

Market Lane Early Learning Centre



PARENT HANDBOOK

(Revised: March, 2024)

INRODUCTION

Welcome to Market Lane Childcare Centre

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you and your child to Market Leane childcare center.

Market Lane has been providing quality licensed childcare to the residents of Vaughan since early 2000. We are currently licensed to care for children, ranging from toddler to school aged children. This handbook has been designed to create awareness of the requirements and policies of M.L.E.L.C. as well as the requirements of you, the parents/guardians.

Please read this handbook carefully and feel free to discuss with us any questions you may have.

Program Statement

- M.L.E.L.C. provides a wide range of learning materials and opportunities with the children's' interests in mind to help guide the children reach their full potential and make educated choices.
- All staff will promote the health, safety, nutrition, and well-being of each child by providing a clean and safe environment, nutrition based on the Canada's Food Guide, access to drinking water throughout the day, limited transitions, eliminating any environmental issues that may cause undue stress to the child, unnecessary disruptions to play and reducing hazards that may cause injury. Educators will familiarize themselves with all information concerning any medical conditions, exceptionalities, allergies, food restrictions, medication requirements, and parental preferences in respect to diet, exercise, and rest time.
- All staff will support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, and childcare providers. The Directors and Supervisor will support this through the hiring of qualified, responsive, and well-trained Early Childhood Educators who support families in their role as primary caregivers and understand the needs of each child as an individual.
- All staff will encourage children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate; acknowledging that each child is competent, curious, and rich in potential. Staff will support self-regulation in children (defined as the child's ability to gain control of bodily functions, manage powerful emotions, and maintain focus and attention) Self-regulation in early development is influenced by a child's relationship with important adults in that child's life, including the ECEs in the program. All staff will provide the experiences, support and encouragement that help young children learn to self-regulate, which is a crucial component of quality care.
- All staff will foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry by providing a variety of activities, and an environment rich in content, that encourages choices and active play, supported by qualified, attentive, and interactive Early Childhood Educators.
- All staff will provide child-initiated and adult supported experiences. The Early Childhood Educators will observe the children and use that information to plan and create a positive learning environment, that is based on the interests of the child and supported by all the adults in the childcare environment. Educators will be responsible for introducing new ideas, interests, facts, concepts, skills, and experiences to widen the child's knowledge and life experiences.
- All Early Childhood Educators need to be reflective practitioners who learn about children through listening, observation, documentation, and discussion with others, families, to understand children as unique individuals. They will observe and listen to learn how children make meaning through their experiences in the world around them, and use this to have meaningful interactions, and engage children daily. Each child will experience indoor, and two hours of outdoor play (weather permitting) daily, as well as a time to rest and sleep if needed, quiet and active times, always being mindful of each child's needs and parental direction.
- Regular and ongoing communication with parents is an important component of the day. Communication may be in person, by phone, e-mail or through written and posted communication tools. Parents will be directed to resources outside of the center if necessary, and community partners such as early year's services, speech therapists, support services, occupational therapists, counsellors, etc., this will be an important part of the centers support to all children and their families.
- We view the community as valuable resource and our educators plan learning opportunities to engage community in programs. We seek out opportunity to share knowledge and learn from others in community.

- The organization will provide ongoing opportunities for educators to engage in critical reflection and discussion with others about pedagogy and practice, to support continuous professional learning.
- All staff will build a climate of trust, honesty, and respect in the workplace, working collaboratively to provide a safe, secure, healthy, and inviting environment for all children and their families, building and maintaining healthy professional relationships that encourage growth and offering support and mentorship.
- All staff, students and volunteers will read the *Program Statement*, and *sign off in the Policy and Procedures Sign Off binder* prior to employment or prior to interacting with children, and when the statement has been modified, and on an annual basis.
- The Supervisor will review all sign offs by staff, students and volunteers and sign the review sheet to indicate that the process has been completed. The Supervisor must be confident that the staff, volunteer, or student is fully aware, and understands the Program Statement and its implementation.
- Each classroom will maintain a binder containing observations, plans and documentation to support their understanding of the program statement. Copies of the documentation, relevant to their child, will be shared with all parents or guardians of the children in the program.
- The Supervisor will meet on a regular basis with each team to establish a clear understanding of the program statement, to support staff in their delivery of the Program Statement and to aid the staff in self-reflection, to be recorded, and added to the binder on a regular basis. The Supervisor will view each staff as competent and able, and give them time to be heard and respected, and to reflect on their own performance and their contributions to the environment and the development of each child in their care. The Supervisor will use all observations, interactions, and conversations to monitor the staff.
- Staff will reflect on *How Does Learning Happen?* by working through the reflection exercises in the document, by reviewing their observations and engaging children in meaningful activities, by maintaining communication with parents and building trusting relationships with the families, by working with their co-workers to create a safe and healthy environment and by taking the time to engage in self-reflection in a regular basis.
- Market Lane ELC wants to ensure that your children have a safe and positive experience that promotes their growth as a learner. The Supervisor will observe staff interactions with children ensuring that they align with our program statement and beliefs in adult-child interactions.
- If the Supervisor observes or is made aware of any practice that is not supported, they will address the issue with the staff member according to the strategies outlined in the Disciplinary Policy that is outlined in the Operations Manual.
- Additionally, all Early Childhood Educators have made a commitment to abide by the standards of their profession as set out in the College of Early Childhood Educators Code of Ethics and Standards of practice. All Early Childhood Educators hold themselves accountable, and will use the Code of Ethics, the Standards of practice and the *CCEYA, 2014* to guide their decisions and practice. ^[1]_[SEP]

Prohibited Practices

The following is a list of practices prohibited by our center:

- The corporal punishment of a child.
- Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a highchair, car seat, stroller, or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself, or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent
- Locking the exits of the childcare center for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures
- Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame, or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity, or self-worth
- Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing, or bedding
- Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

Our Mission

Our mission is to provide a program that is stimulating, creative and adaptable to meet the individual needs of the children from many different backgrounds. We strive to make your child's time here the best experience it can be for them as well as for you, the parents.

Our Vision

Market Lane Early Learning Centre's vision is to nurture, develop and build an exceptional foundation of skills and abilities in our children to become outstanding citizens of the future.

Philosophy

- Market Lane Early Learning Centre follows the play-based *ELECT* curriculum and aims to provide an environment that nurtures children socially, physically, and intellectually. We encourage children to become happy, self-motivated, and independent.
- Parents and Early Childhood Educators function in harmony to create a caring and nurturing environment for the children.
- We are committed to supporting families by maintaining open communication between the staff and the parents and encourage parental involvement in our programming and care activities. It is one of the ways quality childcares is ensured.
- PLAY, guided by trained educators, will expose children to situations that will stimulate:
 - Personality development
 - Physical development
 - Social and Emotional development
 - Intellectual development
 - Cognitive and Creative skills development

Curriculum

- The classroom's Lead Teacher is a Registered Early Childhood Educator (RECE) and is responsible for planning the activities around the developmental needs and interests of the children. M.L.E.L.C. plans programs on weekly basis providing activities for cognitive, fine motor and intellectual development.
- The classrooms are divided into different learning centers: creative, sensory, dramatic play, block area and reading and writing area. During the day, the children will engage in small group activities to enable them to develop these skills. Also, a period will be spent outdoors to develop their gross motor skills.
- We, at M.L.E.L.C., encourage taking the child's artwork home, as appreciation from the parents, will boost their confidence and creativity.
- In programming activities for the children, we follow the *Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT)* – a framework standardized by the Ministry of Education, which brings together established research findings and diverse perspectives, beliefs, and recommended practices.
- It recognizes that families, communities, and cultures hold distinct values about how young children should experience and interact with the world around them.
- We develop activities centered on stories, songs, math's, fine and gross motor skills, circle time, science, music, theatre, and art/craft.
- We strive to prepare your children for their early school years by exposing them regularly to letters, numbers, colors, shapes, name recognition and new vocabulary.

STRUCTURE

Licensing

M.L.E.L.C. is licensed by the Ontario Ministry of Education. The *Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA), 2014* and its accompanying regulations form the basis for the licensing procedure. Upon successful completion of the annual licensing inspection, a renewal license is issued by the Ministry of Education and is posted at the entrance of the center. M.L.E.L.C. is licensed for children under 18 months to school aged.

Administration

- M.L.E.L.C. was established based upon the philosophy that the opinions of all involved in all its programs must be encouraged and respected.
- The Directors oversee the functioning of the center. The Directors work with the Supervisor to ensure that high quality programming is maintained across the center.
- Monthly meetings are held by the Directors and by staff. All concerns of the organization are discussed at these meetings to ensure maximum participation in the decision-making process.
- Parent workshops are organized periodically around topics such as health, nutrition, and parenting.

Staff

- It is the Centre's policy to hire Early Childhood Educators (ECE's) who are registered with the College of Early Childhood Educators of Ontario.
- The teaching staff is led by a supervisor, who is a member in good standing with the College of Early Childhood Educators, with adequate experience, and who can plan and deliver play-based learning and care programs. (*Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007*)
- M.L.E.L.C. ensures that all the teaching staff should be a member in good standing of the College of Early Childhood Educators with adequate experience.
- A committee comprising of the Directors and the Supervisor conducts all permanent hiring.
- Market Lane E.L.C. ensures that all the staff has a valid Vulnerable Sector Police Check, a valid First Aid (including Infant and Child CPR) certificate and are adequately vaccinated.
- The staff-child ratio is in line with the *Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA), 2014*.

<u>Classroom</u>	<u>Staff: Children</u>
Room 1 is licensed for 15 primary/Junior school age children or 15 preschoolers	1:15
Room 2 is licensed for 15 Toddlers	1:5
Room 3 is licensed for 24 Preschoolers	1:8
Room 4 is licensed for 10 Infants	1:3

PROGRAM

Infants (6 weeks to 18 months)

Our experienced and compassionate staff cares for 10 infants in a safe and secure environment that has been designed for infants. Infants in group care have opportunities for early socialization and stimulation. We believe that every experience is a learning experience, and infants are cared for in a way that optimizes their opportunities for learning and social interaction throughout the day.

Toddlers (18 months to 30 months)

- 15 Toddlers are guided through this phase of their development in a warm and stimulating atmosphere. Toddlers play has a serious purpose and our ECEs allow the play to be driven by the child's interests.
- Children in the toddler room are encouraged to cooperate and act independently while developing cognitive, life, and social skills.

Pre-School (30 months to 6 years)

- Our qualified and caring staff guide 24 pre-school children in an inspiring environment.
- The central focus for our preschool program is play-based, active learning. Children interact with well-planned settings for enhanced learning through play. Group and individual activities encourage creative, cognitive, physical, emotional, and social development.

School-Age (68 months to 13 years)

- Our goal for our 15 school-age children is to have a safe and enjoyable time in a club-type of atmosphere.
- Daily, children are exposed to a variety of fun, age-appropriate activities which include cognitive games and puzzles, sensory and creative activities, reading, music, indoor and outdoor play, and special events. We strive to encourage each child to develop growth of independence, self-confidence, a sense of responsibility and respect for others and the environment.

Supervision

- Each child in attendance at M.L.E.L.C. is ensured safety and well-being.
- Children are supervised during indoors, outdoors and washroom routines. Children are not left alone under any circumstances at any point of time.
- Each child's attendance is recorded upon arrival and departure and the parents should make sure that the teacher is aware of the drop off and pick-up.
- You are required to drop and pick up your child in between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m.
- Only adults designated by the parents on the consent form should pick up the child and this must be informed to the center supervisor by the parents. A photo identification must be presented by anyone, other than the parents when picking up the child.
- No child will be supervised by any person younger than 18 years of age and who is not an employee of M.L.E.L.C.

Supervision of Students and Volunteers

- M.L.E.L.C. may have volunteers and/or Early Childhood Education students working within the organization along with the staff throughout the year.
- Volunteers and placements students will be always under the direction and supervision of the M.L.E.L.C. staff. The M.L.E.L.C. staff will ensure that no volunteer or student is left alone with a child at any time. It is the supervisor's responsibility to orient the volunteer with their responsibilities.
- Volunteers and placement students are never counted in staffing ratios and are required to adhere to all the policies and procedures laid down by M.L.E.L.C. and act in a professional manner.

Hours of Operation

The center opens Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.

As regulated by the *CCEYA 2014*, a child can stay a maximum of ten hours per day at the center.

Statutory Holidays

The center will be closed on regular statutory holidays.

- Family Day
- Good Friday
- Victoria Day
- Canada Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Day
- Civic Day
- Boxing Day

**The center will close early on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.*

Fee Subsidy

- Parents can receive a subsidy, administered through the York Region to assist with childcare fees.
- To determine if a parent qualifies for a full or partial subsidy, an assessment form must be completed by the parent. M.L.E.L.C. will then bill the family accordingly.
- The Supervisor can provide advice for parents regarding the subsidy system.
- If the parent does not qualify for subsidy, or if the subsidy expires, the parent is solely responsible for the full childcare fee.

Modes of Payment

- Payments can be made by cheque, cash, or e-transfer.
- Your payment should be placed in an envelope with the child's name and handed over to the supervisor. If you are making the payment by cash, please make sure you receive a receipt at that time.
- A receipt will be issued for tax purposes at the end of the calendar year.

Late Fees (Non base Fee)

- M.L.E.L.C. closes at 06:00pm and a late fee of \$2.00 per minute will be charged after that.
- Parents will be asked to sign a late fee memo and the money is to be paid directly to the staff.
- No receipt will be issued for this payment.
- Effective January 2024, monthly fees for the children should be paid within first 10 days of the month. A late fee of \$50/- will be charged, if the payment is delayed for more than 10 days.

Vacation policy

- Effective November 2022, the Market Lane Early Learning Centre's vacation policy for parents have been cancelled.
- There are no longer vacation days discounts for the families. You are entitled to pay the fees for all the days your children are enrolled for and shall pay the full amount of fees.
- In case if you decide to go for vacation for a longer time duration, and you want to secure the spot for your child to come, you must put a deposit in place. And once you are back from your vacation, we will refund the deposit back to you.

Fee Structure

Upon enrolment, parents are required to leave a last month deposit. The deposit is 50% of the program fee.

Families with two children will leave a deposit for both children. This fee is due prior to child's start date.

- All fees must be paid within the first week of each calendar month. The fee can be spilt into two payments, first payment will be due on first week of the month and second payment will be due on third week of the month.
- Fees are applied to all days that M.L.E.L.C. is open as well as statutory holidays and sick days. There is no break in your childcare fee at any time of the year.

Change in rates with CWELCC

- Market Lane Early Learning Centre is enrolled under CWELCC system.
- The discounted rates for parents enrolled as of October 31st, 2022, will remain applicable to those parents under CWELCC program. The parents' discounts given will continue to be provided.

Base Fee charged to the parents under CWELCC System

PROGRAM	Base Rate – Pre CWELCC (March 27, 2022)	Base Rate less 25% (Nov – Dec 2022) (Under 6 yrs of age)	Base Rate less 52.75% (Effective Jan 1, 2023) (Under 6 yrs of age)
INFANT FULL DAY	\$78.00	\$58.50	\$36.86
INFANT HALF DAY	\$59.00	\$44.25	\$27.88
TODDLER FULL DAY	\$73.00	\$54.75	\$34.49
TODDLER HALF DAY	\$47.00	\$35.25	\$22.21
PRESCHOOL FULL DAY	\$68.00	\$51.00	\$32.13
PRESCHOOL HALF DAY	\$46.00	\$34.50	\$21.74
KINDERGARTEN FULL DAY	\$61.00	\$45.75	\$28.82
KINDERGARTEN HALF DAY	\$46.00	\$34.50	\$21.74
SCHOOL AGE FULL DAY (6 yrs. and over)	\$51.00	\$51.00	\$51.00
SCHOOL AGE BEFORE (6 yrs. and over)	\$25.00	\$25.00	\$25.00
SCHOOL AGE AFTER (6 yrs. and over)	\$32.00	\$32.00	\$32.00
SCHOOL AGE BEFORE & AFTER (6 yrs. and over)	\$43.00	\$43.00	\$43.00
SUMMER PROGRAM (6 yrs. and over)	\$51.00	\$51.00	\$51.00

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

(A detailed Policies & Procedures Manual is available with the Supervisor)

Admission & Discharge Policy

- We do require that the parents/guardian and their child(ren) visit the center prior to enrolment. This process allows your child(ren) to become familiar with our staff and the facility.
- If you feel it necessary, we can arrange for your child(ren) to be left in our care for two hours, free of charge as a trial before leaving them for a full day.
- An interview will be arranged to familiarize new families with the surroundings and to answer questions.
- On being offered a spot at the MLELC, parents are required to complete forms as legislated by the *Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA), 2014*, two weeks prior to the child attending the center. These forms will be kept in the child's record.
- It is important that parents keep us informed of any changes to phone, address, emergency contacts, immunization, and the child's state of health.

List of forms you will be required to read and complete:

- Registration Form
- Health & Medical Form
- Consent Form
- Parent Handbook and Fee Agreement

List of documents required for enrolment:

- Immunization Record
- A non-refundable registration fee of \$100 per child (**Non base Fee**). This fee will be charged once, at the time of registration and will be charged again if a family has been withdrawn from our program for more than 1 years.
- For the first day, new parents are encouraged to stay with their child at the beginning of the day to reassure him/her and to minimize fears until both, the parents and the child become more comfortable.
- Please note that Market Lane ELC reserves the right to deny admittance to our programs where the parents have breached our Parental Code of Conduct (i.e. being verbally abusive, threatening, swearing, etc.)

Withdrawal Notice

- A written two weeks/ 10 business days' notice must be given to the Program Supervisor prior to permanent withdrawal from the program.
- If such notice is not provided, the parent agrees to provide Market Lane ELC with payment in lieu of notice for the same period.

Wait List Policy

At Market Lane ELC, we try to accommodate all children. However, there may be times when we do not have spot available for your child. In such a situation, the child will be placed on the Market Lane ELC wait list.

There are no fees for placing your child's name on the Market Lane ELC wait list and there is no obligation to register for the spot, should one be offered by the center.

How are vacancies determined?

- if another child is moved up to a different classroom (eg: infant – toddler)
- if a child changes the days which they are enrolled.
- if a child withdraws from the center.
- if your child's age changes from the original age group, in which case he/she will be in a different age bracket and there is a spot available in the other classroom; provided there is not a wait list for that class.

Waiting list priority order

- current students and students who were enrolled in the center during the previous year.
- children currently enrolled and needing to graduate to the next age group

- applicants who are siblings of students currently enrolled
 - applicants who are extended family members of currently enrolled students.
 - applicants who have been on our waiting list.
 - applicants from the public.
 - * *Special consideration will be given to families on the wait list who risk losing their newly granted fee subsidy if they do not secure a childcare spot within a specific time frame.*
 - * *Returning families will be included on the wait list and must await list registration form to the Supervisor. The time span between the withdrawal of a family and their new wait list registration must not exceed two years.*
- Every effort will be made to contact the family regarding an available spot for the child. We will attempt to contact the family a total of three times. If the family fails to return a third call within one week, or refuses the offer for the third time, they will be withdrawn from the Market Lane ELC waiting list.
 - Once withdrawn from the wait list, the family must forward a new registration form to the Supervisor to be placed on the wait list again.
 - A record of the wait list will be kept in the office. Parents who wish to know their position on the wait list are to call the office where the supervisor or designate will inform the family verbally of their number in line. Additionally, families who wish to visit the center to know their current position on the wait list will be informed verbally by the supervisor or designate what their current position is.
 - The wait list will be managed in a manner that maintains the privacy and confidentiality of the children listed on it.
 - Should you have any queries about your child's position on the wait list, do not hesitate to contact the Program Supervisor.

Parent Issues and Concerns Policy

- It is the goal of Market Lane ELC to provide services of the highest quality.
- To achieve this, we welcome ongoing feedback from families. Hearing compliments and concerns helps us to build on and improve our services.
- We will respond to all concerns that families may have.

Compliments

- If a parent/guardian would like to compliment an employee of the organization; they are encouraged to tell the employee.
- If the family would like the employee to be recognized within the organization, they can inform the Supervisor either verbally or in writing. The Supervisor will ensure that the Director is informed of compliments that are received both verbally and those received in writing.

Complaints

- If a parent/guardian has a concern about the care provided, they are encouraged to discuss this with the employee who is working directly with their child. The employee will work with the family to resolve the situation as quickly as possible. If the situation is not resolved, or if a parent/guardian is uncomfortable approaching the employee, they can request assistance from the Supervisor.
- The parent/guardian may file a written complaint with the Supervisor. The following information should be forwarded to the Supervisor:
 - nature of the complaint
 - outline of relevant circumstances
 - steps already taken to resolve the issue
 - action desired
- Within five working days of receiving a written complaint, the Supervisor will work with the family to make a thorough inquiry into the complaint and to prepare a report summarizing the problem, including the discussion with the parent, the Supervisor's recommendations and the actions taken.
- If the family is not satisfied with the action taken by the Supervisor, the parent may file a written complaint with the Director. The Director will have five working days to review, investigate and respond to the parent's complaint.

- The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.
- Investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial, and respectful to parties involved.
- Contact information is posted on Parent Information Boards and is available on our website.

Confidentiality

- Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially, and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff, students and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society).

Conduct

- Our centre maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication, and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated from anybody.
- If at any point a parent/guardian, provider or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused, or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the supervisor and/or licensee.

Emergency Management Policy

- Market Lane ELC is equipped with telephone service that is always accessible to staff and can be used to obtain emergency assistance.
- Duties of each staff member in the event of a fire and a fire exit plan is posted at the entrance of the center and in each classroom.
- Fire drills are conducted every month in accordance with Ontario Regulation 213/07 (Fire Code) made under the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997* and a written record maintained for at least 12 months from the date of the drill.
- In the event the center must be evacuated, the Assembly Point is at the "Island" in the center of the parking lot.
- The emergency shelter, in case of evacuation will be at Woodbridge Public School, 60 Burwick Avenue, Woodbridge, Ontario.
- In the event of a medical emergency, we may need to take your child to the hospital. In some circumstances, emergency help may be called before parents are notified. Every effort will be made to notify parents immediately after emergency help is called.
- On reaching safety, the staff will contact parents by phone to ask them to pick-up children. As soon as reasonably possible during an emergency the supervisor will send an email to all parents informing them of the situation, any applicable instructions, and the known next steps.
- Market Lane ELC has an Emergency Management Policy in place which must be reviewed by all staff, students, and volunteers prior to the start of employment/ volunteer position, any time there are revisions and annually thereafter.

Arrival & Departure Policy

- Children are signed in and out by staff members upon their arrival and departure.
- We ask that if your child is not going to attend care as per usual that you inform the center by 10am. This will help us plan for meals, and activities for the day.
- When your child does not attend daycare, you must call to let us know the reason – if it is a communicable illness, we are required to record this in case of other cases breaking out. If no one answers the phone, please leave a brief message. Also, upon arrival and preparing your child for the day please help them or direct them to wash their hands before beginning to play with toys, to prevent the spread of germs.
- If someone else will be picking up your child, please let staff know upon arrival. Photo ID will be required by the person picking up your child as well if the staff member is not familiar with that person. Please let any individuals other than parents who may pick up the children that they will be asked for picture ID in order to ensure the safety of all children. Children will not be released to unauthorized individuals.

- If someone shows up to pick up your child and staff was not made aware of it, we will have to track you down to confirm that this is in fact permitted, as well as see a picture ID of that individual to confirm their identity.

Immunization, Illness & Medication Policy

Immunization

- Updated immunization record must be provided on enrolment to the Market Lane ELC and once enrolled the records must be updated on a regular basis.
- If parents object to immunize their child, a “*Statement of Conscience or Religious Beliefs*” or “*Medical Exemption*” form must be provided.

Illness

- If your child is too sick to attend daycare, please keep him/her at home. The best place for a child to be recuperating from an illness is home.
- If your child experiences any of the following please keep him/her at home until fully recovered, or well enough to participate in normal everyday activities.
 - Fever
 - Excessive discharge from the mouth, nose, eyes, or ears
 - Red discoloration of the whites of the eye(s)
 - Skin rash
 - Abdominal pain, vomiting or diarrhea
 - A deep, hacking cough
 - Breathing difficulties
 - Yellowish discoloration of the eyes or skin.
 - Pus filled or oozing cuts over the skin
- If your child is sent to the Market Lane ELC with any of these symptoms or develop them during the day, he/she will be sent back home. You should arrange for back-up care when your child is sick, and unfortunately there are no refunds or discounts for days that your child does not attend daycare. There are still costs associated with each childcare spot each day that unfortunately cannot be avoided if your child is not in attendance.
- However, if your child is hospitalized for a long period of time exceptions may be made with presentation of documentation from the hospital.

Medication

- The staff is not permitted to administer any non-prescription medication to your child unless you provide them with a letter from your doctor indicating his consent and the prescribed dosage.
- Prescription medication must be provided in the original container with the child’s name, date, name of the medication and instruction for dosage, administration, and storage.
- You will also be asked to complete a Medication Form available with the supervisor and the medication will be administered by an ECE or the Supervisor.

Food & Nutrition Policy

- Nutritious food is essential for a child’s development and our menus are prepared based on *Canada’s Food Guide and Child Care & Early Years Act, 2014*.
- At Market Lane ELC we provide nutritious snacks and freshly prepared meals and follow a nuts free policy. Weekly menus are available on our website.
- Parents are to provide formula milk and/or breast milk for infants
- It is essential that we are made aware of any food allergies or food restriction for religious reasons. We will attempt to provide alternate food when necessary, however we may not be able to cater to all requirements. Please be sure to discuss this with the Supervisor before your child is enrolled to the Market Lane ELC.
- Please do not bring any outside food into the childcare center unless approved by the supervisor, as there may be staff, children, or parents with life-threatening allergies.

Meals and Snack Policy

Market Lane Early Learning Center offers meals that go above and beyond the recommendations of the Canadian Food Guide. We follow seasonal menus that are developed and approved by a certified dietitian. Snacks and lunches are not prepared on the premises. The menu is posted outside the kitchen and are available upon request. Please notify the center supervisor if your child has any food allergies or restrictions before commencing at the center. If you would like to bring your child's lunch from home, please include an instruction letter on how the lunch is to be served. Please label all your child's personal items.

Snacks from home are not allowed into the center due to allergies. Please ensure that all food is eaten or discarded before entering the center.

Sleep Policy

- Children younger than 12 months must be placed for sleep in a manner consistent with the recommendations set out in the document “*Joint Statement on Safe Sleep: Preventing Sudden Infant Deaths in Canada*” published by Public Health Agency of Canada unless the child's physician recommends in writing otherwise. Market Lane ELC ensures all children are placed for sleep in a manner consistent with these guidelines.
- It is recommended that children younger than 12 months be placed on their backs to sleep to lower the chance of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), however; parents may request otherwise with a doctor's written recommendation, and this must be documented on the Enrolment Form.
- Parents will indicate in the Enrollment Form what the child is to use during nap time (i.e.. light blanket, swaddle blanket, sleeping sack, soother) or if the child is to have a reduced, extended or no nap.
- Parents will be consulted respecting their child's sleeping arrangements at the time the child is enrolled at Market Lane ELC, upon transition to another classroom or upon a parent's request.
- Infants will be fed following the written instructions provided by the parents; however, it is important to note that bottles should not be given to infants while they are lying down. Bottles should never be propped against something or left in a child's mouth when they are falling asleep or asleep.
- Infants must sleep in their assigned cribs and at no point in time are infants to be left sleeping in the bouncy chairs, swings, or any other place other than the crib. Under no circumstances are pillows, heavy blankets, bottles/sippy cups, stuffed toys and/or crib bumpers to be used in an infant sleep room.
- Children older than 12 months must be placed for sleep in a manner advised by the parents.
- A staff is physically present in the sleep room to supervise the children and conduct physical checks.
- Direct visual and physical sleep checks (checking for breathing, increased/decreased breathing sounds, tossing, and turning, etc.) will be completed for all age groups and documented as follows:
 - Infants/Toddlers – direct visual and physical sleep checks every 15 minutes
 - Preschool/ School Age – direct visual and physical sleep checks every 30 minutes
- Any change in a child's sleep pattern must be documented in the child's daily report to inform parent(s) of this change and may require that the child is monitored more frequently during sleep.
- Lighting in the sleep room must allow for direct visual monitoring. Lights can be dimmed, but staff must be able to see children clearly.
- Each child in care will have a crib or a cot labelled with their name with a crib/cot sheet. No child is to be put in a crib or on a cot without a clean bedsheet.
- Sleep time will not exceed two hours in our toddler, preschool, or school age classrooms. Infants may sleep for longer during the day as per the parent(s) request.
- Arrange children's cots in a head to foot formation with the cot 1.5 feet apart and with an aisle of at least 3 feet to ensure children and staff can safely evacuate in case of an emergency.
- Make sure you can see the child's face while sleeping; blankets and sleep toys must never cover a child's face.
- Staff, students, and volunteers will review the Sleep Supervision Policy before the start of their employment/placement/volunteer position, any time there is a revision and annually thereafter to ensure understanding.

Serious Occurrence Policy

The safety and wellbeing of our children in licensed childcare center programs is of highest priority and we work diligently to provide a safe, creative, and nurturing environment for the children. Despite all the best precautions, serious occurrences can sometimes take place.

What is a Serious Occurrence?

- death of a child
- a life-threatening injury to or a life-threatening illness of a child who receives childcare
- abuse, neglect or an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child while receiving childcare
- an incident where a child receiving childcare goes missing or is temporarily unsupervised
- an unplanned disruption of the normal operations of a childcare center that poses a risk to the health, safety, or well-being of children.

How to respond to a serious occurrence?

- If a child is directly involved, attend to the child first. Assess the situation. If the child's well-being is compromised, assess the extent.
- Remove the child from any immediate danger. Stay with the child and keep him/her as comfortable as possible.
- Designate a person to call 911, report what you have seen to the Directors and call child's parents or guardians.
- Give child any first aid required. If first aid required, continue with first aid until EMS arrives.
- Accompany child to hospital
- All witnesses will remain at the school until they have given full report.
- The Ontario government has introduced a policy that requires licensed childcare centers and private home daycare agencies to post information about serious occurrences that happen at a center or a home daycare location effective November 2011. To support increased transparency and access to information, a *Serious Occurrence Notification Form (SONF)* must be posted at the center or home daycare location in a visible area for at least ten business days.
- A report is provided to a program adviser of any serious occurrence within 24 hours
- Annual analysis of all serious occurrences that occurred in the previous year is conducted and records are maintained of the actions taken in response to the analysis.

Child Abuse/ Neglect Policy

Our goal is to provide a safe and happy learning environment for the children enrolled in our day care program. Children must be treated with respect. Self-respect is important in the healthy development of children.

We do not allow or tolerate physical/ verbal abuse:

- of one child to another
- of a child by a member of the staff
- of a child by a parent
- Every person in Ontario is required under the *Child and Family Services Act* to report his/her belief that a child may need protection. "A person who believes, on reasonable grounds, that a child is or may be in need of protection shall forthwith report the belief and information, upon which it is based to a society."
- The legislation specifically requires individuals who perform professional or official duties with respect to children such as the "operator or employee of a day nursery" to report suspicion of child abuse. If in the course of our professional duties, the supervisor and/or the staff of the center have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child may have been abused, the suspicion, and the information upon which that suspicion is based, is reported immediately to the *Children's Aid Society (CAS)*.
- We cannot judge or decide what child abuse is, we must leave that to the agency worker.
- We are not allowed to contact the parents first.
- In the unlikely event an agency worker calls you; we can assure you that utmost confidentiality would be maintained by the staff. Only those individuals directly involved would know of the call and once the agency has investigated and closed the case, the matter would be ended as far as we are concerned.

- We would not refer to it again and we hope it would make no difference in the close, supportive relationship we have with all our parents.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaidthereportingabuse/index.asp>

Incident Reports

- Parents will be informed by telephone/email regarding any incidents occurring with their child whilst under our care. The parents will be informed as soon as possible regarding the same.
- If your child has an accident while in our care, the staff will fill out an accident report form describing the circumstances of injury and any first aid administered.
- The staff will also note the accident in the daily written record.
- You will be requested to read and sign the report when you arrive to pick up the child.
- A copy of the report will be given to you and a copy will be retained at the center.

Outdoor Play

- Outdoor play is very important for the children and is a big part of our program. The children will enjoy our lovely, secure play yard twice a day.
- Parents are required to ensure that their child is properly dressed for the weather.

Field Trips

- Field trips and walks are a regular and carefully supervised part of our program.
- Walks in the neighborhood are often taken without previous planning.
- Field trips beyond the immediate neighborhood will be notified in advance.

Clothing & Toys

- Please make sure that your child is dressed appropriately according to the weather conditions as the children go outside for two hours every day.
- All children will require a change of clothes and a naptime blanket to remain at the Market Lane ELC.
- Parents also need to provide a pair of indoor shoes in the winter so that the child can remove the boots; bare feet is not permitted in the center for safety reasons.
- Please encourage your child to leave their toys and treasured possessions at home so they do not get lost or broken. However, if your child requires a special toy at rest time, they may bring it in a bag with their name on it.
- Please make sure your child's belongings are labelled to prevent loss.
- Market Lane ELC will not be responsible for lost items.

Inclement Weather Policy

- Market Lane ELC implements an Inclement Weather Policy to ensure safety measures are followed when weather conditions become dangerous.
- Our foremost concern is to ensure the safety of our students, families, and staff and to ensure that every possible measure has been taken to prevent injury and to maintain a safe environment, inside and outside our center.
- In the event of serious inclement weather, every effort will be made to keep the center operational during regular hours, however, we may be forced to cancel some of our services.
- On severe weather day's we ask all our families to please call the center before leaving home. Parents/guardians need to be aware that families will not be reimbursed for days missed due to severe weather conditions.

Closures due to natural calamities

- In the event of serious inclement weather such as snow days, storm etc., every effort will be made to keep the Centre operational during regular hours, however, we may be forced to cancel our services.

- Market Lane Early Learning Centre will not be providing any refunds to the situations arising out of our control, such as storms, snow days etc. If we are closed during that period, we shall not be reimbursing any payments done for the day.
- On severe weather day's we ask all our families to please call the Centre before leaving home. Parents/guardians need to be aware that families will not be reimbursed for days missed due to severe weather conditions

Access to Child & Premises Policy

Market Lane ELC will ensure that we do not prohibit a parent from having access to their child at our program or from accessing the premises when their child is in care except on reasonable ground that the parent does not have a legal right of access to the child or if the parent is behaving in a disruptive manner.

If it is an emergency, call 911 immediately.

Parent Code of Conduct

- We all have the right to be safe and feel safe in our community. Market Lane ELC's Code of Conduct sets clear standards of behaviour that apply to all individuals involved in our center community including parents or guardians, volunteers, and teachers.
- These standards apply whether they are on Market Lane E.L.C.'s property or at center-sponsored events and activities.
- All members of the Market Lane ELC community are to be treated with respect and dignity regardless of race, creed, sexual orientation, disability, or any other ground protected by *Ontario's Human Rights Code*
- All adult members have the responsibility to act as models of good behaviour. Foul language (swearing, name-calling, shouting, etc.) is not appropriate. Individuals engaging in such behaviour will be asked to leave the premises immediately.
- Inappropriate behaviour or harassment of any kind towards a child, student, parent, or teacher will result in immediate intervention up to and including the family's expulsion from the center and/or police intervention. This type of behaviour includes but is not limited to harassment or intimidation by written note, email, words, gestures and/or body language.
- No weapons are allowed on center property or at center functions.
- Alcohol and illicit drugs are not allowed on center property or at center sponsored events. The consequences for failure to comply will include but is not limited to the family's expulsion from the center.
- The privacy and confidentiality of our parents, guardians, teachers, volunteers, and students is important to us.
- All concerns and comments should be addressed with the teachers. Should this discussion not address your concerns, the next step is to review the situation with the Supervisor.
- Gossip and public criticism are unacceptable. There should be no discussion of concerns with other parents in the center hallways, the parking lot or via electronic mediums such as Facebook, Myspace, personal blog sites or other forms of electronic information sharing.
- Any pictures taken at the center or during center events are for the private use of Market Lane ELC families only. These pictures cannot be posted in on-line photo albums or social media.

Communication Policy

- We have an open-door policy with parents, as this is one of the key components in developing a child's future.
- We are always open to questions, comments, or suggestions for the betterment of the program.
- If you need to contact Market Lane ELC for any reason, please feel free to call 905-265-7285. If you get our voice mail, please do leave a message, as often we are out or busy with children and unable to get to the phone at that moment. We do check messages regularly and return phone calls as soon as we get the chance.
- We do not mind calls to check to see how your children are doing during the day. We do please ask to limit them to two per day, as they do disrupt the program to pull a teacher out to speak over the phone.

Smoking Policy

- The *Smoke-Free Ontario Act* came into effect on May 31,2006, prohibiting smoking in enclosed workplaces and public places, to protect workers and the public from second-hand smoke. Smoking is prohibited in a day nursery

licensed under the *Day Nurseries Act* and as such no lighted tobacco can be brought onto premises of the Market Lane Early Learning Centre or on the playground.

The centre's operator is responsible to:

- ensure that everyone is aware that smoking is prohibited.
- post No Smoking signs at all entrances, exits, washrooms and other appropriate location.
- ensure that no one smokes on the premises.
- ensures that a person who does not comply, does not remain on the premises.

Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy

Purpose

This policy and the procedures within help support the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care.

This policy will provide staff, students and volunteers with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for ensuring the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care, including 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.

This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for policies and procedures regarding the safe arrival and dismissal of children in care.

Note: definitions for terms used throughout this policy are provided in a Glossary at the end of the document.

Policy

General

Market Lane Early Learning Centre will ensure that any child receiving childcare at the childcare centre is only released to the child's parent/guardian or an individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization the childcare centre may release the child to.

Market Lane Early Learning Centre will only dismiss children into the care of their parent/guardian or another authorized individual. The centre will not release any children from care without supervision.

Where a child does not arrive in care as expected or is not picked up as expected, staff must follow the safe arrival and dismissal procedures set out below.

Procedures

Accepting a child into care

1. When accepting a child into care at the time of drop-off, program staff 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 staff must confirm that the person is listed on Enrollment package or where the individual is not listed, ask the parent/guardian to provide authorization for pick-up in writing (e.g., note or email).
 - document the change in pick-up procedure in the daily written record.
 - sign the child in on the classroom attendance record.

Where a child has not arrived in care as expected

1. Where a child does not arrive at the child care centre and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off (e.g., left a voice message or advised the closing staff at pick-up), the staff in the classroom must:
2. Inform the Supervisor and they must commence contacting the child's parent/guardian no later than 09:00am. Staff shall call the parents or send them an email. If there is no communication from parents regarding the same, staff must leave a voice note and mark the child absent after an hour. Once the child's absence has been confirmed, program staff shall document the child's absence on the attendance record and any additional information about the child's absence in the daily written record.

Releasing a child from care

1. The staff 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 childcare may release the child to. Where the staff does not know the individual picking up the child (i.e., parent/guardian or authorized individual),

- confirm with another staff member 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 against 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 (before centre closes)

1. Where a parent/guardian has previously communicated with the staff a specific time or timeframe that their child is to be picked up from care and the child has not been picked up, even after 30 minutes have passed by, the program staff shall contact the parent/guardian via phone call and advise that the child is still in care and has not been picked up.
- Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian, staff must keep on calling again and leave a message for the parent/guardian. Where the individual picking up the child is an authorized individual and their contact information is available, the staff shall proceed with contacting the individual to confirm pick-up as per the parent/guardian's instructions or leave a voice message to contact the centre.
- Where the staff has not heard back from the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was to pick up the child the staff shall contact emergency contact, to come and pick up; and if no response, wait until program closes and then refer to procedures under "where a child has not been picked up and program is closed."

Where a child has not been picked up and the centre is closed

1. Where a parent/guardian or authorized individual who was supposed to pick up a child from care and has not arrived by pick up time or the by the centre closure, staff shall ensure that the child is given a snack and activity, while they await their pick-up. Write it down in the classroom logbook as well.
2. One staff shall stay with the child, while a second staff proceeds with calling the parent/guardian to advise that the child is still in care and inquire their pick-up time. In the case where the person picking up the child is an authorized individual, the staff shall contact the parent/guardian first and then proceed to contact the authorized individual responsible for pick-up if unable to reach the parent/guardian.
3. If the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the child, the staff contact authorized individuals listed on the child's file.
4. Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized individual listed on the child's file (e.g., the emergency contacts) by 30 minutes, Click or tap here to enter text.the staff shall proceed with contacting the local Children's Aid Society (CAS), 1-800-718-3850. Staff shall follow the CAS's direction with respect to next steps. Make a note in the classroom log book about what happened, and when were the calls made to the parents and communication happened or left voice notes.

Dismissing a child from care without supervision procedures

Staff will only release children from care to the parent/guardian or other authorized adult. Under no circumstances will children be released from care to walk home alone.

Glossary

Individual authorized to pick-up/authorized individual: a person that the parent/guardian has advised the child care program staff in writing can pick-up their child from care.

Licensee: The individual or corporation named on the licence issued by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of the child care centre and home child agency.

Parent/guardian: A person having lawful custody of a child or a person who has demonstrated a settled intention to treat a child as a child of his or her family.

Regulatory Requirements: Ontario Regulation 137/15
Safe arrival and dismissal policy

50. Every licensee shall ensure that each child care centre it operates and each premises where it oversees the provision of home child care has a policy respecting the safe arrival and dismissal of children that,

- (a) provides that a child may only be released from the child care centre or home child care premises,
 - (i) to individuals indicated by a child's parent, or
 - (ii) in accordance with written permission from a child's parent to release the child from the program at a specified time without supervision; and
- (b) sets out the steps that must be taken if,
 - (i) a child does not arrive as expected at the centre or home child care premises, or
 - (ii) a child is not picked up as expected from the centre or home child care premises.

Disclaimer: This document is a sample of a policy and procedure that has been prepared to assist licensees in understanding their obligations under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA) and O. Reg. 137/15. It is the responsibility of the licensee to ensure that the information included in this document is appropriately modified to reflect the individual circumstances and needs of each child care centre it operates and each premises where the licensee oversees the provision of home child care.

Please be advised that this document does not constitute legal advice and should not be relied on as such. The information provided in this document does not impact the Ministry's authority to enforce the CCEYA and its regulations. Ministry staff will continue to enforce such legislation based on the facts as they may find them at the time of any inspection or investigation.

It is the responsibility of the licensee to ensure compliance with all applicable legislation. If the licensee requires assistance with respect to the interpretation of the legislation and its application, the licensee may wish to consult legal counsel.