



# **First Avenue Early Learning Centre Family Handbook**

**73 First Avenue  
Ottawa, Ontario**

**K1S 2G1**

**Phone: 613-736-1913 x 206**

**Website: [www.afchildrensservices.ca](http://www.afchildrensservices.ca)**

Welcome to First Avenue Early Learning Centre, a program of Andrew Fleck Children’s Services. Originally part of the Glebe Parent’s Day Care organisation, which began in the early 1970s when community members advocated for quality non-profit childcare. It opened as a temporary summer program in 1972 at Glebe United Church before moving permanently to the Glebe Community Centre in 1973 and eventually to a new building at 10 Fifth Avenue. Over the years, it expanded to offer programs to Kindergarten and School-Aged children attending the surrounding Hopewell, Mutchmor, and First Avenue schools. In January 2025, Glebe Parent’s Daycare and its four satellite sites officially amalgamated with Andrew Fleck Children’s Services.

We are licensed to offer early learning and care for 16 preschoolers (2.5 years up to 3.8 years), 13 kinder (3.8-6 years), and 26 school age children (6-12 years). Andrew Fleck Children’s Services is a not-for-profit, multi-site and multi-service organization established in 1911 to serve children and families in the Ottawa area. The health, safety and quality of your child’s experiences are foremost at all times, ensuring that they and you enjoy a positive experience in our program.

We consider the needs of all children and respect that each child will have unique skills and attributes, which we foster and nurture by having the children contribute to their learning.

This handbook is designed to assist you in understanding the procedures, policies, and regulations involved with the operation of our Centre. Our Program Supervisor is Samantha Pemberton, and our PC assistant is Natasha Edwards. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to speak with any of our employees or with Natasha or Samantha at any time; Natasha can be reached at 613-236-4502 or at [nedwards@afchildrensservices.ca](mailto:nedwards@afchildrensservices.ca) Samantha can be reached at [spemberton@afchildrensservices.ca](mailto:spemberton@afchildrensservices.ca). Alternatively, you can also connect with our Program Director, Kathy Knight-Robinson: [kkrobinson@afchildrensservices.ca](mailto:kkrobinson@afchildrensservices.ca) or Chief Executive Officer Kim Hiscott; [khiscott@afchildrensservices.ca](mailto:khiscott@afchildrensservices.ca) .

**LICENSING/REGULATIONS**

Our Centre is licensed under the *Child Care and Early Years Act* of the Ontario Ministry of Education Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Office. We must participate in an annual licensing review process and are required to meet all regulations in the Act as well as Health, Safety and Fire regulations dictated by the Department of Public Health, the City of Ottawa, the Ontario Fire Marshall, and the Ottawa Fire Services. The Program Advisor from the Ministry of Education monitors standards for safety, employee training, program quality, and compliance; our License and Summary of the License are posted in the Centre for your information.

Our licensing capacity is as follows;

First Avenue program	Preschool (2.5-3.8 years)	16
73 First Ave	Kindergarten (4-6 years)	13
<i>Blended Before and After School program for 26 Kinder (3.8 to 5 years) and School-Agers *6 to 12 years).</i>	School Age (6-12 years)	26

## HOURS OF OPERATION

Our centre is open Monday to Friday; from 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM. On school holidays, PD days, and during the summer, our school-age and kindergarten programs offer full-day care if you have registered for such.

It is beneficial for the children to arrive by 9:30 AM, so they can actively participate in the many morning program activities offered prior to lunch and rest time. Our program supports an 'Open Door' approach for families and parents/guardians are welcome at any time of the day.

## ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE PROCEDURES

The transitions from home to child care and from child care to home can set the tone for a child's day or evening. Their reactions and responses may be different from day to day. For some children, a quick good-bye is best; for others, a bit more time might be needed. Between you and the Educator, a comfortable routine for these important transitions will be established that meets the needs of your child.

**Families are requested to inform the centre when their child will be absent from the program by 10 am at the latest.** This is especially important if your child is unwell so we can monitor others for signs of illness.

## PROCEDURES FOR SAFE ARRIVAL

When a family has not confirmed a child's absence, an educator will, at their first opportunity, communicate via email, text, phone call, or other means with the family to confirm the absence. This communication will be the one and only notification that the centre will send, regardless of whether a family responds.

For centre-based Kinder and School-age children:

- a. If a child doesn't arrive before the school bell rings, the educators will notify school personnel that the child did not arrive at childcare. No additional steps will be taken since the school will follow their own protocol regarding safe arrival.
- b. Should a child be absent from the after-school program, Educators will reach out to school personnel to determine if the child was present at school earlier in the day. Should the child have attended school and not attend the after-school program, the staff will try to reach out to the parent or guardian via phone, email or message to notify them of the child's absence. This will be documented in the daily written record.

**Responsibility of parent(s):** When a parent/guardian arrives to drop off a child in the morning, they are expected to connect with an educator and communicate any pertinent information such as: their arrival, the well-being of the child/health concerns, new medication, any changes in pick up times or new person picking up or any other pertinent details that the educator should be aware of.

**Responsibility of educators:** The educators will do a brief visual health check and communicate any pertinent information to the parent (e.g. schedule changes). They will note any pertinent information shared by the parent in the daily log book and sign the child in using our Digibot attendance system.

## SAFE DISMISSAL

**Families are responsible for informing the centre every time their child will be picked from the program by someone other than the parents or authorized adults.**

1. Children will not be released to anyone who is not on the authorized person's list to pick up. When a new person is added to the list, they will need to provide photo identification to confirm their identity.
2. Children will not be released without supervision unless a release form has been signed and mutually agreed upon by the parent(s) and the program supervisor or assistant program coordinator.
3. Should a child not be picked up by an authorized person by closing time, the educator team will communicate by phone with the parents to notify them. Should they not be able to reach the parent(s)/guardian(s) within 15 minutes, then the emergency contacts would be notified and asked to pick up the child.
4. If they still have not been able to connect with either the parents/guardians or the emergency contacts within 30 minutes, they will contact their immediate supervisor/designate to determine the next steps which could include calling Children's Aid Services or the Police.
5. Policies regarding late pick-ups still apply.

No child will be released to a person other than the parents/guardians without written permission given to the centre in advance. When dropping off and picking up your children, please:

- Anyone who picks up/drops off must be identified as an alternative pick-up in the child's file.
- All alternate individuals will be requested to show I.D.

If an AFCS employee suspects that the individual picking up the child is visibly unfit to drive, and/or that the child may be in danger, they are obliged to report their concern to the authorities (Police/CAS) immediately. Alternate travel arrangements will be offered to the parent.

Employees cannot withhold a child from their biological parent unless a court order is on file.

## LATE PICK UP

We encourage you to **arrive by 5:15 pm to pick up your child**; this ensures you have an opportunity to connect with your child's educator and time for an unrushed ending to your child's day.

It is recognized that due to exceptional circumstances, families might occasionally be late in picking up their children. When this occurs, parents/guardians must notify the Centre at the earliest opportunity. Late pick-ups cause difficulties both to the team and the children waiting to be picked up.

A parent/guardian/designate, who is responsible for picking up a child, and arrives after 5:30 PM, (based on the Centre's clocks) will be required to sign the late fee book.

If a child is picked up past 5:30pm, a late fee will be charged as follows:

\$2.00 for the first 5 minutes

\$1.00 for every consecutive minute thereafter

If a parent/guardian is late more than 3 times, the late fee will double.

Reoccurring instances of late pick up may result in the family being discharged.

Late pick up occurrences are based per family.

Late fees are part of Non-Child Care Fee Accounts. This account is for the payment of any applicable fees due and payable to AFCS that are Non-Child Care Fees, i.e. late fees, payment for extra door fobs, parking pass fees (if needed at your location), etc.

This account does not include your regular daily childcare fee, or any daily subsidized fee paid to the City of Ottawa, for our childcare services. If you are a full fee client, any Non-Child Care Fees invoiced within any given month will be added to your regular bi-monthly payment the following month that the fee was incurred. If you are a subsidized client, the payment of any Non-Child Care Fees will be processed according to the Non-Child Care Fee schedule following the month the fee was incurred. Any late fees not paid may result in discharge from the program

**DAILY FEES FOR SERVICES**

We have a purchase of service agreement with the City of Ottawa to provide care for families eligible for fee subsidy as well as full fee families.

We have been approved for the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care program (CWELCC) and will be following all guidelines in regard to fee reductions. Our BASE FEES are indicated below. Our non-base fees, if applicable, include late fees, a transaction fee on all payments made by credit card, additional or lost fobs, and a \$10.00 fee for each returned payment from the bank.

Rates Table		
Program	Base Fee Pre-CWELCC Reduction	CWELCC
<i>Preschool</i>	\$54.41	\$22.00
<i>Kinder</i>		
AM/PM Including Holidays	\$25.40	\$12.00
AM/PM Not Including Holidays	\$25.80	\$12.00
Holidays	\$53.73	\$22.00
<i>School Age</i>		
AM/PM Including Holidays	\$24.75	N/A
AM/PM Not Including Holidays	\$24.75	N/A
Holidays	\$58.00	N/A
<i>Please note that there is a 2.2% + 30 cents charge on all CAD transactions made with a Canadian Visa and MasterCard credit cards and a 2.4% + 30 cents charge on all CAD transactions made with a Canadian AMEX credit cards and International credit cards.</i>		

Parents/guardians seeking a childcare subsidy will need to upload all required documents to the City of Ottawa Child Care Waiting List to see if they qualify for the subsidy.

**Please note:** Families using a childcare subsidy are entitled to 52 absent days per calendar year; any extra absent days will be billed to the family at the full fee rate.

Please be advised that there are no refunds for sick days, holidays or closure days and all statutory holidays are invoiced at the daily rate.

## POLICY FOR PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

- A. All parent fees are payable on a bi-monthly basis.
- B. As a not-for-profit organization we do not have the means to tolerate unpaid accounts. If an account is more than two (2) months in arrears, parents/guardians can receive a notice of termination and the account will be forwarded to a collection agency.
- C. There is a \$10.00 charge for all **returned cheques**.
- D. The appropriate notice required must be given when withdrawing your child(ren) or payment in lieu of notice will be invoiced.

Any late fees will be withdrawn from the method of payment indicated on file.

### We offer 3 methods of fee payment

Direct Debit is set up by submitting:

- a signed Direct Debit Authorization Agreement
- a VOID CHEQUE to provide bank account information

Post-Dated Cheques:

- submit a series of cheques as per finance schedule
- Cheques should be made payable to Andrew Fleck Children's Services.

Credit Card is set up by submitting:

- a signed PRE-AUTHORIZED CREDIT CARD (PACC) Agreement form

**NOTE:** There is a 2-3% (depending on your card) fee added to your invoice to cover our costs

You may call 613-736-1913 ext. 225 or email [finance@afchildrensservices.ca](mailto:finance@afchildrensservices.ca) at any time for questions or information concerning your account

## WAITING LIST POLICY

All families seeking childcare must register with the centralized City of Ottawa Child Care Registry and Wait List tool (CCRAW). <https://onehsn.com/Ottawa>

There is no fee for using the Child Care Registry and Wait List tool and we do not collect a fee or a deposit for placing a child on a waiting list.

If interested, families can contact our Parent Navigator – [PN@afchildrensservices.ca](mailto:PN@afchildrensservices.ca) to obtain more information regarding when a space may become available.

Factors that influence when a start date /space may be available:

- Application date,
- Child's birthdate,
- Date care is needed,
- Fee subsidy priority\* (if applicable)
- Employer or sibling priority\*\* (if applicable)

*\*Priority of fee subsidy is determined by the City of Ottawa Children's Services: these are based on vulnerability factors such as needs of children, income, families in schools/work programs etc.*

*\*\*Some of our sites have a contractual agreement to prioritize spaces for employees of that workplace. We also prioritize siblings of children currently attending, transfers between AFCS sites and AFCS employees.*

If any of these apply to you, please communicate with our parent navigator at [pn@afchildrensservices.ca](mailto:pn@afchildrensservices.ca)

## ADMISSION POLICY

**Subsidized spaces are available in licensed programs.** Eligibility for subsidy is determined by the Child Care Subsidy Office of the City of Ottawa. To apply you must first create an online application through the

City of Ottawa at 311 or at <https://onehsn.com/Ottawa>

Should your family require a child care subsidy, confirmation from the City of Ottawa Subsidy Office must be received by the program a minimum of 48 hours to the child being enrolled. Before confirming a full fee or subsidized space or enrolling your child in the program, an opportunity will be arranged for you and your child to tour the program, meet the staff and review all the necessary documents with the Program Coordinator or designate. A space will not be confirmed until the program has met with the family and child. Spaces will be granted based on the waiting list application date and subject to the following criteria:

- Children must be within the age limit set for the program
- Up to date children's records of immunization must be provided prior to admission
- All necessary documents must be completed at least 1 week prior to the child starting in the program

### WITHDRAWAL / DISCHARGE POLICY

1. Children may stay in the program until the end of their 12<sup>th</sup> year. We respectfully request one month of written notice of pending withdrawal and require at a minimum two weeks' notice. If the required notice is not provided, fees will be charged in lieu of the notice period.
2. Parents who wish to temporarily withdraw their child from the program (e.g. for an extended holiday) may request to have their child's name placed on the waiting list for readmission. Regretfully, no guarantee can be given that a space will be available when needed. Please note this does not eliminate the notice period requirements as described above.
3. The following are the exceptions to the above policy **for Kindergarten and School age children:**
  - a) Filling spaces mid-year is difficult and not always an option based on space requirements for the next school year. Therefore, after January 1st of each calendar year we **require 3 months' notice** for withdrawal from the program. If the required notice is not given fees will be charged in lieu of the notice period.
  - b) We must be informed before August 1st of the upcoming school year if you no longer require care in September. If you withdraw after August 1st and we are not able to fill the space by the start of the school year, you will be charged a notice period of 2 weeks of fees.
4. Should a child that demonstrates challenges, developmentally and/or behaviourally be enrolled in the program, the program will seek to access additional supports and resources in a timely manner. However, if it is concluded that the staff and program can no longer meet a child's needs and that there is a safety risk to the child, other children and staff, then the decision to discharge a child may be warranted.
5. The program also reserves the right to give notice of withdrawal of service if the parent does not abide by all policies and procedures.
6. If the centre's programs are not meeting the needs of your child or family, we will discuss possible solutions and provide assistance in finding alternatives.

### CANCELLATION OF REGISTRATION

Families are required to make a payment equal to 10 full days of care immediately upon accepting a registration offer, which will be applied to the first payment under our regular bi-monthly payment schedule. Refunds of registration payments will only be issued if we receive cancellation of your registration 30 days prior to the beginning of care, including returning after breaks in care (ie. Opting out of care for the summer, extended vacation, etc.)

## **ENROLLMENT & MOVING TO ANOTHER AGE GROUP**

To fill available spaces, we contact families whose child is age-eligible for the space available, based on their registration application date and if we can successfully support the child’s needs. The dynamics of the group and expected availability to move to the next age group is also considered.

To ensure we provide you and your child with the best possible early learning and care experience, you will be invited for a tour and conversation, before the space is offered and before a parent is expected to accept it. This is to ensure we can meet the needs of the child and expectations of the family.

*Movement within the centre:* When a space becomes vacant in an older age group, a conversation with the parents and Educator teams (both groups) determines whether a child currently attending in a younger age group is chronologically and developmentally ready to move.

An orientation to the new group is planned over a period of a week, or more starting with short visits that increase based on the child’s comfort. This transition to the new program room is supported by the Educators, who will communicate consistently with the family and share updates.

*Moving to Kindergarten:* We plan our overall site enrolment for each age group with the expectation that all children eligible for Junior Kindergarten will be leaving us by September. Our recommendation is that families plan their holidays so that their child says goodbye to us and then starts in school. You will be asked to let us know your departure date as soon as possible so we can plan for moving children to the next age group and welcoming new children from our extensive wait list. Kindergarten registration typically occurs in January/February, we will send you a prompt. You may also want to be proactively thinking ahead about before and after school child care and placing your child on the waiting list of the schools that your child is eligible to attend. If your child is being supported by Children’s Inclusion Support Services (CISS), then a transition to school plan will be discussed with you.

Unfortunately, other than knowing when our preschool children will be moving on to kindergarten, we cannot predict when we will have a vacancy.

Typically, we have very few spaces available during the year, summer & fall is when most of our new children start

## **THE CENTRE IS CLOSED ON THE FOLLOWING DAYS:**

New Year’s Day	Jan. 1 or following business day
Family Day	Third Monday in February
Good Friday	Variable date between March 20 and April 23.
Easter Monday	Variable date between March 23 and April 26.
Victoria Day	Third Monday in May
Canada Day	July 1 <sup>st</sup> or following Monday
August Civic Holiday	First Monday in August
Labour Day	First Monday in September
Truth and Reconciliation Day	September 30 or following Monday
Thanksgiving	Second Monday in October
Remembrance Day (for professional learning – employees are working)	November 11 <sup>th</sup> or following Monday
Christmas Day	December 25 or following work day
Boxing Day	December 26 or following work day
in lieu our agency-wide professional	One day between Christmas and New Year’s Day

learning day on November 11 <sup>th</sup>	
Two days between Christmas and New Year	In addition to the stats we are also closed 2 days – these dates fluctuate each year and are communicated in September.

### PROLONGED TIME AWAY FOR CWELCC FUNDED SPACES

While we respect that time away with family is something to treasure, knowing that other families are waiting for spaces, it would not be appropriate for us to leave spaces vacant, even though they are being paid

- Families may be absent for up to an accumulation of 52 days, but no more than 4 consecutive weeks, as a reportable absence, pro-rated in a calendar year.
  - When this occurs (or is being planned), please speak with the Director/Consultant
- Absences greater than the above may result in a child’s space being terminated so we can offer care to someone on our waiting list
  - This is based on the CWELCC Provincial policy and mirrors the eligible paid days away for families in receipt of fee subsidy

There may be exceptions to this depending on unique circumstances, these are to be brought to the Director for consultation. E.g. child has a pending surgery, health and safety issues etc.

- At this time, this also does not apply to school-age children over the age of 6 since they are not funded through the Child Care and Early Learning Child Care Plan.
- It also does not apply to families in our licensed child care located in shelters programs.

As these are publicly funded programs, this is our ethical accountability as we may be asked by our funders about our enrolment.

### INCLEMENT WEATHER

Occasionally, when extreme weather conditions can create dangerous traveling conditions, we may contact parents/guardians to request that they depart earlier than their routine to ensure timely pick up. This is to ensure the safety of children and families as well as our employees who also need to travel home.

**Our policies addressing late pick-ups will not be altered due to poor weather and travel conditions.**

**We prioritize outdoor time for all children in all seasons, however, there are times when we make a decision to remain indoors.**

Even though we prioritize outdoor time for all children in all seasons, there are times when we make the decision to remain indoors. Many factors are taken into consideration including the age of the children, availability of protection from the elements: is there shade, does the building provide wind shelter so it is not as cold as in other areas, how long will we stay outside? We monitor the weather, temperature and the air quality index. While temperature and weather elements can often be managed by layers of clothing when it is wet or cold or by adding sun shirts and water play when it is hot along with shortened amount of time outside, air quality cannot be mitigated.

We refer to the *Current Air Quality Health Index*, part of the Weather Network, for guidance when planning for our time outside. The descriptions of the Air Quality Index and additional information can also be found here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/air-quality-health-index/understanding-messages.html>

- Low Risk (Air Quality Index of 1-3): This is the ideal air quality for outdoor and physical

- activities. **All outdoor programs will take place as usual.**
- Moderate Risk (Air Quality Index of 4-6): **We will monitor children and staff and potentially shorten our typical amount of time outside by at least 50% and encourage activities that do not promote running, high energy movements. Infant programs will not be outside at all.**
- High Risk or Very High Risk (Air Quality of 7+): **Indoor programming only.**

Ottawa Public Health information can be found here: <https://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/public-health-topics/outdoor-air-pollution.aspx#protect>

Weather quality can be found here: [https://weather.gc.ca/airquality/pages/index\\_e.html](https://weather.gc.ca/airquality/pages/index_e.html)

### **EMERGENCY CLOSURES**

Due to unforeseen circumstances (fire, flood, loss of electricity, and/or property damage); our program may close if the Centre is deemed unsafe or non-operational. Parents will be notified of the closure and required to make alternative arrangements until official notice is given of the Centre reopening. The Centre may also need to close during significant events, for example extreme weather, particularly in situations where staffing will be limited. No rebate of fees will be given due to emergency closures.

### **GIFT GIVING**

While it can be traditional for children to give Educators gifts during the holiday season, end of the year etc., as RECEs we are professionally bound, by the College of ECEs, from accepting any gifts of benefits, advantages, fees, honoraria, or favors, including items, money, or gift cards. This is to preserve our integrity as professionals and to protect parents/guardians from any expectation of undue influence. Homemade gifts would be an exception and are most appreciated; small gestures such as a consumable item (box of chocolates for example), that can be shared with the team onsite are also welcomed.

Your appreciation and opportunity to develop a relationship with your child is thanks enough!

### **DUAL RELATIONSHIPS**

To avoid situations that may impair, or perceive to impair, an AFCS employee’s professional judgment, AFCS employees are obligated to avoid conflicts of interest and/or dual relationships. This means that AFCS employees are not to engage in any after hours relationships (e.g. babysitting) where they are responsible for children (whether for compensation or not) who are also attending licensed child care at the same location. AFCS employees are aware of this restriction and sign the AFCS Conflict of Interest policy annually.

### **NUTRITION**

This centre provides a menu that meets the recommendations of Canada’s Food Guide. Natural wholesome foods are served. A balanced mid-day meal for preschool children plus a morning and afternoon snack are provided for all children in care. Kinder and School Age children must bring in a lunch from home on non-school days when they are in care all day.

Providing a calm eating area with low lighting, background nature music, and engaging conversations where we eat meals family style supports a positive approach to meal times.

Our weekly menus for the current and following week are posted in each cooking and serving area of the Centre, along with any dietary restrictions, allergies and/or anaphylaxis. Weekly menus are kept for 30 days after the last day for which they are applicable. Substitutions and specific food choices are noted on the posted menus.

Special dietary and feeding arrangements are to be carried out in accordance with the written instructions provided by the parents/guardians of the child. Careful menu planning is essential to meet children's nutritional needs and to expose them to a wide variety of foods.

We offer water and milk at all meals; we do not serve juice or other food items that contain high sugar and sodium levels. Nutritious between-meal snacks are provided for each child, that promotes good dental health and to not interfere with a child's appetite for meal time.

We support children's self-help skills by offering utensils for self-serving such as small tongs and using small containers to pour milk and water. Please feel free to provide input into our menu planning at any time. Parents are required to label all food and drink brought to the centre, with their child's name on it. Infant feeding requirements will be discussed at the time of admission.

### **SIGNS OF ILLNESS**

We are committed to the health and well-being of the children and employees at all our centres. Therefore, our health policies have been developed based on the guidelines from Ottawa Public Health (OPH) Department and the Child Care and Early Years Act. We strictly adhere to these policies and guidelines to ensure a safe and healthy environment for all.

Educators perform a daily well-being visual check to ensure children are well enough to participate in the program. If signs of illness are observed or your child becomes ill during the day, your child will not be able to attend the centre that day or will be notified to come and pick up your child as soon as possible.

Should your child show signs of an unknown rash, eye infection or other communicable diseases while present at the centre, we may ask you to consult with a health practitioner to prevent the transmission of communicable diseases to others.

To prevent outbreaks, the City of Ottawa Health Department requests that children with certain communicable diseases be excluded until specific criteria are met.

Therefore, your child may not attend the program if they exhibit the following symptoms:

1. A fever of 38 degrees Celsius or higher (100.3 Fahrenheit)
2. Deep, persistent cough or pain
3. Any unexplained rash or skin irritation
4. Headache or sore throat
5. Eyes/ears that are oozing any form of discharge (may require the child to be on antibiotics for 24 hours prior to readmission if a bacterial infection)
6. Strep Throat (must be on antibiotics for 24 hours prior to readmission)
7. Vomiting
8. Watery Diarrhea (at least 2 episodes)

### **Exclusion and Re-Entry**

If your child develops any of the general symptoms listed above (items 1-6), we ask that you keep your child at home until they are **fever-free and symptom improving for 24 hours without any fever reducing medication.**

If your child develops any of the gastrointestinal symptoms listed above (items 7-8), we ask that you keep

your child at home until they **have gone a full 48 hours symptom free after the last occurrence.**

On occasion, the centre may be in an Outbreak; this is when more than 15% of children and/or employees are ill with the same symptoms. When this happens, we consult Ottawa Public Health for guidance, including for exclusion and re-entry in the program.

The program must be notified immediately if your child is hospitalized for more than 24 hours at any time.

### **IMMUNIZATION**

It is recommended by the Local Medical Officer of Health, that all children be immunized. Parents of children who object to immunization due to religious/conscience or medical reasons must complete a standardized ministry approved form. Ministry approved forms for religious/conscience objections must be completed by a “commissioner for taking affidavits” (i.e. notarized). Any medical exemptions forms must be completed by a doctor or nurse practitioner. These forms are available upon request. All immunization records and/or records of parental objections will be kept as part of the children’s files.

#### **IMPORTANT!**

Ottawa Public Health requires that parents register and update their child’s immunizations online <https://www.canimmunize.ca/en/report?phu=28>

### **HEADLICE**

When your child is found to have head lice or nits while attending the program, you will be given a withdrawal notice for Head lice with a 24-hour exclusion and a form to fill out indicating that the head licetreatment was completed. This form will need to be returned to the program after each treatment. This decision is made by the agency in order to prevent the spreading of head lice and live nits at the centre.

### **ALLERGIES AND ANAPHYLAXIS**

To provide a safe environment and protect your child **we must be aware of any allergies or potential allergies that your child may have.** All allergies must be documented on the appropriate registration and medical forms.

For children who may have an Anaphylaxis allergy, there is a detailed Ministry Policy which must be adhered to and parents/guardians must fill out all appropriate papers which includes authorization from a medical professional. If your child requires an Epinephrine auto injector (EpiPen), the team must be made aware of this and be given the auto injector when you drop your child off. Should you and your child arrive at the program without the auto injector you will not be able to drop them off until their auto injector is onsite.

We strive to be a **nut safe & scent free** environment and will do everything that we can to protect your child while at the centre, but we cannot guarantee that your child may not come in to contact with an allergic substance. This policy and all forms required will be reviewed with you at time of the tour and prior to your child’s first day at the Centre.

Children attending our infant, toddler and preschool programs are provided with 2 snacks and a lunch daily. We attempt to accommodate a variety of dietary restrictions and allergies. **Food from home is not necessary unless agreed to in advance with the program supervisor.** Should food from home be necessary, each container / item must be clearly labeled with the child's full name and any parental written instructions (if applicable).

Some children in our programs have life-threatening food allergies (Anaphylaxis) and, for this reason, it is imperative that you **DO NOT bring any food into the centre**, unless otherwise arranged with the program Coordinator or if your kinder or school-age child is bringing their lunch for a non-school day. Any food coming into the Centre or home child care premises must not contain any nuts or nut products and must be labeled with the child's name. Please note that should there be any other anaphylactic allergies (other than nut or nuts products), a communication will be shared with that information and any directives to follow.

Anaphylaxis is a medical condition that causes severe reaction to specific agents and can be fatal in seconds. All employees are trained in the use of an Epinephrine auto injector.

#### **ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION**

If your child requires medication while in the program, you are required to complete and sign a *Medication Authorization Form* which provides details about the medication, including the time and amount of the dosage. Should your child be prescribed antibiotics, they must have been taking the antibiotics for 24 hours prior to returning to the Centre.

Due to the frequency and their longer-term daily usage, **sunscreen, diaper creams, and lip balms, hand sanitizer can have a blanket authorization from a parent/guardian** on the enrolment form and can be administered without a medication form as long as they are non-prescription and/or they are not for acute (symptomatic) treatment. They must be **labelled with your child's name**, whether they have a drug administration number (DIN) or not.

We can only accept medication which is in its original container and the container or package must be clearly labelled with the following:

- Child's name
- Name of drug/medication  
Dosage
- Date of purchase
- Expiration date
- Instructions for storage & administration
- Possible side effects

All medication no longer needed or expired is to be taken home. **We request that all medication be hand-delivered to us so that it can be stored safely out of reach of children and according to instructions.** The Centre must store all medication in a locked container in the fridge or cupboard except for emergency medication. A designated employee will be responsible for all medications.

#### **SAFE SLEEP**

Each family is advised of our **Safe Sleep Policy** at the time of enrolment.

Each child will be assigned their own cot/mat/crib and it will be labelled with their name. All cots/mats/cribs are disinfected weekly. Educators performs visual checks on all children 4 times throughout rest time and these are documented in the daily log book. Any changes in the child's sleeping patterns or behaviors will be communicated with parents. Educators will consult with parents/guardians with respect

to a child's sleeping arrangements. We will embrace opportunities for children to nap outdoors or maybe even under the trees when this feels like the right experience to introduce to the group and of course when the weather cooperates.

Educators will communicate, to parents/guardians, any significant changes in a child's sleeping patterns or behaviors. Any sleep preferences that are identified at intake or communicated by parents will be documented in daily log book.

### **BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE**

The emotional and physical well-being of children in our care is a priority Positive forms of Behavior Guidance with emphasis on discussion, encouragement and positive reinforcement comply with our philosophy to promote the healthy development of the children.

Please read our Program Statement for further information on Behavior Guidance Practices.

#### **Prohibited Practices as defined by the *Child Care and Early Years Act*:**

- Corporal punishment of the child (which may include but is not limited to, hitting, spanking, slapping, pinching)
- 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 them self or someone else, only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent.
- Locking the exits of the premises for the purpose of confining the child or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures.
- Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth.
- Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding.
- Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.
- Sexual abuse, sexual misconduct, and prescribed sexual acts (as defined under the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007*)

### **ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORTS**

If your child suffers a significant injury requiring more than basic comfort (soap, water, band-aid, ice, TLC) or that is more than would be expected in the normal course of play, Educators will administer first aid and also complete an accident report before the child is signed out (when possible) or by the next day that care is provided. A copy will be provided to the parents/guardians.

If the injury is severe enough to warrant medical assistance, parents/guardians will be notified immediately to come and pick up their child to seek medical attention. If emergency treatment at a hospital is required, parents will be contacted to either accompany or meet someone at the hospital. If parents/guardians cannot be contacted, employees will follow emergency procedures and call either ambulance services or 911, depending on the severity of the injury.

### **SERIOUS OCCURRENCES**

As a licensed program we are responsible for delivering high quality services that promote the health, safety and well-being of all children. A part of our accountability requirements, under licensing, is to report incidents to the Ministry of Education Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Offices. The type of incidents that we must report include any life-threatening injury or illness or any time there is a disruption of service for example; a power outage which means the program is closed.

We are very proud at Andrew Fleck Children’s Services to offer a high-quality licensed program and take our accountability to parents and the public very seriously. We have consistently followed the requirements under the *Child Care and Early Years Act*, to report incidents to the Ministry. The Ministry believes that families will benefit from information regarding incidents that occur including the actions that we have taken to prevent and minimize a reoccurrence by posting non-identifying information when an incident has occurred.

Beside our license, you will find a serious occurrence notification form posted anytime an incident has been reported to the Ministry. The form identifies the date, the type of incident, a description and any action taken. There will be no identifying info included on the form. The notification form will remain posted for 10 business days; if the posting is related to an incident that involved your family, you will be personally informed.

**CONCERNS OR ISSUES**

All issues and concerns brought forward are taken seriously and every effort will be made to resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all.

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

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.

Procedures to follow:

Examples of issues or concerns	Steps to report and issue or concern:	Steps for responding to issue or concern:
Program Related e.g.: General Program Delivery	Raise the issue or concern to the employee directly or the manager or designate	When an issue or concern is brought forward to an employee, it is their responsibility to: Inform the appropriate manager or designate of the situation within 24 hours. Document the issues/concerns in detail.
Agency Related e.g.: General AFCS Operations Related	Raise the issue or concern to - the Manager or Designate.	Documentation should include: the date and time the issue/concern was received;

Employees, students or volunteers	Raise the issue or concern to the individual directly or the manager or designate	the name of the person who received the issue/concern; the name of the person reporting the issue/concern; the details of the issue/concern; any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern information given to the person regarding next steps Provide the person expressing the concern with the contact information of the person being notified (if applicable) Explain that every effort will be made to provide an initial response or resolution to the concern or issue within 2 business days.
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**APPROPRIATE CLOTHING**

Children should wear comfortable clothing that you do not mind getting dirty. Shoes must always be worn. Well-fitted footwear, such as running shoes, are required (no slippers/flip flop or croc sandals) so children can comfortably move on various surfaces indoors and outdoors with confidence.

***We believe there is no such thing as bad weather when you have the right outdoor clothing!***

There are usually two outdoor play periods a day (weather permitting) and we ask that the children be dressed accordingly: very warm, water-resistant clothing for winter; cool clothing with sun hats and sun screen for summer. It is extremely important that a complete change of clothing (mitts, hat, pants, shirt, socks, underclothes, and shoes) is provided to be kept at the Centre.

Please label all your child’s belongings including clothing. We cannot be held responsible for lost/missing items. Families are responsible for bringing in diapers and wipes for their child. A helpful reminder note will be posted on your child’s cubby, when diapers/wipes are running low.

Weather	Clothing*
Warm	Short or long-sleeved shirt – ideally one expected to provide sun protection Durable and breathable pants Sun hat Closed-toes shoes or boots An extra pair of socks in backpack
Cold	As temperatures drop children will require base layers & winter gear. Base layers – synthetic long underwear/top Mid layers – fleece pants, sweatshirt overtop of base Snow pants and jacket or snowsuit 2+ pairs mittens (mitts are so much warmer than gloves) Warm hat + Boots
Rainy	Long sleeved shirt Long pants Running or hiking shoes (no sandals or open-toe shoes, please) Sun Hat Rain gear (waterproof boots, pants, jacket) 1 extra change of clothes (including underwear and socks)

	Sunscreen on sunny days
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\*We also have a supply of extra indoor and outdoor clothing to loan to children when necessary.

**AFCS provides a Muddy Buddy for each preschool child to wear over their regular clothing for days when the outdoor play is anticipated to be wet / muddy or when an additional layer is necessary. These remain onsite and are washed regularly.**

**AFCS also provides a long sleeve sun shirt for each child to wear over their regular clothing, this shirt is rated at UV protection SPF 50.**

**ACTIVITIES OFF THE PREMISES**

Walking excursions and field trips support a sense of community and are designed and organized to support the children’s ongoing inquiries. Parent/guardian volunteers are always welcome to come alongfor the adventures. Parents are always informed of any activities off premises in advance. Should circumstances (e.g. health) prevent a child's participation in a walking excursion, it is the parents’ responsibility to arrange alternate care.

**PARENT/GUARDIAN PARTICIPATION**

Our program supports an ‘Open Door’ approach for families and parents/guardians are welcome at any time of the day. Family involvement in the program is valued and encouraged.

Participation, by a parent, in a program that their child attends, is not deemed as volunteering. In keeping with our open-door policy, parents(and other family members with parent/guardian permission) are invited to spend time in their child’s program engaged and participating with their child on an ongoing basis, this is in keeping with our Program Statement.

Parents are invited to participate in special events or walking excursions, accompanying and participating withtheir own child.

For further clarification, please read the following points which also pertain to parent participation in their child’s program and or attending walking excursions:

- At no time will a parent be left unsupervised with any child other than their own. An employee of Andrew Fleck Children’s Services will always be present.
- Parents are never counted in ratio.
- Parents that attend walking excursions are accompanying their own child and are not responsiblefor the supervision of other children

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

To protect the health and safety of children and employees, Andrew Fleck Children’s Services has an emergency management policy and procedures that sets out the roles and responsibility of all employees. All programs conduct monthly fire drills and follow evacuation procedures. This ensures that all children become familiar with emergency procedures. In the event of a real emergency and that the children cannot return to the Centre they will be moved to our designated emergency shelter and parents will be

contacted to pick up their children immediately.

**Our Emergency Shelter is located at the fire station at 10 Fifth Avenue.**

As indicated in the AFCS Emergency Management policy, the Supervisor of the program or designate will notify parents/guardians of the emergency situation, evacuation and the location to pick up their children. Notification will be done by email or phone depending on the situation. Where possible, the Senior Leadership Team will update our website and the program supervisor or designate will update the program's voicemail as soon as possible to inform parents/guardians that the program has been evacuated. The details of the evacuation, site location and contact information will be provided in this message.

**EMPLOYEE QUALIFICATIONS, SCREENING MEASURES AND CRIMINAL REFERENCE CHECK – VULNERABLE SECTOR CHECKS**

All our Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) are registered with the College of ECE. Our ECE Assistants support the Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) in providing a nurturing, developmentally appropriate, healthy and safe environment to meet the needs of all children.

All employees counted in ratio have Standard First Aid & Infant/Child CPR qualifications and must provide a Criminal Reference Check with the Vulnerable Sector prior to their employment and every 5 years after. Employees also sign a Declaration of Offense on an annual basis.

All our programs support students from various Colleges as they complete their ECE placements. Volunteers are also often part of our programs.

**SUPERVISION OF VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENTS**

While we welcome community members, students and/or volunteers to our program they are never left alone with the children, left unsupervised or included in ratios. All students and volunteers receive a detailed orientation prior to beginning their placement and must abide by and sign off on our Program Statement and all policies and procedures as well as provide us with a criminal reference check with the vulnerable sector.

## DUTY TO REPORT

In Ontario, under section 125 of the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017, S.O. 2017, anyone who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is, or may be in need of protection must promptly report the suspicion and the information upon which it is based to the Children's Aid Society. Our educators have been trained to recognize the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect. Any allegations or suspicion of child abuse and/or neglect is also deemed a Serious Occurrence under the Child Care and Early Years Act.

Visit [Report child abuse and neglect-It's your duty](#)

Educators are required to report concerns where there are reasonable grounds to suspect one or more of the following with respect to a child:

- *Physical abuse*: signs of physical harm or injury
- *Sexual abuse*: inappropriate touching or involvement in a sexual activity or exploitation
- *Emotional Harm*: Humiliation, insults, threats, and other behaviors that harm a child's emotional state.
- *Neglect*: Basic needs for food, clothing, shelter & safety are not met
- *Exposure* to family violence