

# Star Seedlings Family and Childcare Centre Parent Handbook

## 1) Program Statement

This Program Statement is provided to prospective and current parents. It describes the goals and approach of our Family and Childcare Centre as they are consistent with the requirements of the Child Care Early Years Act, 2014. It will be reviewed during our annual PD Day, Friday before the Civic Holiday.

### Program Statement for Star Seedlings Family and Childcare Centre

Star Seedlings Family and Childcare Centre sees children as competent, capable, curious and rich in potential, additionally acknowledging them with a holistic view, as beings of body, soul and spirit. Thus, the aim of our curriculum is to meet the physical, emotional and intellectual needs of the developing and growing child while fostering reverence and respect for the earth and all people.

We believe children are creative beings who learn best through self-initiated play and the experience of practical activities, free to explore their own interests and grow their imaginations. Our environments are designed to allow children to explore the properties of open-ended materials, using them imaginatively to develop their creativity capacity, competency for problem-solving skills and disposition for lifelong learning.

As children learn through imitation, meaningful work and household chores are a big part of our daily life together. Caregivers are often occupied with caring for the environment through such activities as sweeping, washing, gardening, as well as the bodily care of the children. Children can participate and thus build healthy habits and skills. Their experience of these predictable rhythms and routines, helps them to feel secure, with an additional sense of satisfaction and purpose. This state of security and calmness enriches the quality of their play, to be more focused and deeper.

The home-like environment that we create, both inside and outside, is designed to allow children to experience a feeling of wonder and reverence for the world around them. The warmth and intention that we bring to our interactions with children allow them to feel safe and valued. The children's physical, social and cognitive development is fostered through creative arts,

storytelling, song, cooperative activities, daily walks to the park and outdoor time in the garden. We believe that an atmosphere of joy and goodness, nutritious organic meals and healthy movement contributes to their brain development, healthy immune system, self-regulation skills and general wellbeing.

### **The Physical Environment**

Our program rooms are designed to be a calm, aesthetically beautiful and welcoming environment similar, to a home, to create a gentle and gradual bridge to the child's expanded experience of the world. Snacks and meals are prepared and cooked in our on-site kitchen. Children have their own beds with warm blankets and pillows to nap or rest on. The walls are painted in soft pastel shades. Decorations are minimal, allowing the beautiful and natural materials in the room to exude warmth and provide pleasing sensorial experiences. Materials from nature abound - wooden play stands, silk play cloths, pieces of wood that serve many purposes to the child's growing imagination, a nature table or corner, puppets of silk and felted wool. Great care is taken to create a secure space from which children can experience, play and explore the world around them.

The programming extends further into the outdoors, where play allows for exploration of nature and caring for the garden. When children see their caregivers gardening or raking leaves, they too, want to participate in caring for the garden. Opportunity abounds for sensory play with sand, water and snow. The children practice their gross motor skills walking to and playing in the nearby park and playground.

### **Role of the Educator**

Our educators are thoughtful reflective learners who continually work to develop their practice. We take seriously our responsibilities, including the trust that families have given us to care for their children, and continually strive to keep the child at the centre of our practice. Our relationships are based on love, respect and care for each child who we view as unique in body, soul, and spirit. Our educators actively observe the children in their care, carry them in their meditation, and seek to work consciously and artistically to create the experiences that will serve their individual development. Their ongoing study of child and human development, artistic, and meditative practices, are essential ways in which educators find renewal and strengthen their craft. Their devotion to this task awakens them to the importance of self-education and transformation in the context of community.

We understand that children learn best through imitation and our educators recognize the important role they play in being a person worthy of imitation. The meaningful work and chores that they engage in provides a rich opportunity for children to absorb the mood, gesture, and devotion to the task that the educator brings to their work. Chores that are repeatedly done in the classroom are orchestrated to allow children to flow in and out of these activities, inviting

them to engage fully for as long or as little as they like. In this way, out of imitation, a healthy will force is developed through children's joyful participation to the task at hand.

In our enriching programming, we work with the Ministry of Education's learning foundations of belonging, well-being, engagement, and expression allowing children to grow with a feeling of security, to the fullest of their potential. Through our interactions with others we strive to build acceptance, learn to take care of others, and experience community. The qualities of love and emotional warmth create the basis for a child's healthy development to feel safe and valued. These intentions form the basis of our interactions between the adult caregiver and each child, in the children's behavior towards one another, and among the adults and families at the school. Seasonal festivals are a highlight in our program for children and they are involved in the preparation of these special times. These festivals also serve to bring families and the community together so that meaningful relationships with staff, parents, children and community are fostered.

Our holistic perspective of the whole child can be considered through the following sections:

#### **a) Promoting the Health, Safety, Nutrition and Well-being of the Children;**

##### Goal:

Star Seedlings Family and Childcare Centre is aware that the early years of the child's life set the foundation for their future health and wellbeing. We understand that the first step in establishing and nurturing health, safety and wellbeing for the children in our programs is through loving, warm and nurturing relationships with their caregivers, in a safe and secure environment.

##### Approaches Used:

- A variety of nutritious, organic (when possible) food choices is provided for snacks and lunch, to promote physical health and good nutrition habits.
- Encouraging a healthy table culture, by respecting children's appetites allowing them to eat the amount they indicate is right for them, providing adequate time and space to eat, and assuring meals are eaten in a harmonious mood.
- Shared snack and meal times are served family style, supporting the child's feeling of belonging to a group.
- Regular, predictable daily and weekly rhythms and routines supports a sense of wellbeing through predictability and security.
- Educators communicate with parents regarding each child's needs for nutrition, sleep, and warmth.

- Children’s learning and sense of well-being flourishes in calm, peaceful and safe environments free of technology, where plenty of fresh air, natural lighting, and a reduction of loud noise and clutter are offered.
- Educators maintain certification in Standard First Aid and CPR.
- Policies and procedures ensure educators maintain safe practices with the children, such as supervising children adequately, ensuring the continued safety of equipment and the environment, good hygiene and safe sleep procedures, and appropriate sanitary practices to limit the spread of communicable illness.
- We recognize that children will benefit most in an environment that is respectful and welcoming towards their families, and that includes their involvement and support.

**(b) Supporting Positive and Responsive interactions among the children, parents, child care providers and staff;**

Goal:

Star Seedlings strives to promote a sense of belonging for children and their families by creating positive interactions and through collaboration. We understand that relationships of trust are the basis for learning and cooperation. Educators respect and regard the children positively to help them become capable communicators. Every child is encouraged and given the opportunity to develop personal responsibility and social skills through the secure relationships created with their caregiver and each other.

Approaches Used:

- Educators work in the knowledge that positive, caring and respectful relationships are the foundation for optimal learning, development, health and well-being.
- Educators model warm, caring interpersonal relationships, by verbal or non-verbal expressions and gestures which the child may freely imitate.
- Through imitating the adults in all their interactions and activities, children learn to take responsibility for themselves, each other and their surrounding environment.
- Educators see each child as a unique individual, full of gifts to be shared with others
- Educators strive to convey that the world is a good place.
- Children are given the opportunity to resolve their own conflicts when appropriate, under the loving and watchful guidance of the educators.
- Educators strive to interact with colleagues and families with authentic interest and in a respectful manner.

**(c) Encourage children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate;**

Goal:

Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with their body, mind and senses, in different ways. Self-initiated and self-directed play is encouraged in our programming, as it helps the children learn to trust their own initiative to explore, interact and communicate. Educators are near-by to offer support to modulate emotions and maintain a positive atmosphere. Each child's needs are considered and respected in the rhythm of the day, supporting their individuality, developing ability to self-regulate and growing sense of autonomy.

Approaches Used:

- The strong daily rhythms and weekly routines, with alternating structured and unstructured times, help children to know what to expect and thus feel secure and confident to reach out and interact with others.
- The calm, uncluttered, supportive environment assists children in self-regulation, as it allows them to move freely to focus their energies on exploration, inquiry and increasingly complex social play, managing distractions, while learning to inhibit their impulses and understand the consequences of their actions.
- Consistent boundaries are given to the children, based on their needs and developmental stage, thus allowing them to know and feel secure within the framework of the environment.
- Attention is given to children's varied ways of communicating, both verbally and non-verbally. Educators facilitate successful communication between children by helping them to listen, hear each other, and express themselves to one another. Educators will seek to understand more deeply what children are trying to express and help them to verbalize their feelings and self-regulate.
- Educators are continually learning about how to create learning environments and programming that helps support children's self-regulation—to help children remain or return to a state of calm.

**(d) Foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry;**

Goal:

At Star Seedlings Family and Childcare Centre, children experience a variety of safe, age appropriate and interesting environments that nurture their natural curiosity for the world they live in and create a sense of belonging. We believe that everything in a young child's environment has an impact on them inwardly and outwardly. Through play, exploration and inquiry the young

child can develop skills and their emerging independence and self-confidence. Parents are encouraged to engage and initiate meaningful, positive communication with educators to find ways to support their children as curious learners.

Approaches Used:

- Children have opportunities to meet challenges and take appropriate risks so as to practise skills and extend their learning in their self-directed play.
- Educators encourage each child to explore and follow their own curiosity, while responding to the child's discoveries and sense of wonder.
- Children are presented with rich language to model, through songs, games, storytelling and puppet plays.
- Children are offered open ended, beautiful, natural materials to use in a myriad of ways. Toys may be suggestive, but not prescriptive of their use, so as to foster the children's exploration and imagination.
- Children are able to test out their ideas and language, through self-directed and free play.
- Children are provided long periods of unhurried time to engage in sustained, complex play and inquiry.
- Child-directed, open-ended free play allows relationships to evolve gradually, at a pace comfortable and age appropriate for the children.

**(e) Provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences;**

Goal:

Children are encouraged to create their own learning situations through self-initiated, creative play and join in in educator led activities. Play is the work of the young child, enhancing their social, emotional cognitive and physical skills. Educators listen and observe this play, developing a deeper understanding of the interests and perspective of the children in their care. Then they can facilitate learning experiences with patience and care, to help the children become motivated and independent learners.

Approaches Used:

- Educators engage in daily domestic activities such as, folding laundry or sweeping the floor. Children are welcome to join in as they wish.
- With the youngest children, educators may initiate activities and explorations, but as children mature, educators will initiate less, allowing children ample opportunity to explore new ideas and expand old ones.

- Through the rhythms and routines of the day, child-initiated activities are alternated with educator-guided activities such as meal, rest or story time.
- Educators are not attached to expected outcomes or determining the direction of the play. Rather, their role is to engage with the children as needed, to support their play and enhance their experiences. Children choose activities they want to be involved in during free play time.
- Children are respected for their unique gifts and are supported in developing at their own pace.
- Outdoors in the garden, children may choose to join the educators in raking, shoveling, or gardening. These 'domestic' activities often reappear in the open-ended play children initiate themselves.

**(f) Plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported;**

Goal:

The environment is a key factor in supporting children's development and learning experiences. Because young children are open and deeply impressionable through their senses, the use of natural materials in a calm, uncluttered environment with no technology, supports their learning. When manipulating objects, acting out roles, or experimenting with different materials, they are engaged in learning through play. Play allows them to actively construct, challenge, and expand their own understandings through making connections to prior experiences, thereby supporting new learning. Intentional play-based learning enables children to investigate, ask questions, solve problems, and engage in critical thinking. When children experience processes, such as the steps of doing laundry, they make a deep connection to the community and world they live in.

Approaches Used:

- Educators create peaceful and calm environments, indoors and outdoors, to support positive interactions and feelings of well-being in the children, which supports a learning experience.
- Educators allow enough time for children to move at their own pace, initiating and exploring their world through play. When play is self-directed, the children feel free to explore as their curiosity suggests, allowing them to set the course of their exploration and degree of learning.
- A care-based relationship allows educators time to respond to individual children's needs and builds trust between them.
- Educators give much consideration to the quality of the environment. Toys and play materials offered are simple, so that the children can be imaginative and active in their learning.

- When educators are active and purposeful in their daily tasks, children can participate or imitate the activities through their play, thus learning how to care for their environment, themselves and each other, as well as refining useful skills.

**(g) Incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, into the day, and give consideration to the individual needs of the children receiving child care;**

Goal:

The physical space, both indoors and outdoors, reflects a home-like environment where children can identify with a consistent routine that encompasses active play, rest and quiet time. The rhythm of the day includes outdoor play both in the morning and afternoon, allowing for physical movement in the natural outdoors. Educators support regular rhythm and patterns of activities in the classroom that engage the children's physical, emotional, social and cognitive developmental needs.

Approaches Used:

- A wide range of sensory experiences are available to the children, both indoors and outside.
- Each day includes generous time for free play indoors and outside.
- The play-garden provides safe and stimulating outdoor play through caring for the garden, exploring elements of sand, water and snow, while providing lots of fresh air.
- Daily walks to the park offer opportunity to challenge and develop variety of motor skills, as well as experience changes in the seasons. We ensure the children are well-dressed for the weather conditions.
- Quiet, focused activities are available in a range of forms as children need them.
- Children are supported during rest time after lunch, in their cot with their own, individual doll and gentle harp playing.

**(h) Foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children;**

Goal:

Parents and educators share ongoing communication to support each other about observations of the children at home and the Centre. The partnership between parents and Educators helps support the child's sense of security and well-being, as they participate in a positive, authentic



and open relationships. This bond serves to support the child's developmental needs for consistency and clarity.

Approaches Used:

- Educators recognize that children grow up in families with diverse experiences, cultural perspectives, and understand that all families have their own individual expression.
- The first contact with a family may be at an Open House, tour or community event.
- A Family Intake meeting is an interview of inquiry for the family to learn about the Centre and for us to learn about the family and hear the child's personal 'story' or biography. It sets the stage for a relationship as partners, to support the children's development.
- Educators communicate daily with parents during drop-off and pick-up times, sharing information about the child's night/day and any concerns, issues or questions each may have. It is also a time to share the child's successes and milestones.
- If a parent or educator would like to discuss something at length, a phone time or meeting will be scheduled.
- Annual educator/parent interviews are available to discuss children's development and progress.
- Parents are invited to community events such as Gardening Day, Lantern Walk and the Summer Picnic.
- Educators send regular email correspondence and updates to parents regarding programming.
- The Centre offers parenting workshops, on common child rearing topics, such as sleep and bedtime routines.

**(i) Involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and staff;**

Goal:

Star Seedlings Family and Childcare Centre is committed to engaging with the local community and partners, to involve them in supporting the children, families and educators of our Centre.

Approach:

There are many community partners—individuals, organizations and agencies who can offer support to our children, families and educators in many ways. We wish to collaborate with these partners and create opportunities to build relationships and access resources, on behalf of the children in our care, and their families.

**(j) Support staff or others who interact with children in relation to continuous professional learning;**

Goal:

Star Seedlings Family and Childcare Centre is committed to hiring, training and fairly compensating all educators and staff. We hire individuals who have a positive and sensitive attitude towards children, who are conscious in providing a nurturing and secure environment in which the children may develop and grow holistically. Formal professional learning is vital, but we also know that the most central professional growth happens day-to-day, as our educators co-learn with children and each other.

Approaches Used:

- Educators have either completed training in the field of early childhood and are registered with the College of Early Childhood educators or are actively participating in studies to achieve this goal.
- Daily personal reflection is an expectation of our educators. Consideration of each child, how they engaged and reacted during the day, and what they might need from the educator is an active practice for our educators. This reflection informs and supports the interaction between the educator and child for the next day.
- Educators document on their observations of each individual child and the group as a whole.
- Educators meet regularly to discuss and review their practise with the children, sharing issues and opportunities in support of the children's development.
- Mentoring, attending lectures and continuing professional development workshops and trainings update the educators' knowledge developments in CCEYA, including health and safety. We have an annual Professional Development day which all educators and staff attend, where we upgrade our understanding of Waldorf pedagogy.

**(k) Document and review the impact of the strategies set out in clauses (a) to (j) on the children and their families. O. Reg. 137/15, s. 46 (3); O. Reg. 126/16, s. 32 (2-4).**

Goal:

Our programming focuses on core values of Waldorf pedagogy. We believe that early childhood education is foundational for life- long learning. We strive to include many different aspects within our program to create a well-rounded, interesting and exciting experience for the children with whom we are privileged to spend our days. We feel that children need the opportunity to discover how to interact with others in a safe and nurturing atmosphere as they develop their self-worth, confidence, and communication skills. Our educators and staff communicate and listen effectively and purposefully with families and each other.

Approaches Used:

- Documentation includes a monthly log of what has occurred in the class,
- Annual meetings with each family present opportunities to review the impact of the Childcare program and its approaches on the both their child and family.
- As required by the Ministry of Education’s Child Care Early Years Act, this program statement shall be reviewed by all new staff, student teachers, and volunteers prior to interacting with children, annually thereafter, and any time that this statement is modified.

## 2) Licensed Age Groups

Star Seedlings Family and Childcare Centre will be licensed as follows:

10 Toddlers from 18 months – 30 months : Oak Room

28 Preschoolers from 30 months up to 6 years : Birch and Maple Rooms

We are licensed by the Ministry of Education to have a capacity of 38 children in total. A copy of the license is posted on the front window of the Centre.

## 3) Services Offered

Star Seedlings offers Full-Time Full Day, as well as Part-Time Full Day (2 or 3 days per week), childcare for both Toddler and Preschool age groups.

<u>TYPE OF PROGRAM</u>	<u>DAYS TO ATTEND <i>(cannot be changed)</i></u>
Part-time 2 Full Days (PT-2FD)	Thursday and Friday
Part-time 3 Full Days (PT-3FD)	Monday - Wednesday
Full-time Full Days FT-5FD)	Monday through Friday

#### 4) Times of Operation

Our general hours of operation are from **7:30am to 5:30pm**. Please let us know if you require different hours.

Star Seedlings is open all year round, offering a 50-week schedule. We are closed for holidays the first week of August and one week in December until the New Year, and one Professional Development Day in August.

The specific dates for each of the non-care days will be posted on the website calendar and distributed to each family in September.

#### 5) Holidays Observed

Star Seedlings will be closed for all Statutory Holidays as well as the Civic Holiday. If a statutory Holiday falls on a regularly scheduled work day, parents/guardians are obligated to pay for that day and there will be no deduction in fees.

New Year's Day	Family Day	Good Friday	Easter Monday
Victoria Day	Canada Day	Civic Holiday	Labour Day
Thanksgiving Day	Christmas Day	Boxing Day	

#### 6) Fees

Fees are accepted in the form of monthly pre-authorization withdrawal from the parent's debit account. Parents have the billing option to pay for their fees either the 1<sup>st</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. NSF – there will be a \$40.00 processing fee charged for NSF, to cover bank charges

Refunds – fees are not refunded for Statutory, Civic Holidays, Emergency closures, Professional Development days, or any absent days due to vacation or illness.

2018 Fee Schedule			
<u>Toddler 18m – 30m</u>		<u>Preschool 2.5 – 6 years</u>	
2 days (Thursday & Friday)	\$ 566	2 days (Thursday & Friday)	\$ 540
3 days (Monday – Wednesday)	\$ 849	3 days (Monday – Wed.)	\$ 810
5 days (Monday – Friday)	\$1,415	5 days (Monday – Friday)	\$1,350

Fees are reviewed annually and are subject to change each year (effective 15<sup>th</sup> April)

## 7) Admissions Process

- a) Visit Star Seedlings Family and Childcare Centre for either a scheduled **tour** (lasting about an hour) or **attend an Open House**.
- b) Complete and sign an **Application Form** downloadable from our website or after a Tour/Open House. Send to [kweyler@starseedlings.ca](mailto:kweyler@starseedlings.ca)
- c) After being contacted to book an **Admissions Interview**, complete the **Enrolment Package**, downloadable from our website, and submit to [kweyler@starseedlings.ca](mailto:kweyler@starseedlings.ca) or drop off at the Childcare Centre. An interview of about an hour long with the Parents, Supervisor and Lead Caregiver for your child's program room will be booked, to meet and discuss your child's needs and our approach.
- d) Upon acceptance, a **Contract** will be prepared and sent to the Parents. They will have 2 weeks to review and return it signed to the Supervisor via email: [kweyler@starseedlings.ca](mailto:kweyler@starseedlings.ca) or dropped off or mailed to the Centre at 81 Speedvale Ave. East. Guelph. Parents are required to pay a \$100.00 registration fee for materials, as well as their first and last month deposit of fees.
- e) At least a week prior to child's **Start Date**, parents will be contact to confirm that all forms, documents and details are completed and in order, including Individualized Plans for Children with Medical Needs (IMP), Individual Support Plans (ISP), Anaphylaxis Action Plan (AAP), emergency contact information and permission forms.

### Other Documents:

- A copy of the most recent immunization record to be included with the Enrolment Package. Parents of children who object to immunization due to religious/conscience or medical reasons must complete a standardized ministry approved form. These forms must be completed by a 'commissioner for taking affidavits' (i.e. notarized). Medical exemption forms must be completed by a doctor or nurse practitioner
  - [Statement of Medical Exemption](#)
  - [Statement of Conscience or Religious Belief](#)
- A copy of any Child Custody Agreement papers is required, if applicable. In case of custody disputes, we cannot refuse a parent access to his/her own child unless we have on file a copy of the court order stating that the parent in question may not have access to the child. Please keep this in mind if you are requesting that we deny access to a parent.

## 8. Waitlist Policy and Procedure

### General

- Star Seedlings Family and Childcare Centre will strive to accommodate all requests for the registration of a child at the child care centre.
- Where the maximum capacity of a program has been reached and spaces are unavailable for new children to be enrolled, the waiting list procedures set out below will be followed.
- No fee will be charged to parents for placing a child on the waiting list.

The Childcare Supervisor is responsible for managing the waiting list for all childcare applications and communication with the parents regarding the waiting list.
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### Procedures

#### Receiving a Request to Place a Child on the Waiting List

- The Supervisor will receive parental requests to place children on a waiting list via completed application form after receiving a tour of the Childcare Centre. The completed application form may be submitted to the Supervisor in person or left at the Childcare Office.

#### Placing a child on the Waiting List

- The Supervisor will place a child on the waiting list in chronological order, based on the date and time that the request was received.
- Once a child has been placed on the waiting list, the Supervisor will inform parents of their child's position on the list.

#### Determining Placement Priority when a Space Becomes Available

- When space becomes available in the program, priority will be given to:
  - 1) children who are currently enrolled and need to move to the next age grouping;
  - 2) siblings of children currently enrolled;
  - 3) children of staff.
- Once these children have been placed, other children on the waiting list will be prioritized based on program room availability and the chronology in which the child was placed on the waiting list.

## Offering an Available Space

- Parents of children on the waiting list will be notified via email and/or telephone that a space has become available in their requested program.
- Parents will be provided a timeframe of two (2) business days in which a response is required before the next child on the waiting list will be offered the space.
- Where a parent has not responded within the given timeframe, the Supervisor will contact the parent of the next child on the waiting list to offer them the space.
- Star Seedlings cannot guarantee the number of days or the days of the week that will be offered but works to achieve the desired child care scenario for each family. If a family is offered a space earlier than their requested start date, or it does not meet their criteria and they decline, they will maintain their spot on the waiting list and will be offered a space when another opening is available.
- If a family has been offered a space on or after their requested start month and they decline, they will lose their place on the waiting list. They will be given the option of remaining on the waiting list or being removed entirely and will be subject to the waiting list priority.
- If parents wish to withdraw their children from care for a period of time (e.g. withdraw for the summer months or parental leave), they will be subject to waiting list priority criteria upon return.

## Responding to Parents who inquire about their Child's Placement on the Waiting List

- The Supervisor will be the contact person for parents who wish to inquire about the status of their child's place on the waiting list.
- The Supervisor will respond to parent inquiries and provide the child's current position on the list and an estimated likelihood of the child being offered a space in the program.

## Maintaining Privacy and Confidentiality

- The waiting list will be maintained in a manner that protects the privacy and confidentiality of the children and families on the list and therefore only the child's position on the waiting list will be provided to parents named on the registration.
- Names of other children or families and/or their placement on the waiting list will not be shared with other individuals.

## 9. Discharge Policy

A written notice of withdrawal is required from the parent who originally signed the child care contract and must be given two months in advance of the withdrawal date. If this notice is not received, full program fees will be charged.

It is the intention of Star Seedlings Family and Childcare Centre to make an effort to serve all our children and their families. We work collaboratively with parents, caregivers and various community partners/support organizations to meet the individual needs of every child.

It is our policy to assist a child who maybe undergoing any behaviour changes and/or challenges that may require additional support from staff, administration and/or outside agencies (such as Early Intervention Services) for the health, well-being and safety of the child. We will make every effort to find appropriate solutions to resolve any issues, by providing support with strategy-implementation, with parents' active involvement.

In the event a child is experiencing challenge that may pose a direct threat to the safety of themselves and/or others, the parent/guardian may be required to withdraw the child from the program.

The following procedure will be followed when a child's behaviour becomes a safety issue:

a) an initial meeting between parents and the caregiver – at this meeting parents will have the opportunity to review any incident reports made regarding the child, highlighting the child's social behaviours, concerns or threats observed regarding safety;

b) a conference with members of the childcare staff, Supervisor and Lead Caregiver will take place to develop a plan for consistent strategies to be put in place; parents will be informed of the plan;

c) parents may be asked to provide 'on-call' support or removal of the child from the program room when safety is questioned. An Individual Support Plan (ISP) will be developed in order to plan for the child to return to the program;

d) should the child's needs be deemed by the Supervisor, Lead Caregiver and/or the parents to be beyond the expertise of the staff, recommendation will be made in writing for the parents to withdraw their child and to enroll the child in an alternate place where his/her needs may be better addressed;

f) whenever possible, the parent will be given sufficient notice to make alternate arrangements. However, in the event that a child's individual needs or behaviour pose a serious threat to the safety of self, and/or others, the parent may be required to immediately withdraw the child from the childcare, at the written request of the Supervisor. Depending on the situation/circumstances, Star Seedlings will determine the withdrawal date/discharge.



## 10. Arrival and Departure Procedures

Our front door is locked with a passcode, which you will be given upon confirmation of your admission to Star Seedlings Family and Childcare Centre. You can have access to the Centre during operating hours. Parking is along the back fence of the play yard, with short-term parking for drop-off and pick-up along the length of the property. Please no idling. Also, we are a *Smoke Free* property, so please refrain from smoking on the premise – **Thank you.**

Upon arrival, the parent/guardian of the child must physically accompany the child for drop off in the child's designated room, notify the childcare staff and sign the drop off sheet with the time and their initials. Children must never be left alone in a room or the yard, or enter the room or yard without their parent/guardian. The staff member will greet the family, perform a visual daily health check for any signs or symptoms of communicable diseases, and mark the attendance record of the child's presence. If the child shows obvious signs and/or symptoms of a communicable disease, the staff may ask the parent to leave with the child to obtain a doctor's note stating that the child is safe to attend childcare or it is best for the child to remain at home.

Similarly, when collecting your child, please make contact with the staff and sign the drop off sheet with the time of picking up and your initials. Please make sure that the staff know you are leaving with your child.

Children will not be released to any person other than those specified on the Authorized Persons list, in the enrolment package. You may add or delete people from this list at any time, however changes must always be made in writing, in a letter format, with your signature and date.

If you, or anyone on the Authorized Persons list, are unable to pick up your child and you have made alternate arrangements, please contact the Supervisor and provide a description of this person. They will be asked to show photo-identification when arriving at the centre for pick-up before we release your child to them.

In the case that a child's departure was not communicated, and the child is not located in the program room or their designated play-yard, and time of departure was not recorded, the police will be called to report a missing child and a Serious Occurrences will be reported and submitted to the Ministry of Education.

Please be aware that arrival and departure times are critical transition times for both children and parents. The separation anxiety your child may experience will lessen over time. As your child becomes more familiar with our environment and rhythm of the day, he/she will arrive feeling more confident and relaxed.

### **Late Pick-up Fee Policy –**

We acknowledge that occasionally, unforeseen circumstances may occur causing parents to arrive after the Centre's closing time. Please call or email the Supervisor to advise us that you

are on your way. A child can experience stress and anxiety when they are waiting for their parent while all the other children have been collected.

A Late Fee charge of a \$1.00 a minute will be applied, and parents will be billed according to their lateness. Our Late Fee is designed to encourage parents to arrive on time for their child and is not intended to be utilized as an extended hours of operation option.

In the event of a **late pick-up without advance notice** from the parent, the following Emergency Procedure will be followed:

5:30p.m.	Staff will call the parent, unless regular pick-up is agreed to be 6pm
5:45pm	Staff will call emergency contact (if parents cannot be reached)
6:30pm	Staff will call the Children's Aid Society and notify the police (if parents and emergency contacts cannot be reached)

## 11. Attendance and Absences

It is advised that all children arrive by 9:00am.

If a child will be absent and remain at home due to an illness/sickness and/or for other reasons, parents/guardians are to contact the Childcare Office at (519) 265-8727 or via email at [info@starseedlings.ca](mailto:info@starseedlings.ca) to inform us of the absence.

If you are anticipating an absence for a family vacation, please notify the Supervisor in writing or via email, prior to the time that you will be absent. Please let us know the exact dates your child will be away and when returning. As per the Fee Policy, we can not accommodate a reduction in childcare fees during that time.

## 12. What to Bring to Childcare

At enrolment, each child will receive an extra clothing bag which needs to be filled with extra socks, and seasonal clothes such as shirt, sweater, shorts/trousers, and underwear (if using). This bag will remain at the Centre and needs to be replenished as items are used. Please provide a weeks supply of diapers and/or pull-ups. We will provide wipes, sunscreen and cold weather face cream.

Star Seedlings will provide your child with a blanket to be used at nap time. Also, with the registration fee of \$150.00 your child will be provided with a water bottle, slippers and a 'muddy buddy' for their use, the whole time that they are registered at the Centre. So as your child grows, we will give them use of the next size up slippers and 'muddy buddy'. These items are to remain at the Centre.

Also, on a regular basis, there will be a workshop for new parents to make a doll for their child to have during naptime. At enrolment time, you will be notified of the next upcoming workshop. You may provide the material, such as a piece of a favourite flannel baby blanket or piece of clothing, and the centre will provide the rest of the materials. These dolls will be the responsibility of the parents to take home and wash, on the weekends.

### 13. Daily Program and Rhythm

Star Seedlings welcomes the opportunity to nurture and support young children. Children engage in a safe and supportive home-like environment of warmth and care, with a range of developmentally- appropriate experiences, fostering healthy rhythms and a sense of well-being. Each of the caregivers are striving to meet the children based on Rudolf Steiner's indications a philosophy of child development.

Our Centre has many elements similar to a home environment: a kitchen where food is prepared, and shared at a table together; places to play, both indoors and out; a cozy sofa or chair to snuggle. Children each have their own bed with a warm blanket and doll, and pillow from home, if needed. The rooms are designed to give an ease of transition out of their home, aiming to create a calm space in which they can learn to self-regulate.

Our days are filled with a balance of focused and guided activities such as colouring, painting, eating, cleaning, circle time, with 'out breathes' of unstructured play and outdoor activities. The day is filled with songs and stories, and balanced with a quiet nap time after lunch. The basis of our program, and thus learning, is through relationships; with the child and caregiver, child to child, caregiver to caregiver, and each of us with the environment and natural world.

### 14. Reduced Ratios

As outlined in the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, any childcare program can have up to 2/3 reduced ratio during arrival and departure times. Arrival is between 7:30am – 9am and Departure time is from 5:00-6:00pm. Reduced ratios also apply during children's rest time between 12:30-2:30pm.

### 14. Outdoor Play and Activities Off premises

As required by the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA), all children who attend a full day program are required to have an outdoor play period for at least 2 hours each day, weather permitting, or unless a physician or parent of the child advises otherwise, in writing. All children

benefit from time spent outside playing and exploring where they are able to connect with the natural world.

We are fortunate to have a large fenced play yard offering much green space for exploration of nature and gardening. Opportunity abounds for sensory play with sand, water and snow. When children observe their caregivers gardening or raking leaves, the too will want to participate in caring for the natural environment, and thus practice gross motor skills.

Children will be kept indoors on heavy rain days, and in cases of extreme heat or cold. Please ensure your child is provided proper clothing during the winter i.e. snow pants, snow boots, neck-warmer, mittens/gloves, socks, hat). The playground is inspected twice daily by the caregivers, monthly by the Supervisor as well as a special annual inspection.

Every morning we will go for a walk on the Conservation Land at the end of the Church property. The same route will be taken every day and will be inspected by the Supervisor or Delegate, prior to the children visiting. A Field Trip Policy and Procedures will be discussed at the time of Enrolment, at which a consent form is to be completed.

## 15. Nutrition

Star Seedlings is a Nut-Aware environment.

Children are served healthy, mostly organic meals prepared fresh daily in our on-site certified kitchen. Children receive two healthy snacks, morning and afternoon, and a nutritious vegetarian lunch. Menus are posted on the outside of the program door, or just inside *Birch* room, and on the website. Lunch menus are rotated every four weeks throughout the year, reflecting seasonal produce. They are reviewed as needed to meet the appetites and dietary needs/restrictions of the children.

For the safety of the children with allergies, **we do not allow food of any type** to be brought into the childcare. We are unable to serve or allow parents to bring in any home-made good or produce from their garden. All food served at the childcare must have all ingredients listed or prepared by a certified/recognized company that has Public Health Inspections, and clearly states 'contains no nuts' sign. As supply is available, we may use produce from our own vegetable garden in the play-yard.

## 16. Sleep and Rest Period

As required under the Child Care and Early Years Act 2014 (CCEYA), we provide a rest/sleep time, in which all children are required to have a rest, of no more than 2 hours long. Our daily rest period is from 12:30pm to 2:30pm. Caregivers will tuck the children in and either sing a lullaby or play the lyre, as needed, to ensure a rich sleep experience. Children who are not able to sleep

are able to engage in quiet activities during the second half of the rest time, in a way that the sleeping children are not disturbed. Cots, sheets and a blanket are provided. Children may have a 'lovey' that stays at the childcare, during the week and that goes home on weekends to be laundered. Bedding is washed weekly at the childcare, more often if visibly soiled.

## 17. Illness Policy

Once a child starts attending childcare, and comes in contact with many other children, it is quite common for them to experience sickness. Illnesses tend to decrease as your child builds up a group immunity. Star Seedlings Family and Childcare Centre reserves the right to request a doctor's note prior to a child's return to the Centre, in appropriate situations. If your child is away for 5 or more consecutive days, we will ask for a doctor's note with a safe to return date. Any child with a fever over 100.4F (38C), diarrhea, vomiting, extreme cold symptoms, communicable disease or other obvious illness, will be isolated with a staff member until the parent or emergency contact arrives to pick up the child within one hour. *Please ensure that your emergency contact information is kept up to date including all phone numbers.* An illness report will be filled out by the caregiver and signed by the Supervisor/designate prior to parent's review. The parents/guardian will be required to review the illness report and sign upon pick up.

Your child must be 24 hours fever, vomiting or diarrhea free (symptom free) before returning to the Centre. If your child returns with the symptoms again, childcare staff will advise you to keep your child home for another 48 hours. If you feel that your child is unable to participate in the program both indoors and outdoors (under all kinds of weather), we suggest that you keep them home until they are able to do so. In case of an unknown rash, we will ask that your child be picked up as soon as possible, and a doctor's note explaining the cause of the rash along with the safe-to-return date is required, upon your child's return to the Centre.

Please keep your child at home/your child will be sent home if -

Fever over 100.4F (38C)

Heavy nasal discharge and cough (yellow and green in colour)

2 or more cases of diarrhea

Has vomited

Has an unknown rash

## 18. Administration of Medication

Only the Supervisor or Lead Caregiver from each program room will administer to a child the medication prescribed by a physician. The Supervisor oversees all drugs and medication. Medication must be in its original container, as supplied by the pharmacist with the child's name, the name of the medication, the dosage, duration period, the date of purchase, and instructions for storage and administration clearly labelled. Medication will be stored in a locked box, out of the reach of children at all times, or refrigerated in the Supervisor's office, if required.

We require you to fill out authorization forms allowing us permission to administer the medication at the scheduled times with given dosages. Any reactions the child may have to the medication (that would result in the discontinuation of the medication) must be listed by the parents/guardians on the authorization form. Staff must check that the parents written instructions match any instructions printed on the original container and for expiry dates. Any accidental administration of medication must be recorded and reported to the Supervisor, who must then notify a parent of the child and complete a Serious Occurrence Notification Form.

The staff of Star Seedlings are not authorized to administer over the counter, non-prescription drugs, such as children's Tylenol, Advil etc. without a note from the doctor and a medication form signed by the parent/guardian. If a child has a contagious disease, we will notify you immediately. A doctor's note will be required before a child with a contagious disease will be able to return to the child care.

## 19. Anaphylactic Policy

Anaphylaxis – refers to a serious allergic reaction which can be life threatening. This allergy may be related to food, insect stings, medicine, latex etc.

The Anaphylactic Policy is intended to help support the needs of a child with severe allergy and provide information on anaphylaxis and awareness to parents, staff, placement students, and visitors at the childcare. Upon application and/or enrolment parents must list any/all allergies and their reactions, and in case of an anaphylactic allergy, children must have their allergy medication available at the childcare site, such as Epi-pens or asthma medications including puffers. Based on the type of allergy indicated in the child's file, special consideration and procedures will be followed to ensure that an allergic reaction is avoided.

Strategy to reduce the risk of exposure:

- All food allergies and intolerances/sensitivity are posted in every program room serving areas, the kitchen and common areas where the children may be present. The allergies are also listed in the Emergency Child Detail Sheet, which is kept in the program room binder. All staff must review and be aware of the allergies of all children in the Centre. To reduce the risk of exposure to anaphylactic causative agents that may produce

anaphylactic reaction, certain items may not enter the childcare site i.e. food items containing peanuts/nuts, latex gloves, etc.

- In case of medicines that can cause anaphylactic reactions such as penicillin, all medications must be prescribed by a doctor with the child's name and the original label and stored in a locked container to avoid exposure to other children whom the medication is not prescribed.
- Star Seedlings Family and Childcare Centre requires two sets of Epi-pens to be available for the centre's use. One will be stored in the classroom backpack and the second will be kept in the Supervisor's office. It is parent/guardian's responsibility to provide the childcare with Epi-pens and replace the ones that are expired prior to the expiry date. All Childcare staff including students and volunteers review the Anaphylactic Action Plan for each child with anaphylaxis. The Anaphylactic Action Plan is devised with the input of the parent and/or child's physician, and the parents train the Supervisor who trains the rest of the staff. This plan is reviewed annually or when notable changes are made.
- We do not permit food from home, including home-made baked goods or dishes. Foods that are brought into the centre must be from an 'approved source – listing all ingredients clearly on the label and not containing peanut or traces of tree-nuts.'

## 20. Individualized Plans for Children with Medical Needs

If a child has an anaphylactic allergy or a condition that requires medical attention, an Individualized Plan for Children with Medical Needs will be developed with input from the child's physician that includes required emergency procedures. Training from a physician or a parent/guardian must be provided to the Supervisor on the procedures to be followed in the event of a child having an anaphylactic reaction. (Please note that all staff have been trained in Standard First Aid and CPR level C). All individualized plans must be reviewed with staff, volunteers, and placement students who are working with the children in the centre, by the Supervisor. The review of the plan will be made upon the admission of the child to the program and annually thereafter, with staff signing off on each review. The review/training record will be kept in the child's file, and the copy of the individualized plan will be kept in the classroom binder for easy access for childcare program staff.

## 21. Injury Reports

If your child has an accident during the day involving an injury, an Injury Report is to be reviewed and signed by the parent/guardian, at the end of the day. A copy of the Injury Report will be provided to the parent/guardian the following day. If there is a serious injury and the

parent/guardian/authorized emergency person cannot be reached, an ambulance (EMS) will be called. The parent/guardian is responsible for the ambulance fee.

## 22. Incident Reports

Any incidents that involves your child, that raises an alarm or concern for the safety of other children, staff and your child him/herself (whether behavioural or physical), or poses a direct negative impact on programming, will be recorded, for parent/guardian to review and sign. The staff who witnessed the incident will make a written record and submit to the Supervisor for review before the incident reports are provided to the parent/guardian. A signed copy will be provided to the parent the following day.

## 23. Serious Occurrences Notification

The Ontario Government introduced a policy effective November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011, that requires all licensed childcare centres to post information about serious occurrences that happen at a centre. To support increased transparency and access to information, a Serious Occurrence Notification Form must be posted within 24 hours of the occurrence, in a place easily viewed by parents, for 10 business days. The Licensee will take additional actions or investigations. The Serious Occurrence Notification Form will maintain confidentiality of the parties involved. Forms will be kept on file for at least 3 years from the date of the occurrence.

## 24. Child Guidance and Prohibited Practices

At Star Seedlings we practice positive child guidance strategies. The most effective means of guiding appropriate behaviour is through modeling the best course of action. Another guidance strategy is to gently invite the child closer to the proximity of the caregiver or hold their hand, as a child struggling with self-regulation may feel calmer sitting closer to an adult with whom they have established a connection and trust. Gentle verbal cues may also be used, such as broadcasting and focusing on desirable, positive behaviours. Our intention is to bring the children to be able to have an expression of their own individual needs and direct themselves in a situation, appropriately.

As stipulated under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, all employees, placement students, volunteers or anyone interacting with children are prohibited from the following practices:

1. Corporal punishment (physical punishment such as hitting, spanking, kicking, heavy pushing, shoving, grabbing, squeezing arms, ears etc.);



2. Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, 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 themselves, or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
3. Locking the exits of the Centre for the purpose of confining the child, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures or using a locked or lockable room or structure to confine the child if he or she has been separated from other children;
4. 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;
5. Depriving the child of basic needs (i.e. food, drink, shelter, clothing, toilet use, sleep and bedding). Food should not be used to discipline children at lunch or snack time; and/or
6. Inflicting any bodily harm on children, including making children eat or drink against their will.

The consequences of engaging in a prohibited policy are outlined in the Serious Occurrence Policy and Discipline Policy. Corporal punishment and other harmful disciplinary practices are forbidden in order to protect the emotional and physical well-being of children. These practices are never permitted. Children benefit from an affirming approach that encourages positive interactions with other children and with adults, rather than from a negative or punitive approach to managing unwanted behaviour.

## 25. Reporting 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 Family and Children's Services of Guelph and Wellington County CAS can be contacted at any time of day or night: 1-800-265-8300 or 519-824-2410

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/childrensaidthereportingabuse/index.aspx>

## 26. Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality/Non-disclosure

All of our program staff are expected to maintain professionalism within their practice, as well as in relationships with families and children of Star Seedlings Family and Childcare Centre, at all times. Staff are prohibited from sharing their personal contact details such as cell phone number to parents for the purpose of keeping in contact during centre hours or operation. Please call the centre directly at 519-265-8727 or email us at [info@starseedlings.ca](mailto:info@starseedlings.ca), for general inquiries and communication. Otherwise, please email the Lead Caregiver for program room communication and cc. the Supervisor in the email.

All forms and verbal information regarding the children, families and staff are confidential. Star Seedlings Family and Childcare Centre cannot disclose any names in the case of an incident between the children. This information must remain in confidence to protect all parties involved.

Star Seedlings Family and Childcare Centre strongly discourages parents from making any baby-sitting arrangements with our childcare staff. The organization is concerned with the potential liability and dual relationships of this arrangement. As a result, parents must acknowledge that any arrangement made with a staff member outside of work hours is made independently of Star Seedlings Family and Childcare Centre. We do not accept responsibility for any activities of our staff outside of their work hours.

## 27. Supervision of Volunteers and Placement Students

As Star Seedlings encourages the building of community, we gratefully receive volunteers and placement students to participate in our programming. The Vulnerable Sector Screening is routinely required by community colleges and universities prior to a student's placement in a childcare setting.

Supervision of both volunteers and placement students will be as follows:

- No child will be supervised by a person under 18 years of age;
- Only employees will have direct unsupervised access to children;
- Volunteers and students may not be counted in the staffing ratios;
- A mandatory orientation of all volunteers and students will be given prior to working with the children. This will include a review of: Program Statement and Program Statement Implementation Policy, Supervision Policy, Prohibited Practices and Child Guidance Policy, Fire Emergency Policies and Procedures, Anaphylaxis Policy, Individualized Plans for Children with Medical Needs, Serious Occurrence Policy, Child Abuse Policy, Confidentiality Policy, as well as Volunteer or Placement Student job description. This will be reviewed at least annually, as needed.

## 28. Emergency Management

Star Seedlings has policies and procedures for various emergency situations including lockdown, hold and secure, bomb threat, fire, flood, power failure, gas leak, tornado, earthquake etc. as outlined in Emergency Management Policy and Procedure. As well there is detailed Fire and Emergency/Evacuation plans, that are posted on the wall of each programs room as well as in that room's binder.

Our policy is to ensure the health and safety of all children and adults during a situation where immediate action is required. The policy is reviewed with all staff, placement students and volunteers before they begin interacting with the children, and on an annual basis thereafter. Fire drills are practiced on a monthly basis. If an emergency arises, parents and families will be contacted by phone as soon as the immediate threat has been addressed.

Staff will ensure that the children are kept safe, are accounted for and supervised at all times during an emergency situation. All directions given by the emergency services personnel will be followed, including direction to evacuate to locations different than listed below.

### **Emergency Evacuation-**

In the event of an emergency, parents/guardians will be contacted. If we are unable to contact the parents/guardians, the name given as an emergency contact will be called. In the event of an emergency evacuation procedure, Star Seedlings Family and Childcare Centre will go to the designated emergency evacuation point.

<p style="text-align: center;">EMERGENCY EVACUATION LOCATION</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Riverside Community Reformed Church</p> <p style="text-align: center;">79 Speedvale Ave. East, Guelph, ON N1E 1M3</p>
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### **Emergency Closures – Snow Days and Storms/Extreme Weather**

Every attempt will be made to operate as usual on storm days. In the event of a storm developing in the middle of the day, in the best interest of the children and their safety, parents will be contacted to pick up in a timely manner -within an hour. This will allow all children and all staff to get home safely.

A 'snow day' decision is not made lightly, knowing the difficulty parents face to find proper childcare on such short notice. However, it is a safety concern for children, parents and staff when driving may become risky, and highways may be closed, and thus a 'snow day' is declared and announced.

The process involves the Supervisor and another staff conferring to decide by 6:15am. A comprehensive communications plan is put into action: all parents and staff are sent an email regarding the closure; our website home page is updated, and the phone number recording changed to state the closure.

### **Power Outages –**

Star Seedlings Family and Childcare Centre will not open if there is no power. If there is a power outage prior to the opening of the Childcare centre, (7:00am), the local power supplier will be contacted to see how long before power can be restored. If power is not going to be restored within one hour, or time is undetermined, the Child Care will no open for that day. All families will be notified about the closure due to a power outage via email sent by the Supervisor.

If there is a power outage during the operating hours, it will be categorized as either a. short-term - considered to be less than 2 hours; or b. long-term power outage – considered for two (2) hours or more. Children’s safety will be considered as first priority in the decision-making process of keeping the child care open or closed for that day.

*a. Short-term Power Outage (under 2 hours)*

Depending on the time, routine, and programming needs of the day, the childcare may remain open for a full day of operation. However, basic access to clean water, toileting, temperature and food/snacks have to be available.

*b. Long-term Power Outage (2 hours or more/unknown)*

In case of power outages lasting/expected to last for more than two (2) hours, the child care will announce an early closure due to power outage. Parents/guardians will be contacted via email and phone to pick up their children within an hour. If the parent(s) cannot be reached, the emergency person listed will be contacted. In the case of an emergency closure, childcare will not be offering any refund of fees.

## **29. Parent Issues and Concerns**

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our child care centre and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing with our program. 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 staff 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 the Supervisor 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 five ( 5) business day(s). 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-**

Our centre 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.

## Procedures

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
<p><b>Program Room-Related</b></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"> <li>- the programroom staff directly</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Supervisor.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within three (3) business days.</li> </ul> <p>Document the issues/concerns in detail. Documentation should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the date and time the issue/concern was received;</li> </ul>
<p><b>General, Centre- or Operations-Related</b></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"> <li>- the Supervisor or licensee.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the name of the person who received the issue/concern;</li> <li>- the name of the person reporting the issue/concern;</li> <li>- the details of the issue/concern; and</li> <li>- any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Staff-, Duty parent-, Supervisor-, and/or Licensee-Related</b></p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the individual directly</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Supervisor or licensee.</li> </ul> <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 three (3) business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing.</p>
<p><b>Placement Student- / Volunteer-Related</b></p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Supervisor and/or licensee.</li> </ul> <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>

**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 the Executive Director and/or Chair of the Board of Rudolf Steiner Centre Toronto.

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: [**

Supervisor: - Karen Weyler ([kweyler@starseedlings.ca](mailto:kweyler@starseedlings.ca)) Tel :519-265-8727

**For Escalation of Issues or Concerns:**

Executive Director – James Brian ([jmbrian@rogers.com](mailto:jmbrian@rogers.com)) Tel: 905-764-0934

Chair of the Board – Robert McKay ([robertmckay@rogers.com](mailto:robertmckay@rogers.com)) Tel: 647-981-6298

Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care Help Desk: 1-877-510-5333 or [childcare\\_ontario@ontario.ca](mailto:childcare_ontario@ontario.ca)

College of Early Childhood Educators: Tel: 416-961-8558 / (toll free) 1-888-961-8558

Family & Children's Services of Guelph and Wellington County: Tel: 519-824-2410

Ministry of Labour – *Healthy and Safety* :1-877-202-0008/ *Employment Standards Info* :1-800-531-5551

## STAR SEEDLINGS HANDBOOK POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Please detach and submit this Consent Page to the Childcare Supervisor

This is to verify that I have read, understood and agree to the policies and procedures as outlined in the Star Seedlings Family and Childcare Centre's Parent Handbook 2019:

Child's First and Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_