



St. Jacobs Daycare

PARENT HANDBOOK

TODDLER – PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS

12 Young Street
St. Jacobs, ON N0B 2N0
519-664-1110

SCHOOL AGE PROGRAM

Located at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church
1310 King Street North
St. Jacobs, ON N0B 2N0
519-664-1110

PHILOSOPHY

At St. Jacobs Daycare, we believe that children are 'competent, capable, curious, and rich in potential.' As collaborators in their learning, we offer a positive, supportive environment that focuses on developing a child's sense of belonging, promotes engagement with peers, family and community, fulfills each child's potential through play, exploration and inquiry, and fosters expression in all forms. Moments of discovery can take place through child-directed and adult-supported experiences, as well through conversations, individual interactions and progression through our daily routines and transitions. Our educators are dedicated professionals who possess a wealth of experience, unique gifts, and a high level of enthusiasm for their work. They carefully observe, document, analyze and share the play experiences of individual children and groups of children. Thoughtful consideration is given to the needs, interests, and inquiries that children are making during play. Through careful analysis, intentional, material-rich play environments are created. St. Jacobs Daycare is dedicated to the inclusion of all children, and is a proud participant in the larger community.

PROGRAM STATEMENT

St. Jacobs Daycare is a non-profit, charitable early learning centre, licensed by the Ontario Ministry of Education. Our Registered Early Childhood Educators engage in partnership with children, their families, and the community at large to provide a responsive, inquiry-based emergent curriculum in a home-like environment. As progressive educators and willing collaborators, we have embraced the guiding document "How Does Learning Happen?" and we are committed to actively embodying the four central values outlined in the guide throughout our philosophy, pedagogy, environment, and interactions.

When children are connected to others and contribute meaningfully to their world, they gain a sense of belonging. At St. Jacobs Daycare, we create environments and guide interactions to support the safety and inclusion of all children. Through our conversations with individual children and groups, we promote respect, empathy, and perspective-taking. We collaborate with families and children to build positive relationships. St. Jacobs Daycare actively seeks, and responds to involvement from community partners to form relationships which promote belonging and growth within the community. We develop practices that support inclusion. The perspectives and gifts of educators, children and families are integrated into our program. We strive to accomplish these goals in the following ways:

- Our policies, practices, and environment support the inclusion of all children and families, and reflect the diversity of the world around us.
- We build positive relationships with parents by setting aside time at arrival and departure for meaningful verbal communication. We share our observations and reflections of children's experiences through multiple means: verbal communication,

written documentation, newsletters, learning stories, individual portfolios, displays of artwork, photos and documentation panels.

- We are continuously available to meet with families to provide ongoing feedback, as well as to participate in goal-setting and planning for the needs of individual children.
- We maintain awareness and involvement with the local community through outings, excursions, and participation in local events within St. Jacobs.
- St. Jacobs Daycare has formed ongoing relationships with community partners for mutual benefit. We seek assistance from local agencies in ongoing support for individual children. We welcome ECE students during their practicum at local community colleges, as well as local high school students on co-op placements.
- Our educators practice, model, and promote positive communication with families and children at all times. We strive to create warm and caring relationships with each individual child. We practice authentic, respectful communication with every interaction, which helps children feel loved, safe, and secure. We provide time for individual conversations throughout the day: during play periods, meals, transitions, and upon arrival and departure of each child.
- We offer indoor and outdoor play experiences which help connect children to the natural world. Objects from nature that can be explored and manipulated can be found indoors as well as in our outdoor play spaces.
- Our program rooms instill a sense of belonging for each child. Children's experiences, creations, ideas, and photos, including family photos, are displayed in multiple locations within each room.

St. Jacobs Daycare actively promotes the health, safety and well-being of children at all times. In a successful learning environment, children are physically active, confident, resilient and autonomous. Health and safety extends beyond meeting children's physical needs, and encompasses their emotional, intellectual and mental well-being. Children need to feel safe in many ways. To help children work towards self-regulation and self-care we offer intentionally planned, safe spaces. Their diverse physical, emotional and cognitive needs, capabilities and interests are accommodated in both our indoor and outdoor learning environments.

- Daily schedules are posted for each group of children. The schedules incorporate periods of indoor and outdoor play, active and quiet play, nutrition periods and

rest. All times posted on the schedule are approximate, and can be adjusted as needed. As a result, our schedule is both flexible and predictable, and able to accommodate both individual and group needs.

- We offer daily opportunities, indoors and outdoors, for active physical play and exploration. Children are regularly encouraged to take reasonable risks and increase their confidence. These activities will foster engagement, and instill a sense of wonder and curiosity.
- Within our indoor and outdoor environment, we have incorporated spaces that promote quiet play and reflection through inviting seating, home-like furnishings, soft toys and pillows, and spaces where children can spend time alone as they choose.
- We provide healthy meals and snacks in a relaxed eating environment.
- Our educators implement positive guidance strategies that promote peaceful resolutions in areas of disagreement. They strive to reflect and interpret children's feelings and emotional states through active listening, to help children both express and meet their needs.
- Children are encouraged to understand and express their individual physical needs, such as for rest, quiet and active play, food intake and toileting.
- We encourage the development of children's self-help and self-care skills, and see daily routines and transitions as opportunities to naturally build those skills.
- We hope to immerse children in the ongoing process of self-regulation, by promoting effective communication strategies and establishing an atmosphere of safety and trust, as well as actively engaging children in perspective-taking.
- We continually maintain an awareness of the children in their care, by monitoring their location, their actions and their health. We are consistently mindful of numbers and ratios within each room. All pertinent information is exchanged between staff members during transition periods and throughout the day.
- We maintain and promote positive health practices through such means as effective hand washing, safe food handling, and disinfection of surfaces, toys and equipment.

St. Jacobs Daycare sees children as “competent, capable, curious, and rich in potential.” Children who actively engage with materials, spaces, objects and their peers, in an environment which promotes exploration, play and inquiry will become lifelong learners. Our goal is to create a positive learning environment by providing responsive, relevant curriculum throughout the day. Children explore with their minds, their bodies and their senses. They can maintain their sense of wonder in an environment which is material-rich, interesting, and challenging. Educators support children’s natural curiosity by asking thought provoking questions and engaging in conversations which encourage children to investigate, explore, and test theories. Our curriculum planning provides opportunities for many varied and diverse child-initiated experiences. As well, educators will offer thoughtful, observation-based adult-supported experiences during regular play periods. Through all types of exploration, play and inquiry; children will engage and experiment with materials, and participate in experiences that support the development and growth of each individual child.

- We observe and document children’s interests, interactions and enjoyment. Our process of observation, reflection and curriculum design incorporates observations of individual children and their needs as well as group interests and dynamics. After reflecting on the observations, educators design intentional, experience-rich environments which encourage engagement in productive, child-initiated play experiences as well as adult-supported activities.
- As educators, we see ourselves as co-investigators and co-planners. The children’s ideas, theories and inquiries are incorporated into curriculum experiences that will challenge their capabilities, and encourage further investigation. Our goal is to help them discover and understand key concepts while engaging in play.
- We make our observations and reflections visible in many ways. As well as being the foundation of curriculum planning, we regularly post photo collages and stories, record and share conversations, and create documentation panels. Experiences and discoveries are also incorporated into individual portfolios, and learning stories. We observe and document group play and experiences as well as individual significant moments of discovery and growth.
- Opportunities exist for interactions, conversations and experiences throughout all aspects of the daily curriculum. Children can experience moments of curiosity and discovery during active and quiet play periods, as well as during transitions, during rest

periods, while engaging in personal care routines, and at meal times.

- Our flexible daily schedule allows for long periods of sustained play for children. Limited interruptions will help maintain a sense of calm throughout the centre.
- We encourage and invite participation from parents and the community at large. Community diversity will enrich and broaden the experiences of children in our care.

St. Jacobs Daycare believes that children express themselves in many ways, both verbally and non-verbally. Every child is a capable communicator, and we strive to foster expression in all forms. As children develop, they acquire, comprehend and utilize language for many purposes. We create space and opportunities for children to express themselves and be heard. We promote active listening. We see creative expression as a valuable means of communicating feelings, experiences, and ideas. Our learning environments promote literacy through engagement, stories, conversations and print rich experiences. We value authentic, meaningful and reciprocal communication between children and adults, and among peers. Our goal is to promote creative expression and meaningful communication throughout our curriculum.

- As educators, we are aware of the “many languages” of children. We facilitate successful communication between children so that they can adopt positive strategies for sharing ideas and problem-solving. Our focus moves beyond spoken words. Educators strive to interpret and clarify non-verbal cues, body language and gestures which are part of the “many languages” of children, and assist children in expressing themselves.
- We support children in building healthy relationships with their peers through positive interactions. We promote empathy and assist children in acquiring effective communication skills.
- Language and literacy materials are woven into all daily routines, experiences and spaces. We recognize the importance of stories and books for acquiring language and developing early literacy skills. While books are always available and shared, we also encourage conversation, songs, and storytelling. We create our own books and stories to share. We value the stories that children tell each other as enriching and meaningful, and we recognize that stories often lead to moments of discovery and self-reflection.
- Ample time, space and materials are provided to encourage creative expression. We support expression

in all forms – through drawing, painting, movement, sculpture and visual representation. Time spent with creative materials fosters imaginative thinking and representative play. A wide variety of art materials are available at all times.

- St. Jacobs Daycare recognizes the importance of music and movement as a means to both foster expression and promote literacy and numeracy. Children will have many child-led and adult-supported opportunities to learn music, create rhythms, listen to many types of music, participate in rhythmic movement, sing, and engage with rhymes and finger plays.

The educators at St. Jacobs Daycare are committed to a process of continuous professional learning. Through self-assessments of their own skills and needs, and also by preparing a professional portfolio, the educators engage in a process of self-reflection with regards to their own development and learning needs. Each staff member is encouraged to attend ongoing professional development training annually, as well as enriching their practice through webinars, in-service workshops, and conferences. St. Jacobs Daycare engages in community partnerships for networking, advocacy and professional development.

Along with continuous observation and reflection regarding children’s growth and development, St. Jacobs Daycare is committed to measuring the impact of our learning strategies with regards to children, their families and the community at large. We have established a formal process for gathering and analyzing feedback from parents regarding our program, and we continuously seek, receive, and evaluate informal feedback, in order to monitor and improve the quality and effectiveness of our programs. As a result, this program statement is a living document, which may be enhanced or altered according to the dynamic needs of our community, our families, and our educators.

Using “How Does Learning Happen?” as our guide, St. Jacobs Daycare strives to bring the best possible child care and early learning to the St. Jacobs community and beyond. We are committed to upholding the College of ECE’s Code of Ethics and Standards of Practices as a foundation for quality education. As Registered Early Childhood Educators, we are committed to continuous learning, and strive to maintain a professional practice that is current, relevant and responsive to children’s needs, built on our solid education and knowledge of child development. Our toddler, preschool and school age programs provide children the opportunity to be supported in a safe, caring home-like environment that is child-focused, collaborative and inquiry-based. All educators review, discuss,

and consult our guiding documents, as well as our program statement on a continual basis.

PROHIBITED PRACTICES

As legislated by the Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA), the following practices are not permitted:

- corporal punishment of the child
- physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purpose 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 child care centre 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, bedding; or
- inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE

The staff, students and volunteers at St. Jacobs Daycare strive to provide a positive environment for children to learn and grow. We promote positive pro-social behaviour among children and between children and adults. Our practices encourage the development of self-regulation, independence, positive communication and decision-making, while maintaining awareness of safety for all children.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Our Board of Directors plays an important role at St. Jacobs Daycare. The board provides representation to ensure various points of view are considered when policies are established/changed, fees and the annual budget are prepared, and strategic planning for future needs of the centre is discussed. The board is responsible for working with the Executive Director in the overall operation of the centre, in cooperation with all members.

Parents who are interested in learning more about this aspect of St. Jacobs Daycare, our policies and procedures manual, by-laws and constitution are available upon request from the Executive Director. We encourage all parents to participate whenever possible.

WAIT LIST

POLICY: St. Jacobs Daycare provides a clear overview of how we determine the wait list, offers of admission into the program, and wait list management, in accordance with the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014. Parents/guardians are provided with their wait list status when requested, in a manner that protects personal information. St. Jacobs Daycare's wait list policy is available for parents to review at any time in the parent handbook and on our website. St. Jacobs Daycare does not require a fee in order to place a child on our wait list.

PROCEDURE:

APPLYING TO THE CENTRE

- Parents/guardians must apply to the wait list by submitting an online application through OneList Waterloo Region (www.regionofwaterloo.onehsn.com).
- Through the online application, some details regarding the program are available for parents/guardians (including the type of care available; infant, toddler, preschool, school age). Once the application has been completed on OneList, an application date is automatically generated in the online system which will help to determine your child's status on the wait list at the centre. Once the application is completed an email notification is generated to the centre supervisor, advising them a new application has been completed. The supervisor will log in to view the application, and within 1 week will send a welcome email to the parent/guardian confirming receipt of the application and an idea of the potential waitlist time.
- Parents/guardians are able to login to their online application at any time to view their current application, update any information or withdraw their application. There is no fee charged to parents/guardians to apply to the wait list and they can apply to up to 10 child care programs online.

WAIT LIST MANAGEMENT

- The supervisor reviews wait list information online through the OneList Administration site on an ongoing basis. Any conversations with parents/guardians on the wait list are noted on the child's application form for reference purposes.

- When a parent/guardian inquires about the status of their application on the waitlist, the supervisor will provide information about the program and spaces that are available, or may be coming available. Personal information about the wait list application is never disclosed to maintain privacy and confidentiality for all families.
- As child care spaces become available at the centre, the supervisor follows up with parents/guardians to offer child care spaces in priority order. We prioritize by order of oldest application date, considering the age of the child and the child care space that is available. Priority is given to families with siblings currently attending the centre or who have attended in the previous two years, as well as to centre staff.
- Once a parent/guardian has been contacted via phone and/or email regarding an available space, they are asked to provide confirmation within 72 hours that they want to register.
- If a response is not received from a parent/guardian within the specified time frame, the supervisor may remove the application on the OneList Administration site (this moves the 'active' application to 'inactive').
- Families that respond after the 72 hours has expired, and confirm that they want to register, would have their application moved back to 'active' on the OneList Administration site, with their original application date reinstated, and are placed in priority for the next available space, if the original space offered has been filled.
- In the event that a parent/guardian confirms that care is no longer required or requests to be removed from the wait list, the supervisor can remove the application, noting the conversation with the parent/guardian in the comments section.
- The supervisor will follow up with applications that are older than one year to inquire if care is still required. If no response is received, a second follow up advises the parent /guardian that their application to the wait list has been removed.
- Once enrolment forms are received and a start date is in place for the child, he/she is placed in the program and removed from the 'active' wait list online within the OneList Administration site by the supervisor.

ENROLMENT

St. Jacobs Daycare accommodates children aged 18 months to 12 years. Child-educator ratios vary based on the child's age and their placement at the centre. The toddler ratio (generally aged 18-30 months) is 1:5, and there are two groups of five toddlers in the centre. Preschool ratios (generally aged 30 months to five years) are 1:8. There are two groups of preschool children in the centre, with a maximum of two teachers in each room. The school-age ratio is 1:15 with a maximum group size of 30 children and two educators. Full-time and part-time enrolment is available. Priority will be given to full-time care when at capacity. Part-time children may be asked to switch days or withdraw in order to accommodate full time registrants.

• REGISTRATION PROCEDURE

A tour of the centre will familiarize parents/guardians and children with the centre. The centre supervisor will be happy to answer any questions you may have about the program. A completed registration package is required prior to your child's start date.

• PROGRAM ORIENTATION

Orientation to the program includes scheduled visits for parent and child prior to the official start date. In order to save your child's space, a \$500 non-refundable deposit is required at the time of enrolment confirmation. The deposit will be deducted from your first month's tuition.

FEE PAYMENTS

• POLICY

St. Jacobs Daycare's current Fee Schedule is available at the daycare as well as on our website. (<http://stjacobsdaycare.ca/fees>). Fee payments are based on room assignment. Children will move on to the next age group based on availability, development and age. Parents who have more than one child enrolled will receive a 10% tuition discount for the oldest child. Discounts do not apply to the school age program. Tuition is due on the last working day of the month for the upcoming month's care. A \$25 late fee will apply to payments received after that date.

• CHILD CARE SUBSIDY

St. Jacobs Day Care has a purchase of service agreement with the Region of Waterloo. If you wish to apply for child care subsidy, please contact the regional office or apply online. Any tuition not covered by subsidy is the responsibility of parents. As per the above policy, tuition is due on the last working day of the month for the next month's care.

• ABSENCE POLICY

There is no reduction of fees for absenteeism due to illness, inclement weather, statutory holidays and Christmas closure. Parents of school age children will not be charged on planned school closure dates (eg. Christmas Break, March Break, and Summer Break).

If you wish to withdraw your children for the summer months only, 50% of your regular monthly fee is required to hold your space for the fall. Parents of children registered in the school age program must pay for all scheduled days, including vacation time. In order to receive the vacation credit, two months notice must be given for July and August, and one month's notice must be given at all other times. Parents within the school age program are required to pay the upcoming September tuition in June in order to save their space for the following school year.

FUNDRAISING FEES

In lieu of fundraising activities, an annual \$50 fundraising fee is required..

SERVICE TERMINATIONS

• WITHDRAWAL

At least one month's written notice is required for withdrawal from the program. In lieu of one month's notice, full fees will be charged. At St. Jacobs Daycare's sole discretion, failure to comply with any of our policies, including any payment provisions, may result in termination of space, and/or any other available legal remedies.

• BEHAVIOUR RELATED TERMINATION

A decision to terminate a child's enrolment at daycare due to behaviour concerns is not taken lightly, and will not be made until all other avenues have been exhausted. The issue at hand will be clearly outlined to parents during the termination procedure. The issues will be documented and articulated to parents for further discussion. If issues persist, two weeks notice of termination will be given in writing. This termination policy is meant to protect the children and staff of the child care centre from physical and mental stress.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

• CHILD ILLNESS

The daycare follows the Community Health Department's guidelines regarding children's illnesses. When children are ill, they need appropriate care to help prevent the spread of infection to other children and staff in the centre. Staff will continuously observe your child's health throughout the day to ensure that your child is able to participate in daily activities. Children should be kept at home when the illness:

- prevents him/her from taking part in daily activities
- requires more care than staff can provide without affecting the health and safety of other children

- is infectious (high fever, vomiting, diarrhea, severe respiratory infection, undiagnosed skin rash, or red/discharging eyes)

If a child becomes ill while in attendance, parents will be contacted and asked to make arrangements to pick up their child. Please note that the Health Department has specific guidelines with respect to exclusion periods for some illnesses. You may be asked to keep your child home for a minimum of 24 hours, in some cases.

Please notify the centre when your child is absent due to illness. For record-keeping purposes, we need specific information about the type of illness your child is experiencing.

• **IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS**

St. Jacobs Daycare requires that before a child who is not in attendance at a school or private school, within the meaning of the *Education Act*, who is admitted to the centre, and from time to time thereafter, the child is immunized as directed by the local medical officer of health. The above does not apply where a parent of a child objects to the immunization on the ground that the immunization conflicts with the sincerely held convictions of the parent's religion or conscience, or a legally qualified medical practitioner gives medical reasons to the licensee as to why the child should not be immunized. The Statement of Conscience or Religious Belief form for religious/conscience objections must be completed by a "commissioner for taking affidavits" (i.e. notarized). The Statement of Medical Exemption form for medical exemptions to immunizations must be completed by a doctor or nurse practitioner. Children who have immunization exemptions are unable to attend during outbreaks.

• **ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATIONS AND DRUGS**

When possible, parents/guardians are encouraged to administer drugs or medication to their child at home, if it can be done without affecting the treatment schedule. The supervisor / designate oversees all drug and designates a RECE drug and medication administrator for each room. We will only administer prescription or non-prescription drugs and medications which are brought in their original container with written instructions on the label. A labeled bag will be used for all drugs and medications and will contain the following information: name of child, dosage, date of purchase, and instructions for storage and administration. All drugs and medications will be kept in a locked box and refrigerated as necessary. When non-prescribed medication is to be given, a parent will be called by an educator at the time the medication is to be given to confirm parental permission to administer the medication.

• **NUTRITION**

Food is catered by the Stone Crock restaurant. A nutritious lunch, morning snack and afternoon snack is provided. Our menus have

been designed in conjunction with a holistic nutritionist as well as following the recommendations set out in Health Canada's documents. Food for the after school program is purchased at a local grocery store. When school-aged children are in attendance over the lunch hour, such as on PD days, they will be required to supply their own bagged lunch. Parents may choose to supply food and/or drink for their child for a variety of reasons. Parents must complete a "Special Diet Requirements" form when food replacements from home are required.

If you wish to bring a treat for your child's class to celebrate a birthday, please check with your child's educator in advance. All treats must be store-bought in order to comply with food safety regulations. We cannot allow homemade treats to be served at the centre.

SLEEP/REST TIME

St. Jacobs Daycare understands that not all children require a nap. Young children benefit from periods of quiet and relaxation to balance their active play. St. Jacobs Daycare will meet the needs of each individual child, while taking into account parents requests regarding their children's sleep arrangements. Some parents may need to fill out a 'Special Sleep Instruction' form that will support their child's individual needs.

PROGRAM GENERAL INFORMATION

• **ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES**

The centre opens at 7:30 am and closes at 5:30 pm. Upon arrival, parents need to assist their child with removing outdoor clothing and take him/her to the educator. Children need a certain amount of structure for security. Therefore, please arrange to arrive and depart about the same time each day. It is important that you notify the supervisor if your arrival and departure times will change significantly from the usual times. There are staff/child ratios to follow, and staffing may need to be rearranged. If your child is not attending on that day, please inform the supervisor before 9:00 a.m.

The School Age Program runs from 3:30 pm to 6:00 pm. The children will be escorted by the daycare staff from the public school to the St. Jacobs Mennonite Church.

Because staff members are paid until 5:30 pm (6:00 pm for school age program), parents must pick their child up on time. We charge a late fee based on \$2.00 per minute after closing time. A sign will be posted when the late fee is in effect.

• **RELEASE OF CHILDREN FROM THE PROGRAM**

Your child will not be released to anyone who is not listed on the child release form, unless written parent permission is provided. We ask that you let us know if your child is being picked up by someone other than the usual person. Please

accompany and assist your child to gather his/her belongings from their cubby. Please inform the supervisor if there is a court order restricting an individual from seeing your child. It is essential that we have a copy of the court order on file. If this information changes, please inform the supervisor.

• **INFORMATION CHANGES**

Parents/guardians are required to provide up-to-date information concerning work phone number, home phone number, addresses, hours of care required, allergies, immunizations, and authorized pick-up persons. If any of this information changes, please inform the supervisor.

• **HOLIDAYS**

The daycare is closed: New Year's Day, Family Day, Good Friday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Civic Holiday, Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and Boxing Day. The centre is also closed for approximately one week at Christmas. Exact dates will be posted. The School Age Program is closed for the additional public school holidays; Christmas Break, March Break and Summer Break.

• **SCHOOL AGE PROGRAM**

Any parent/guardian wishing for their child to attend the daycare in our School Age Program will receive a form regarding their future childcare needs. Program spaces will be filled by children from within the daycare before accepting children waiting from outside the daycare. The centre cannot guarantee you will get a space. We will do our best to accommodate parents/guardians in this matter.

The School Age Program offers full day care on PD Days. School Age parents/guardians will receive a form to indicate child care requirements for PD Days. Once you sign up for care, we will reserve your spot on a first come, first serve basis. We will do our best to accommodate these needs.

• **FIELD TRIPS AND OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES**

We enjoy taking advantage of the many sites in St. Jacobs. We regularly plan walking field trips for the children to enjoy. Some of our favourite stops are the bakery, post office, wilderness trails, parks and library. A consent form for excursions in town is provided in the registration package.

• **CHILDREN'S BELONGINGS**

The centre is not responsible for the loss of personal items. Please ensure that all personal items, which are brought into the centre are labeled with your child's name. From time to time, some clothing or personal items may be misplaced. If you are not able to locate your child's belongings, please speak to an educator. We will do our best to assist you in locating your missing items.

Your child should be dressed in clothing that is appropriate for the weather and daycare activities. Please bring an extra set of clothing to be left at the daycare.

• **SPECIALIZED SERVICES**

At times, we do utilize early intervention services within our community; for example KidsAbility, KidsLink and KW Habilitation, to help enhance development of the children in our care. Prior to your child receiving these services, written permission will be required.

• **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Parents/guardians are welcome to drop in and observe our program of learning and discovery at any time. We are always happy to have volunteers. Please note that in order to volunteer in a child care setting, the Ministry of Education requires that a current police records check be completed and reviewed by the supervisor/designate. The reference check can be obtained through your local police office. Volunteers can receive a reduced fee for this service upon requesting a letter from the supervisor stating the position is volunteer within our agency, prior to applying for the check.

• **STUDENT / VOLUNTEER POLICY**

The daycare welcomes students and volunteers into our program as part of training and community involvement. Direct unsupervised access (eg. when the adult is alone with a child) is not permitted for persons who are not employees of St. Jacobs Daycare. Students and volunteers are not counted in the staffing ratios.

• **PARKING**

There is a parking lot located at the back of the daycare. Please drive slowly and turn your ignition off when dropping off or picking up your child. For the school age program, the parking lot is located behind the St. Jacobs Mennonite Church.

• **INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY**

St. Jacobs Daycare has a policy on unexpected centre closures. In adverse weather conditions, parents/guardians are advised to listen to local radio stations for notices of an unexpected centre closure. A voice mail message will be left on the daycare answering machine advising parents/guardians when we are closed. Should a closure be necessary mid-day, educators will contact parents/guardians by phone to notify them of the early closure and request pick up.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

• EMERGENCY RESPONSE PREPARATION

St. Jacobs Daycare has an Emergency Management Policy and Emergency Management Procedures in place. Educators are trained in the emergency preparedness and response in relation to fire, tornado, lock-down procedures, or other life-threatening emergency situations. Throughout the year, children and educators will participate in fire, lock-down and tornado drills and discuss our procedures. Each educator carries out specific duties, and the children are made aware of how to respond to the emergency. Parents are notified by a written posting of drills that have taken place. Educators will ensure that children are kept safe, are accounted for, and are supervised at all times during an emergency situation.

• DESIGNATED SHELTER

In the event of a fire or other life-threatening emergency situation, when children and staff are required to evacuate, our designated emergency shelter is the St. Jacobs Firehall, located at 3 Water Street in St. Jacobs. The telephone number is 519-664-2887.

• NOTIFICATION OF PARENTS IF AN EMERGENCY OCCURS

A current list of emergency contacts and parent/guardian telephone numbers are kept in the attendance binders with educators at all times. Once safe at the designated shelter, the educators will commence notification of parents/guardians.

• SERIOUS OCCURRENCE NOTIFICATION POSTING

St. Jacobs Daycare will post a high-level "Serious Occurrence Notification Form" at the daycare when a serious occurrence has occurred. The posting will give parents information about the incident and outline follow-up actions taken and the outcomes, while respecting the privacy of the individuals involved. Longer-term actions taken by the operator will also be included to help prevent similar incidents in the future, where applicable. Many factors may lead to a serious occurrence report. A serious occurrence does not necessarily mean that the centre is out of compliance with licensing requirements or that children are at risk in the daycare.

ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE

In partnership with families, St. Jacobs Daycare Inc. provides a professionally-led, child-centred program which focuses on providing quality child care. St. Jacobs Daycare remains accountable to those who use our service as well as the Ministry of Education.

St. Jacobs Daycare strives at all times to provide care for our families in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. We are also committed to giving people with disabilities equal opportunity to access our goods and

services while allowing them to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other families. Every reasonable effort will be made to overcome barriers faced by children and/or adults.

Our accessibility policies and procedures are available for your review in a number of formats. Should you wish to access these documents, or if you require a specific accommodation because of a disability or a medical need, please notify the supervisor/designate.

PARENT ISSUES AND CONCERNS

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

• POLICY - GENERAL

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in St. Jacobs Daycare and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing with our program supervisor and educators. As supported by our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, child care providers and staff, and foster the engagement of, and ongoing communication with, parents/guardians about the program and their children. Our educators are available to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction.

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by St. Jacobs Daycare and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties and as quickly as possible.

Issues/concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally, or in writing upon request. The level of detail provided to the parent/guardian will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within 2 business days. The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

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

• CONFIDENTIALITY

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

- **CONDUCT**

St. Jacobs Daycare maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated from any party.

If at any point a parent/guardian, provider, or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the supervisor and/or licensee.

- **CONCERNS ABOUT THE SUSPECTED ABUSE OR NEGLECT OF A CHILD**

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

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

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

For more information, visit <http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childsaidsaid/reportingabuse/index.aspx>

- **ESCALATION OF ISSUES OR CONCERNS**

Where parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may escalate the issue or concern verbally or in writing to St. Jacobs Daycare's Board of Directors.

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

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

CONTACTS:

- **Denise Fretz** - Supervisor 519-664-1110 **Email:** stjacobsdaycare@hotmail.com
- **Ministry of Education Licensed Child Care Help Desk:** 1-877-510-5333 **Email:** childcare_ontario@ontario.ca
- **College of Early Childhood Educators:** 1-888-961-8558 **Email:** info@college-ece.ca
- **Family and Children's Services of the Waterloo Region:** 519-576-0540
- **Region of Waterloo Public Health:** 519-575-4400
- **Ministry of Labour:** 1-877-202-0008
- **Waterloo Regional Police:** 519-653-7700
- **Waterloo Regional Fire Department:** 519-884-2121

Procedures

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for St. Jacobs Daycare in responding to issue/concern:
<p>Program Room-Related</p> <p>E.g: schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the classroom staff directly <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the supervisor or licensee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within 2 business days. <p>Document the issues/concerns in detail. Documentation should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the date and time the issue/concern was received; - the name of the person who received the issue/concern;
<p>General, Centre- or Operations-Related</p> <p>E.g: child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the supervisor or board of directors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the name of the person reporting the issue/concern; - the details of the issue/concern; and - any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.
<p>Staff-, Duty parent-, Supervisor-, and/or Licensee-Related</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the individual directly <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the supervisor or board of directors. <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, duty parents, etc. that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	<p>Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.</p> <p>Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within 2 business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing.</p> <p>Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.</p>
<p>Student- / Volunteer-Related</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the supervisor and/or board of directors. <p>-</p> <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	<p>Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.</p>

NOTES

RESOURCE LINKS:

- How Does Learning Happen? www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/pedagogy.html
- Child Care Information for Families www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare



The Board of Directors reserves the right to make additions or changes to these policies at their discretion.

I have read and understand the above policies.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Child(ren) Name(s) _____

A copy of this handbook is available in hard copy and on the centre's website www.stjacobsdaycare.ca