation is challenging, or our Educator(s) feel the child is in need of protection.

Inclement Weather: The closure of the program will be at the discretion of the Program Supervisor. Please check your email, our website at www.muskokafamilyfocus.ca, our Facebook page for updates as well as The Moose FM and Country 102 FM local radio stations. The program will operate on bus cancellation days unless otherwise stated per individual program. Families will be billed if an inclement weather day is a regularly scheduled day for your child(ren), UNLESS the school itself is deemed closed by the school board or if MFF&CP closes the program. ***If the weather deteriorates, MFF&CP will make a decision and notify parents of an early pick up requirement as soon as possible, aiming to close between 4 - 4:30 pm.***

Fire Procedure: In order to prepare for a quick and safe departure from the building in the event of fire, a fire procedure is posted for your information and regular monthly fire drills are conducted.

Emergency Management Procedure: MFF&CP has emergency management procedures in place in the event this facility must be vacated, an emergency location has been established and is listed on the cover page of this document. All parents will be notified by phone as to a designated pick-up spot in the case of an emergency. This information will also be posted on our Facebook page, our website and announced on the local radio station. **In the event of an emergency and where our Educators feel medical attention is necessary, 911 will be called.*

Snack, Allergies, Anaphylaxis and Special Dietary Needs: A nutritious snack will be provided for children attending the After School Program. An example of a snack may be apples slices and yogurt dip. We encourage the children to eat our snacks. If the child is still hungry and has extra snacks in their lunch bag, they may have it if it is a nutritious option and does not include potential allergens in the program. If your child is attending the Before School Program we do not offer a snack. Please provide your child with a snack/breakfast prior to arriving. Any food and/or drinks including water bottles supplied by the parents must be labelled with the child's name on it.

Details of any allergies or special dietary needs that you have provided on your registration form, ie: bee stings, peanuts, milk etc. Parents are required to provide as much detail as possible regarding the child's allergy, anaphylaxis and special dietary needs and review (anaphylactic allergens, intolerances, etc.) with the Program Supervisor and complete the Anaphylaxis Allergy Form prior to starting the program. Parents will notify the Supervisor/Educator if any changes occur. The foods that need to be omitted from your child's diet will be posted in the kitchen and classroom areas. If an "epi-pen" is required for an emergency, it will be carried with the educator at all times.

Our programs endeavor not to use peanut products; however, we cannot guarantee a peanut free environment. Parents are responsible for managing their children's peanut allergies. In order to provide a safe environment, please do not bring and/or send peanut products to the programs. Any other allergen that is life threatening will be given the same consideration.

It is imperative that you keep us informed of any changes in your child's health.
Individual Support Plans(ISP) are required for children with exceptionalities and/or special needs due to a diagnosis or medical condition. These plans must be completed prior to the child starting care, in consultation with the parent or guardian, and must be signed and dated.
ISPs provide essential information outlining how educators and support staff will respond effectively and efficiently to medical or support needs. They are designed to help create a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for all children in our programs.
Parents/guardians are responsible for informing the child care provider of any updates or changes to the plan—such as a new diagnosis, triggers, required supports, or equipment.

Plans must be reviewed and updated every six months, and a new plan is required at the beginning of each school year. All ISPs will be shared with educators involved in the care and support of the child to ensure consistency and preparedness.

Toilet Trained: Your child needs to be **fully** toilet trained to attend our School Aged Programs.

Field Trips and Outdoor Time: On occasion our program may involve excursions away from the premises. You will be advised of any major outings and asked to sign a permission form allowing your child to participate. The After School Programs go outside for a minimum of 30 minutes per day (weather permitting) and 2 hours per day for our full day School Age Programs.

Personal Belongings: Children may bring books, games or activities to our programs, at the discretion of the Educator. Please make sure they are clearly marked with their names, as we cannot be held responsible for lost or stolen items.

Communication: Educators at our School Age Programs enjoy and appreciate the opportunity to communicate openly with the parents of the children they care for at the time of departure. Please allow adequate time for discussion. (Please note that the program closes at 6:00 p.m.) **Please advise our Educator in writing when there are any changes in information to your child's registration form**. It is to your child's benefit to keep our records up to date. If you have any suggestions or concerns, please feel free to discuss them with our Educator or call the Program Supervisor whose number is listed on the cover page of this document. Please keep this parent handbook for easy reference. Please advise your Educator if your child's needs change throughout the school year. For example: your child requires EA support. Program Supervisors and educators will send communication throughout the year via email, call, text and as well the Lillio App (where being used)

MFF&CP requires parents and family members to communicate in a non-threatening, respectful and peaceful manner when speaking with our Educators and Supervisors 'face to face' or via e-mail as well as any communication relating to our organization and its educators through social media and/or community groups. Any inappropriate, disrespectful behaviours from parents may result in the child being asked to leave the Program. Our Educators and Supervisors are expected to do the same with parents and family members.

Safe Arrival Policy: Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place will ensure that any child receiving child care at licensed programs operated by MFF&CP is only released to the child's parent/guardian or an individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization the child care centre may release the child to.

- MFF&CP will release children into the care of their parent/guardian or another authorized individual who must be 13 years of age or older.
- A parent/guardian may request that a child who is 9 years old or older be released from child care without supervision. Parents/guardians must provide written and signed authorization and instructions for the release of the child including the time of dismissal.
- Where a parent/guardian provides written instructions for the release of their child from care without supervision, the parent/guardian is aware that the child care centre/program is no longer responsible for that child upon their dismissal.
- Where a child does not arrive in care as expected or is not picked up as expected, employees must follow the safe arrival and dismissal procedures set out below.

Purpose: It is the policy of Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place to help support the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care in all programs. This policy will provide employees, students and volunteers with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for ensuring the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care. This includes what steps are to be taken when a child does not arrive at the child care centre as expected, as well as steps to follow to ensure the safe dismissal of children.

Procedure:

Accepting a child into care- Full day programs When accepting a child into care at the time of drop-off, program employee in the room must:

- greet the parent/guardian and child.
- ask the parent/guardian how the child's evening/morning has been and if there are any changes to the child's pick-up procedure (i.e., someone other than the parent/guardian picking up). Where the parent/guardian has indicated that someone other than the child's parent/guardians will be picking up, the employee must confirm that the person is listed in the child's file and/or Lillio or where the individual is not listed, ask the parent/guardian to provide authorization for pick-up in writing (i.e., note, email or message on Lillio).
- document the change in pick-up procedure in the daily written record and initial.
- sign the child in on the classroom attendance record.

Where a child has not arrived in care as expected-All Programs

1.Where a child does not arrive at the child care centre and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off (i.e., left a voice/written message, or advised the closing employee at pick-up), the employee in the classroom must:

Full Day Programs:

- inform the program supervisor, RECE or co-worker and they must commence contacting the child's parent/guardian no later than 10:00am. Employee will call parent/guardian, and/or send a message on the Lillio app at least once and leave a message. Employee will note time of call in the communication.
- If the parent does not reply by 10:30am the employee will inform the program supervisor. The Supervisor will make one more attempt contact with the parent/ guardian. If unsuccessful the supervisor will contact the child's emergency contact, who will take over the communication with the parent.

Before & After School Programs:

- Upon completion of attendance at school bell/dismissal, program RECE or co-worker must commence contacting parent/guardian no later than 3:30pm. Employee will communicate with the school Principal/Teacher/Secretary the child did not arrive at after school program as expected. Principal/teacher/secretary will confirm whether or not the child was present at school. If the child was not present at school, there would be no follow up to the parent/guardian.
- Should a child not arrive at Before School Program the school will complete their own safe arrival protocol.

2.Once the child's absence has been confirmed, program employee shall document the child's absence on the attendance record and any additional information about the child's absence in the daily written record.

Where a child was present at school and has not arrived in care as expected- After School Programs

Where a child was present at school, does not arrive at the after school program and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in schedule (i.e., left a voice message or advised employee at pick-up), the employee must:

- notify the school Principal/Teacher/Secretary the child did not arrive at the program as expected. Principal/Teacher/Secretary will commence looking for child to verify the whereabouts of child, information is then communicated to child care program.
- the employee will call parent to verify child's absence. If the employee does not speak with a parent/guardian or receive a message back, keep calling parent/guardian. If unsuccessful the employee will contact the child's emergency contact, who will take over the communication with the parent.
- call or designate someone to call the bus company to verify if the child is on the bus. If on the bus ask bus company to return child to school and do not drop off unsupervised.
- if a child has not been located by 4:15 pm call 911.

Releasing a Child from Care - All Programs

The employee who is supervising the child at the time of pick-up shall only release the child to the child's parent/guardian or individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization that the child care may release the child to. Where the employee does not know the individual picking up the child (i.e., parent/guardian or authorized individual):

- confirm with another employee that the individual picking up is the child's parent/guardian/authorized individual.
- where the above is not possible, ask the parent/guardian/authorized individual for photo identification and confirm the individual's information with the parent/guardian/authorized individual's name on the child's file or written authorization.

Where a child has not been picked up as expected and/or the centre/school age program is closing:

Where a parent or guardian has not picked up the child 10 minutes prior to regular program closure time the employee will:

- contact the parent/guardian via phone call message and advise that the child is still in care and has not been picked up.
- where a parent/guardian or authorized individual who was supposed to pick up a child from care and has not arrived by regular program closure time, employee should call again. If parent is on route educators will ensure, the child is comfortable while they await their pick-up.
- if you are unable to reach the parent, call the emergency contact for pick-up
- If the parent and emergency contact cannot be reached and/or make arrangements to pick up the child, the C.A.S.(Simcoe Muskoka Family Connexions 705-645-4426) will be called30 minutes after closing time. The employee will follow the direction of the C.A.S. with respect to next steps. The employee will notify their supervisor.

Dismissing a child from care without supervision:

Where a parent/guardian has provided written authorization for their child to be released from care without supervision:

- one employee in the program must be responsible for dismissing the child from care.
- Prior to dismissing the child from care, the employee will review the written instructions for release provided by the parent/guardian and release the child at the time set out in the instructions.

The employee will document the time of departure from care and as well as their initials on the attendance record.

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) – Customer Service Standard Policy: Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place is in compliance with the AODA. We are committed to developing policies, practices and procedures that provide accessible quality services to its clients and their children. Services will be provided to clients with disabilities in a manner that promotes and respects dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity. MFF&CP is dedicated to ensuring all programs and services are accessible to clients and their children in accordance with Ontario Regulation 429.07 Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.

Prohibited Practices and Behaviour Management: Muskoka Family Focus & Children's Place will not permit the following Prohibited Practices:

a. Corporal punishment or restraint of a child by an employee, a student, a volunteer or by another child or group of children.
b. Deliberate harsh or degrading measures that would humiliate, shame or frighten a child or undermine a child's self-respect, example: name calling, yelling or singling a child out in a negative way.
c. 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 on as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent.
d. Deprivation of a child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, clothing, bedding, sleep and toilet use.
e. Locking or permitting to be locked without adult supervision for the purpose of confining a child, the exits of any building or structure where children are in attendance at any program operated by MFF&CP. **The exception to this section of the procedure is during an emergency when children could be confined to a room temporarily until the emergency is resolved as it relates to MFF&CP Emergency Management Plan.* The use of a locked or lockable room or structure to confine or isolate a child, who has been separated from other children.
f. Inflicting any bodily harm on children including, but not limited to making children eat or drink against their will.
g. Sexual abuse, sexual misconduct or engaging in a prescribed sexual act, as those terms are defined in the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007*.

Our program philosophy is to use positive verbal reinforcement, modeling approaches, and redirection to encourage respectful behaviour.

Muskoka Family Focus & Children's Place (MFF&CP) is committed to fostering an inclusive and supportive environment for all children, including those who may have behavioral challenges related to a disability. We strive to accommodate children with special needs to the extent possible while maintaining a safe and respectful environment for all children and staff.

We understand that all children will, from time to time, display inappropriate behaviour in our programs. When dealing with such behaviour, the developmental capabilities of each child as well as any relevant stressors will be considered when determining both expectations for behaviour and the consequences of inappropriate behaviour. Educators agree that ensuring a safe, supportive, and respectful environment for all children is essential. The behavior of children should be guided by appropriate expectations, helping them develop social skills, emotional regulation, and positive interactions. Examples of **inappropriate and unacceptable behavior** in a child care setting may include but are not limited to: Physical and verbal aggression, disrespectful or defiant behaviour, intimidation or bullying, destructive or self-harming behaviour, exit seeking behaviour. Educators encourage age-appropriate positive problem solving when helping the children to work through conflict and upset.

Educators will inform the parent of incidents using an ABC Incident report. Parents are asked to sign the report and may keep a copy.

In the case of persistent inappropriate or unacceptable behavior, where the child's behavior continues to pose a challenge, we will work closely with the child's parents to ensure the appropriate level of support. If the situation escalates and proper support cannot be provided by our team, parents/guardians will be notified in writing**.** This communication will request a meeting to discuss the child's continued participation in the program and whether alternative arrangements need to be made. As a last resort, and if after careful consideration we cannot meet the child's needs, a written notice may be issued asking the child to leave the program temporarily or permanently, depending on the severity and frequency of the incidents. This action would only be taken after exhausting all possible accommodations and strategies

Supervision of Volunteers and Students: Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place supports the ongoing learning for volunteers and students. Volunteers and students occasionally participate or complete placements at our programs. Volunteers and students are required to provide a vulnerable sector check and the following are adhered to:

- No child is supervised by a person under 18 years of age
- Volunteers and students will be supervised at all times by a MFF&CP employee
- Only employees will have unsupervised access to children
- Volunteers and students may not be counted in staffing ratios

Serious Occurrence Notifications: The safety and well being of our children in licensed child care programs is our highest priority. Operators of licensed child care programs work diligently to provide a safe, creative and nurturing environment for each child. In spite of all the best precautions, serious occurrences can sometimes take place.

The Ontario government has introduced a new policy that requires licensed child care programs to post information about serious occurrences that happen at a centre. To support increased transparency and access to information, a "Serious Occurrence Notification Form" must be posted at the program in a visible area for 10 days.

Serious occurrence categories include:
a) the death of a child who received child care at a home child care premises or child care program, (b) abuse, neglect or an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child while receiving child care at a home child care premises or child care program, (c) a life-threatening injury to or a life-threatening illness of a child who receives child care at a home child care premises or child care program, (d) an incident where a child who is receiving child care at a home child care premises or child care program goes missing or is temporarily unsupervised, or (e) an unplanned disruption of the normal operations of a home child care premises or child care program that poses a risk to the health, safety or well-being of children receiving child care at the home child care premises or child care program.

Licensed childcare programs are already required to report serious occurrences to the Ministry of Education, which is responsible for child care licensing. This new policy requires child care operators to post information in their facilities so that parents also have access to it.

Health and Safety: We are unable to administer prescription or non-prescription medication with the exception of asthma medication, Epi-pens or other medications for life threatening conditions.

If your child becomes ill during the day and the school has requested pick up, he/she may not attend the after school program that day. If your child arrives at the before/after school program and is ill, our Educator will strive to find a quiet, supervised spot (isolation) for him/her to rest and notify you to pick up. Occasionally when there is one Educator at a program it becomes difficult to isolate, however we will do our best as per our guidelines provided by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit. Children may not attend the program if they have a fever, diarrhea, vomiting, or any infectious illness. They may return to the program after they have been symptom free 24 hours(fever or infectious illness) or 48 hours for diarrhea and/or vomiting from their last symptom.

Our programs follow all health guidelines, requirements and regulations for licensed child care programs from the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit.

Wait List Policy:
Policy Statement: Muskoka Family Focus is committed to accommodating all registration requests for child care. When programs reach maximum capacity, children will be placed on a waitlist, maintained by the program Supervisor. **No fees** are charged to be added to the waitlist.
Waitlist Procedure
1. Requesting Waitlist Placement
    - Parents/guardians must submit a Waitlist Request Form via email.
    - The entry is dated and must include:
        - Child's name and birth date
        - Days of care required
        - Requested start date
        - Parent/guardian names and contact info
        - Any other relevant information the family wishes to include
    - The Supervisor will confirm via email that the child has been added to the list and provide their position on the waitlist.
2. Placement Priority When a Space Becomes Available
    - Families are contacted in order of waitlist entry (date and time), based on the age group of the available space.
    - Priority is given to:
        - Children of Muskoka Family Focus employees
        - Siblings of enrolled children
    - Fairvern Children's Place (FCP):
        - 25% of spaces are allocated to Fairvern Long-Term Care Facility (FLTCF) employees.
        - If FLTCF employees occupy fewer than 25% of spaces, eligible FLTCF applicants will be prioritized until the 25% threshold is met.
        - Once 25% is filled, the general waitlist is followed based on standard order of application.
3. Waitlist Maintenance and Parent Communication
    - The Supervisor:
        - Maintains the waitlist
        - Contacts families via phone/email when a space becomes available
        - Records date, time, and method of each contact attempt
        - Will make three attempts to reach a family; if unsuccessful, the family is removed from the list and the next eligible family is contacted
    - Parents may confirm their waitlist status in person with the Supervisor; only their child's information will be visible to maintain confidentiality.
    - Supervisors are responsible for keeping accurate records and communicating with family inquiries.
    - Families are encouraged to notify the program if child care is no longer needed.

Conflict Resolution for Parents Policy:

Policy: It is the policy of Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place to support open discussions between our staff and families through a clear and transparent conflict resolution process.
All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns as quickly as possible to the satisfaction of all parties.

Communication:

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our child care centres and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing with our programs. As outlined in our program statement, MFF&CP supports positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, child care providers and staff, and fosters the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children. MFF&CP maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication and role-modeling for children.
Staff are available during regular business hours to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction. All parties are expected to communicate calmly and respectfully.

Concerns/Complaints:

- Issues/concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing.
- Parents who have concerns or complaints regarding daily programming, room/child schedules or routines should speak with the educator directly. If successful resolution is not reached with the educator, parents *are encouraged* to discuss their concern/complaint with the Program Supervisor.
- Concerns or complaints by the parent, staff, volunteer regarding an educator or general centre operations should be brought forward to the Program Supervisor directly.
- Concerns and complaints received by employees, students or volunteers should be brought to the Program Supervisor's attention.

Conflict Resolution Process:

- It is anticipated that many concerns will be resolved through discussion, and no further action will be required.
- When the concern/complaint has not been resolved through discussion, staff and/or Program Supervisor will document the concern with date, time, complaint and suggested resolution.
- The Supervisor will respond in writing or via e-mail to the initial concern and/or complaint within 2 business days of it being received.
- 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 all parties involved.
- The Supervisor will discuss with the Management Team the concern and/or complaint. An appropriate resolution will be determined, in accordance with MFF&CP policies.
- The suggested resolution and outcomes will be communicated back to the complainant in writing or via e-mail.
- The level of detail provided to the parent/guardian will respect and maintain the privacy and confidentiality of all parties involved, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons.
- If the matter is not resolved, a written submission from the complainant may be made to the Management Team and a further investigation and discussion will take place.
- The Management Team will respond to the concern and/or complaint within one week of it being received.
- If deemed necessary by the Management Team, the concern and/or complaint will be forwarded to the Board of Directors where a resolution will be decided upon. The Management Team will then respond to the concern and/or complaint in writing or via e-mail with the final resolution.
- 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 by the program Supervisor.

Parent Handbook Parent Agreement: Please Read Carefully

1. All information provided by a parent is strictly confidential. If there is any information, of which we should be aware, to help us in the care of your child, please include it in the form.
2. Your child will not be permitted to leave the program with anyone other than those documented on the release consent form UNLESS written permission is received or in an emergency, a telephone call may be acceptable. Anyone picking up your child must be 13 years or older. **Employees will ask for identification from the person who is picking up the child if they do not know them.**
3. Bi-weekly payment MUST be made and/or will be withdrawn on the date specified.
4. Fees will apply for days your child is enrolled and expected in care but is not. Refunds will not be given for the days your child attended.
5. Parents receiving child care fee subsidy are responsible for paying their portion of the fees to Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place, if any, as determined by the District of Muskoka.
6. Two weeks' notice is required when taking your child out of the program in order to notify another parent of the vacancy. If no notice is given, you will be charged for 2 weeks of care.
7. Overdue accounts over 30 days, 2.5 % interest will be charged. Any account not paid within 60 days will be sent to the Credit Bureau for collection.
8. A $25.00 carrying charge will be made on all Non-Sufficient Funds. (N.S.F. cheques).
9. As a last resort, if inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour continues from a child, the child may be asked to leave the program. (as noted in the handbook)
10. Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place reserves the right to make alternate pick up arrangements for children as they deem necessary, for the safety of the children, if they feel the person who is picking up the child is incapacitated in any way, ie: under the influence of drugs or alcohol. This includes the use of recreational marijuana.
11. Regarding late charges/pick-ups - after 3 times, Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place have the right to discontinue care.
12. Any slandering or inappropriate/negativity on social media involving Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place (and/or our employees) by parents and/or family members will not be tolerated. Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place reserve the right to discontinue care should any of this type of behaviour be brought to our attention.
13. Disrespectful treatment, threatening and/or intimidating harassing behaviour from parents or family members towards Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place employees will not be tolerated. Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place reserve the right to discontinue care should any of this type of behaviour be brought to our attention.

I have read and understand the School Age Program Parent Handbook and agree to follow the policies and procedures as outlined.

PARENT/GUARDIAN: _____

DATE: _____ Program Name:_____

SUPERVISOR: _____

Please return this form with the registration

Thank you for choosing Muskoka Family Focus and Children's Place to meet your child care needs.