

Parent Handbook



Unique Minds Child Care Inc.
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Program Statement

Just as our name states, we at Unique Minds Child Care Inc. view children as unique, capable and competent. We also believe children are born with a natural curiosity and are rich in potential. We as a centre want to build upon this, providing many opportunities for learning in all areas of development. By doing this, we will be following How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years (2014) document.

How Does Learning Happen?

Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years, is a professional learning resource guide about learning through relationships for those working with young children and families. This pedagogical document, How Does Learning Happen?, helps educators focus on these interrelationships in the context of early years environments.

How Does Learning Happen? is a document which is to be supported, implemented and reflected upon as a requirement of the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, which Child Care is governed by.

This document guides all areas of our practice by ensuring that we are developing and maintaining a solid sense of belonging, well-being, expression and engagement for everyone involved with our organization. We reflect on our daily relationships to ensure we are meeting the goals and requirements as set out in the document and as set by our policies and procedures.

Within a warm, nurturing environment, children actively participate in positive, interactive experiences that are based on their current interests and real life experiences. Our programs are flexible and creative and provide children opportunities for decision-making and growth towards independence and responsibility. Allowing the children to express themselves as individuals, and engage them in child-directed activities.

Developing the ability to self-regulate is an essential part of a child's healthy development. Understanding and helping children to develop self-regulation skills is a key component of the Children's Centre. Self-regulation develops over time with maturation, experience and nurturing adult support.

Self-regulation is the ability to effectively monitor and modify one's own emotions, to focus or shift attention, to control impulses and to tolerate frustration or delay gratification. A child must be calmly focused and alert in order to learn, communicate and self-soothe effectively. Good self-regulation skills are important for a child's social-emotional development, as research has shown that children who can successfully self-regulate are more resilient, have better relationships with others, and better academic outcomes.

We value positive and responsive relationships with families. By engaging families in a meaningful way, this partnership ensures that we are able to focus on their child's social, emotional, physical, creative and cognitive development in a holistic way.

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Our educators are warm, caring, qualified professionals who are carefully chosen through a selection process designed to determine their ability to meet the needs of children.

Educators participate in regularly scheduled professional learning opportunities throughout the year. Individually, and within learning communities, educators review, discuss, share and reflect on topics that are relevant to providing quality care for children and effective support for families.

We will work in partnership with special needs resource agencies, such as Bruce County Human Services, to meet the individual needs of children and their families. By working collaboratively with parents and resource agencies, we ensure that strategies are implemented that reduce or eliminate barriers and effectively support each child's unique needs.

Staff, Students and Volunteers will do this by observing and documenting what the interests are of the children, to determine what their strengths and needs are to further expand on their knowledge. Together we will provide an all-inclusive environment where everyone is valued and provided with the same opportunities to strive and grow. As partners with families we want to have an open and confidential relationship with the children's best interests at heart. We as role models and caregivers hope to leave all of our children with the determination and tools to be all that they can be.

Program Statement Implementation Policy

Purpose of the Policy:

To ensure that all staff, students and volunteers are fully informed about Unique Minds Child Care Inc.'s Program Statement, our Curriculum Goals and Approaches, and the Prohibited Practices.

Policy Goal:

That all staff, students and volunteers will have read and understood the document ***How Does Learning Happen*** and our Program Statement, our Curriculum Goals and Approaches, and our Prohibited Practices to guarantee a smooth policy implementation. To ensure that all staff, placement students and volunteers are implementing the Program Statement into the program. All staff, students and volunteers will read and sign off on the Program Statement prior to beginning to work in our program and annually thereafter. If any substantive changes are made, staff, volunteers and students will do a follow up review and sign off.

Unique Minds Child Care Inc.'s Program Statement is consistent with the Ministry of Education's policy statement on programming (0.Reg. 137/15), aligns with our policies and procedures, and is used to guide our work with children and families.

Children have a strong sense of self, health and well-being. Children are provided healthy snacks/meals daily. Food is not used as a reward or punishment and children are able to follow cues in regards to their own hunger or fullness.

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Children are viewed as resourceful, competent, capable of complex thinking and rich in potential. Children are encouraged to feel powerful, independent, important and competent. They are provided with open-ended materials and sensory experiences that offer opportunities for exploration and discoveries.

Our indoor and outdoor environments allow for limited transitions, flexibility for rest periods, and periods of uninterrupted play where safe risk measures are practiced. Programming allows children the opportunity to sleep, rest or engage in quiet activities based on their individual need to regenerate or self-regulate.

Children actively participate in positive, interactive experiences that are based on their current interests and real life experiences. Programming and ongoing projects are generated from observations and children's emergent ideas and interests.

By recognizing and acting upon teachable moments, educators engage the children in planning activities that are meaningful to their world. Children are provided with open ended materials that allow for the natural flow of creativity and the opportunity to make representations of what they understand or imagine.

Children are supported in developing self-regulation skills. Educators demonstrate a calm, positive approach to guiding children, and provide them with the tools necessary to help them problem solve and communicate. They interact with children in a manner that maintains the child's sense of self-worth, respect and dignity.

Families are valued through positive and responsive relationships. Families are valued as contributors with unique knowledge, experiences and strengths. They are welcomed into the program and are invited to participate in the planning and sharing of ideas and resources. They see their lives, language and interests reflected in the program.

Families are engaged in a meaningful way to ensure that educators are able to focus on the children's social, emotional, physical, creative and cognitive development in a holistic way. Educators are mindful of building relationships to meet the individual needs of the child and family. By participating in ongoing communication with parents, educators exchange information and involve them in decision-making for their child.

All children are valued and have opportunities to participate with their peers, in activities that promote their emotional, physical, social and intellectual growth and development. Educators work in collaboration with community resource agencies, to meet the individual needs of the children and their families.

Program Supervisors document and review the impact of the approaches on the children and their families. Program Supervisors, or designates, conduct regular program visits to document, review and discuss with the educators the impact of the approaches on the children and their families.

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Objectives:

- The Director/Designate/Supervisor at Unique Minds Child Care Inc. is informed about the policy, enforcement procedures, and their role in the enforcement.
- The staff, students and volunteers at Unique Minds Child Care Inc. are informed of the policy's provisions, enforcement procedures, and implementation process

Documentation:

The Director/Designate/Supervisor will use checklists to ensure that all staff, students and volunteers are following the Program Statement thoroughly. It will be documented on the checklist if discrepancies are noticed. The Supervisor will then speak directly to the staff, students and volunteers in question and perform a training session with the staff, students and volunteers.

If the Supervisor continues to see infractions from the staff, students and volunteers in regards to the Program Statement, they will proceed to the discipline stages which are:

- a verbal warning
- then a written warning
- then dismissal.

If staff, students and volunteers proceed through all of these stages they will then be dismissed with cause. If a staff, student or volunteer breaches our Prohibited Practices, they will immediately be dismissed.

Organization Re-evaluation:

Once a year, the staff, students and volunteers will be asked to assess whether the program is meeting all of our Curriculum Goals and Approaches that are outlined in our Program Statement. The Supervisor will then re-evaluate our Curriculum Goals and Approaches and make necessary changes to the Program Statement.

Approaches for Guiding Children's Success:

Our aim is for the children and staff to have a safe and enjoyable time at our program. We establish reasonable limits for behaviour which are consistently monitored by all staff. These limits are appropriate to the developmental level of the child and consider the health, safety, and the rights of all individuals. A positive approach is used to guide the children. Each situation and child is considered individually. Our methods include: positive redirection, logical and natural consequences, limit setting, modeling, providing choices, anticipating situations, recognizing appropriate behavior and involving children in conflict resolution.

Monitoring Compliance and Contraventions:

On a monthly basis, the Program Supervisor or designate visits each program to observe and document compliance with the implementation of program policies and procedures, Program Statement Goals and Approaches and Individual Support Plans. Follow up support is provided as required.

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Prohibited Practices:

Under no circumstances is the following permitted:

- a) Corporal punishment of a child.
- b) Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten a child or undermine his/her self-respect, dignity or self-worth.
- c) Deprivation of a child's basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding.
- d) Locking the exits of a child care program for the purpose of confining a child, or confining a child in an area or room without adult supervision.
- e) Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will
- f) Physical restraint of a child

Inclusion:

Unique Minds Child Care Inc. is committed to providing high quality, inclusive programs and practices that respond to the individual abilities and needs of every child. We know that children need to feel valued, have friends and feel that they belong. We provide safe, caring environments where all children are valued and have opportunities to participate with their peers, in activities that promote their emotional, physical, social and cognitive growth and development. We foster each child's sense of belonging and feelings of self-worth through respectful and supportive relationships among staff, children, their families and the community.

Hi-Mama

Hi-Mama will be one (1) form of daily communication between staff and parents. Be sure to download the app to your phone!

Smoke-Free Policy and Procedures

Objective:

To maintain a smoke-free environment and protect the health of all those who work, attend or visit Unique Minds Child Care Inc.

Unique Minds Child Care Inc. is designated a smoke-free area, in accordance with the Smoke-Free Ontario Act. The Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017 prohibits the smoking of tobacco, the use of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) to vape any substance, and the smoking of cannabis (medical or recreational) in enclosed workplaces and enclosed public places, as well as other designated places in Ontario, to protect workers and the public from second-hand smoke and vapour.

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Smoking refers to the smoking or holding of lighted tobacco or cannabis (medical or recreational).

Vaping refers to inhaling or exhaling vapour from an electronic cigarette, or holding an activated electronic cigarette, whether or not the vapour contains nicotine.

Policy:

Smoking or holding of lighted tobacco or cannabis (medical or recreational); and inhaling or exhaling vapour from an electronic cigarette, or holding an activated electronic cigarette, whether or not the vapour contains nicotine is prohibited in a licenced child care facility under the Child & Early Years Act.

Smoking or holding of lighted tobacco or cannabis (medical or recreational); and inhaling or exhaling vapour from an electronic cigarette, or holding an activated electronic cigarette, whether or not the vapour contains nicotine is prohibited in public and private schools, including the grounds associated with the school, and public areas within 20 metres of any point on the perimeter of the grounds of the school.

Responsibilities:

- Provide notice to all parents before their child is enrolled
- “NO Smoking/Vaping” signs will be posted at each entrance/exit and washrooms in the centre
- Notice will be provided to all students, volunteers, and outside agencies prior to providing care, guidance to the children, or maintenance work
- The policy will be reviewed with all staff and supervisors at commencement of employment
- Ensure that no ashtrays or similar items remain in the smoke-free and vape-free areas
- Ensure that NO one smokes on the premises
- Ensure that someone who refuses to comply with Ontario’s smoking and vaping laws does not remain in the smoke-free and vape-free areas

Enforcement:

Grey Bruce Health Unit will carry out inspections and respond to complaints about smoking or vaping within the Unique Minds Child Care Inc centre, play yard, Lucknow Central Public School Before and After School Program or near proximity of either of these locations in order to enforce the Act

Penalties:

There is no maximum corporate fine listed for contravention of this section of the Act, meaning the fine amount would be left up to a justice of the peace. An individual could be subject to a maximum fine of \$5000.

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Registration

Unique Minds Child Care Inc. is licensed by the Ministry of Education. The child/staff ratios are as follows:

- One (1) staff for every five (5) toddlers (18 months to 2.5 years)
- One (1) staff for every eight (8) preschoolers (2.5 to 5 years)

There are a total of 31 spaces available. Toddlers allotted 15 and Preschool allotted 16.

The Before and After School Program is licensed by the Ministry of Education. The child/staff ratios are as follows:

- One (1) staff for every thirteen (13) Kindergarten (44 months to 68 months)
- One (1) staff for every fifteen (15) Primary/Junior (68 months to 12 years)

There are two (2) licensed rooms at Lucknow Central Public School with a total of 40 spaces available. Small room for ten (10) Kindergarten or ten (10) Primary/Junior and large room thirty (26) Kindergarten or thirty (30) Primary/Junior aged children.

Child Care fee assistance is available, because this is a licensed facility by the Ministry of Education.

Application forms may be picked up at Unique Minds Child Care Inc. office, in person or have them emailed directly to you or you can print them from our website, <https://www.uniquemindschildcare.ca> At times, due to full enrolment, children may need to be placed on a waiting list in order to secure a space, when it becomes available. **Spaces are prioritized by full time, reserved and then booking as required. If you occupy a part time space you may be given notice in order to accommodate a full time child.**

Changes in Registration Information must be relayed to the Program Supervisor immediately. In the event of an emergency, your child's safety could depend on the accuracy of this information (i.e.: address, phone number, work information, emergency contacts, medical, allergies). When changes occur, you will be requested to sign and date the updated registration form as verification of accuracy.

First Day Checklist

Parents must supply the following items for the first day of care for their child(ren):

Diapers, Wipes, Diaper Cream (original container)
Blanket, stuffy (if needed for sleep), soother (if needed for sleep)
Sippy Cup or water bottle for daily water.

Extra clothes in the child(ren)'s backpack.

*Staff will let you know when more diapers, etc are needed through Himama.

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Wait List Policy

The policy of Unique Minds Child Care Inc. is that a waitlist will be formed and maintained in a positive and efficient manner when full enrollment has been reached. All parents will be informed at the time of application acceptance, the status of admission and waitlist time. No name will be put on the waitlist without registering through OneList Bruce County <https://onehsn.com/bruce> There will be no cost for having your child on the waitlist, or taken off the waitlist. Full time registrations will override part time registrations.

Applications will be accepted on a first come basis and dated upon registration.

Hours of Operation and Closures

Unique Minds Child Care Inc. will operate twelve (12) months of the year. Unique Minds Child Care Inc. will be closed for the two (2) week break for Christmas along with schools. These will be designated well in advance of closure.

The Centre hours of operation: Monday to Friday 7:00 am to 5:30 pm.

The Before and After School Program hours of operation: Monday to Friday 7:00 am to 8:50 am and 3:00 pm to 5:30 pm.

P.D. Day/March Break/Summer Program hours of operation: Monday to Friday 7:00 am to 5:30 pm.

The following statutory holidays are also observed and Unique Minds Child Care Inc. will be CLOSED for:

Family Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Civic Holiday, Labour Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and Boxing Day, New Years Day.

Confidentiality

All information contained in a child's record is considered privileged and confidential. The information required on records such as name, address, telephone number, immunization records, alternate pick-ups etc. will be kept confidential. Consents must be signed that authorize the release of information to other agencies and persons (as specified by the family); otherwise the family has the right to privacy and is fully recognized and protected.

Parental Issues and Concerns

Unique Minds Child Care Inc. works in partnership with parents, school personnel and community partners to meet the individual needs of children and their families. We value positive and responsive relationships and foster engagement and ongoing communication with parents about the children and the program.

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General

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. 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 will be 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 Unique Minds Child Care Inc. and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties 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 two (2) business days. The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

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

Confidentiality

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents, children, staff, students and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (i.e.: Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, Law Enforcement Authorities or 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.

Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a child

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

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

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

For more information, visit

<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaidd/reportingabuse/index.aspx>

Depending on the nature of the issue/concern, please follow the steps below:

Nature of Issue/Concern	Steps to Report Issue/Concern
Program: i.e.: Schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor programming activities, feeding arrangements, etc	1. Raise the issue/concern directly with program staff. 2. If the issue cannot be resolved, contact the Program Supervisor or Director
General Operations-Related: i.e.: child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc	Raise the issue/concern directly with Program Supervisor or Director
Staff, Student, Volunteer	1. Raise the issue/concern directly with the individual. 2. If the issue cannot be resolved, contact the Program Supervisor and/or Director. All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, students or volunteers that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the Director as soon as it becomes apparent.

Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:

1. Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised
2. Arrange for a meeting with the parent(s)/guardian within two (2) business days
3. Document the issues/concerns in detail
4. Documentation should include:
 - a. The date and time the issue/concern was received
 - b. The name of the person who received the issue/concern

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- c. The name of the person reporting the issue/concern
 - d. The details of the issue/concern
 - e. Any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent(s)/guardian regarding next steps or referral
5. Provide contact information for the appropriate person in the person being notified is unable to address the matter
 6. Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within two (2) business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing.
 7. Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian who raised the issue/concern.

Strategies to Reduce the Risk of Exposure to Anaphylactic Allergens

- Ensure that parents label food brought to the child care centre with the child's full name and the date the food arrived at the child care centre, and that parent's advice of all ingredients.
- Where food is provided from home for children, ensure that appropriate supervision of children is maintained so that food is not shared or exchanged.
- Encourage parents who serve foods containing allergens at home to ensure their child has been rid of the allergens prior to attending the child care centre (e.g. by thoroughly washing hands, brushing teeth, etc.)
- Do not use craft/sensory materials and toys that have known allergens on the labels.

Fire Drills

Fire Drills are practiced once per month. Fire drills are recorded and initialed by the Program Supervisor. Posted by each exit door, is a detailed outline of the emergency procedures followed in case of evacuation of the centre, as well as the evacuation site. Please familiarize yourself with this information

Emergency Management Policy

Unique Minds Child Care Inc. has an Emergency Management Plan in place. If your child is affected by an emergency you will be contacted by staff. You may also listen to local radio stations for updates as well as any social media Unique Minds Child Care Inc. participates in.

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Attendance

Children registered in Unique Minds Child Care Inc. are expected to attend as scheduled or booked. If your child is going to be absent on one (1) of his/her regularly booked days, it is important to inform the centre in advance. If your child is sick and will not be attending please call or communicate through Himama as soon as possible to allow for appropriate staffing. Your child must be booked in advance with the staff, to ensure there is adequate space and staffing for him/her to attend.

Inclement Weather:

Early closing hours will be determined by the Director or Supervisor. If a weather emergency occurs, where it is impossible for staff to reach the centre safely in the morning, a decision may be made to close the centre at the discretion of Unique Minds Child Care's Director or Supervisor. The safety of our families and staff is top priority, so should the centre close, the decision will be made no later than 6:30am. There will be a message sent out on HiMama, or through email or text, a post will be on the Facebook page. We will send the closure to the radio station as well (101.7 The One).

If the schools are closed, the Before and After School Program will be closed.

If the school is closed but the center is open, please let us know if you plan for your child to attend daycare that day by **7:00am**. If the center is open, but the weather drastically worsens, a decision may be made to close the center early so that staff and families can make it home safely. This decision will be made at the discretion of Unique Minds Child Care's Director or Supervisor. This closure will be reported to parents with a phone call to come and pick their child up as soon as they can.

Payment Policies

When registering your child at Unique Minds Child Care Inc., you will be asked to decide if you are booking by reserved days or by written schedule. You will sign a payment agreement based on the following two options:

- **Reserved Spaces:** Payment for your child care services is based on your reserved days. You may register your child to use any predetermined set days. This is recommended if you require a guaranteed space. Booking by schedule does not guarantee a space. If a Statutory Holiday falls on any of your pre-set days you are billed as usual.
- **Spaces by Booking:** If your family requires child care based on flexible schedules, you are required to give your schedule in writing to the centre each Tuesday morning, for the following week. **Families booking by written schedules are not guaranteed a space.** You are billed for what you booked. Once you have submitted your schedule you may

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request additional days, but your originally booked days will be billed. Spaces are filled on a first come, first serve basis. See Weather and Illness policies for further information.

Parent Payment Agreement

- We are responsible to pay all booked days. Switching days is not permitted.
- The illness policy still requires full rate payment. (if you receive fee subsidy user fee applies each day)
- During inclement weather if the centre is open, we are billed regardless of attendance.
- We may book a maximum of three (3) weeks' vacation annually. We must book our vacation in writing three (3) weeks in advance of scheduling and vacations are allowed in one (1) week blocks.
- Payment is due upon receipt of invoice, emailed the first of each month.**
- Two (2) weeks written notice is required when leaving the program. Regular fees will apply until two (2) weeks are completed.

Payments and Illness

You are required to pay for your child's space when they are ill. Please read and be aware of the illness policy as directed by the Public Health Department. If you are a parent receiving fee assistance please be aware the user fees apply to all days with no reduction in the rate set by the County.

Payment during Inclement Weather

If your child was scheduled to attend Unique Minds Child Care Inc. and they are officially open, you are billed for the scheduled day. If the centre is officially closed, you will not be billed.

Vacation Days

Families may book up to three (3) weeks' vacation annually. Families must book their vacations three (3) weeks in advance, in writing. **You may book vacations in one (1) week blocks. Individual days away from the program will be billed.**

Voluntary Interruption of Care

If you wish to pull your child/children for any length of time, for example the summer months (July & August) and wish to return in September your child/children will be placed on a waitlist and will be granted return to care if there is space available.

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Required Notification Period

If you will be leaving Unique Minds Child Care Inc. indefinitely you are required to present the Director/Supervisor with two (2) weeks written notice. You are billed for this period. If you wish to make changes to your days of care you are required to present the Director/Supervisor with two (2) weeks written notice. You are billed for this period. If you wish to make changes with two (2) weeks written notice to modify your reserved days. Changes must be required on an ongoing basis. Changes for appointments and occasional days off are not permitted.

Statutory Holidays

If you use more than three (3) days per week and statutory holidays fall on your reserved day, you will be billed for the statutory holiday. For example if you are booked Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and it is Thanksgiving Monday - we are closed, you are billed and pay for this day.

Payment Procedures

When you enroll in Unique Minds Child Care Inc. you will be expected to pay in advance of your child care. Billing is done the first day of the month. Payments are due upon receipt of your invoice, emailed to you on the first of every month. Financial payment arrangements can be made by talking to the Director/Administrator.

If you are attending by using the booking schedule, payment is also due upon receipt.

Payment Methods

Unique Minds Childcare Inc accepts Cheques or Cash, Please give your payment to the Supervisor or a staff member and they will place it in the office. We also accept e-transfer payments. To pay by e-transfer please send to payments@uniquemindschildcare.ca

Subsidy for Childcare

Subsidy is available to families who qualify. Please communicate with the Director/Supervisor or if you wish to apply for full or partial subsidy. Subsidy applications are available Bruce County <https://www.brucecounty.on.ca/services/human-services/child-care-fee-subsidy>.

If a parent/guardian is eligible for subsidy they must provide Unique Minds Child Care Inc. with copies of the application and supporting documents. Subsidy acceptance letters must be received by Unique Minds Child Care Inc. prior to attendance. Renewal of subsidy must be started at the beginning of the month that subsidy expires and copies of forms must be kept on file until the acceptance letter is received. If parents wish to start their child before subsidy acceptance, a

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cheque for the month will be needed. The parent will be reimbursed their fees when subsidy is received.

Accounts not kept current will receive a written notice and a late fee of \$5.00 per day will be applied to your account. After three (3) days of late fees have been added to your account, your child care will be suspended until all fees are paid. After three (3) late payments, or 2 NSF cheques, fees will require two (2) weeks in advance, or Child Care may be terminated. Each situation is dealt with on an individual basis. An NSF cheque or returned cheque is subject to a \$30.00 administration fee. Accounts in arrears will be forwarded to a collection agency for further processing.

The Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care System

Unique Minds Childcare Inc has enrolled in The Canada-Wide Early Learning and Childcare system, over the course of the next 3 years childcare fees within Unique Minds Childcare Inc will be lowered to \$10.00 per day for childcare. With that being said this program will be offered to families of children that are eligible:

The CWELLCC guidelines state that an “Eligible child” means

(a) any child, until the last day of the month in which the child turns six years old, **and**

(b) up until June 30 in calendar year, and child who,

(i) turns six years old between January 1 and June 30 in that calendar year, and

(ii) is enrolled in a licensed infant, toddler, preschool or kindergarten group, a licensed family age group, or home child care.

So, if a child turned 6 between September and December, they would be eligible until the last day of **that** month. If a child turns 6 between January and June, they are eligible till June 30.

Pick-up Times

Any change from your normal pick-up schedule must be pre-arranged with the staff and approved by the Director/Supervisor. Staff are scheduled according to the number of children at any given time, therefore coming earlier or staying later may compromise the child/staff ratio. Child/staff ratios are regulated by the Child Care and Early Years Act and it is extremely important that we maintain them at all times. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated in adhering to your scheduled hours, for all children’s safety.

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Staff will not release your child to any person other than those listed on your application. If there are any changes to your child's pick-up, it is expected that you will notify the staff in advance. If there is an occasion where you are unable to pick-up before the building closes, it would be expected that you would make arrangements for someone else to pick your child up, and phone Unique Minds Child Care Inc. to notify them of this.

Late Policy

Unique Minds Child Care Inc. closes at 5:30 pm. Parents who pick up after this time are officially late. Late fees will apply. The late fee schedule is \$1.00 for every minute that staff is kept in the program after closing and paid directly to the staff member on duty in cash. Parents who are subsidized are responsible for this fee as it is not covered by subsidy. We thank you for using our services and ask that you consider this policy when arranging your child's pick up.

Arrival and Departure

Unique Minds Child Care Inc. does not supply transportation. This must be arranged by the parents. It is necessary for parents to deliver their child(ren) and collect them at the end of the day. If parents wish to prevent certain persons from gaining access to their child, the Director/supervisor/Staff must be informed who these people are. If a Court Order is in place which limits access to your child, please provide a copy to be placed in your child's file. In such cases and subject to the above precautions, it is required that parents provide a list of people who may be permitted to escort their child on occasion. Space is provided on the application form for this information. Please inform the Staff in the morning or call during the day, to confirm any change in your normal pick-up arrangement. In the case of separated or divorced parents, where either one (1) or the other has legal visiting rights, these rights may not be exercised on Unique Minds Child Care Inc. premises.

Intoxication Policy and Procedures

If a parent/guardian or emergency contact who appears to be intoxicated by alcohol or drug arrives at Unique Minds Child Care Inc. or our Before and After School Program located within the Lucknow Central Public School to pick up a child; the Unique Minds Childcare Inc staff will not release the child.

Unique Minds Child Care Inc. staff will:

- Offer to call a relative or friend to pick up the parent and child
- Offer to call a cab
- Inform the parent that if he/she chooses to drive with or without the child, the Unique Minds Child Care Inc. staff will inform the police immediately
- Call the Ministry for Children & Family Development if they believe the child is need or protection

Transition from Preschool to Summer Camp Policy

The transition from Preschool to Summer Camp is something Unique Minds Child Care values and can offer to your children. Once your children graduate from the preschool program at the end of June, they will be moved up to the school for summer camp. We prefer to do this move because as educators, we think these children are ready for a more challenging education. These children no longer rest or need an hour of quiet time while the younger ones nap.

This transition helps our preschool graduates to prepare themselves for Kindergarten in September by familiarizing them with the school environment. Summer camp provides the children with the ability to get familiar with the sound of school bells, packing a lunch daily, getting ready to go out outdoors (dressing for the weather), changing for water play outdoors or swimming by themselves while being supervised by our educators.

At summer camp they will get to enjoy lots of summer activities, swim days, special outdoor activities, walks, gym time and inside daily activities. This transition helps them to be more independent and prepared for school in the fall while having fun with new friends!

Sleep Policy

The staff in all sleep rooms are doing direct visual checks of sleeping children. They are physically present and checking for indicators of distress or unusual behaviours. The staff will ensure there is sufficient lighting in the sleep room or area to conduct the direct visual checks.

SLEEP TIME VISUAL CHECKS (Must be posted)															
Visual checks of all sleeping and resting children must be completed every 30 minutes during sleep time															
Please include the times at which these visual checks were completed and initial															
Check for breathing, indicators of stress and unusual behaviour															
ITEMS	M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F
DATE															
Check #1															
Check #2															

Children in our programs are assigned individual cots labelled with their names. When children are enrolled, sleep information is collected on registrations. Sleep arrangements are discussed as needed throughout the child’s time at Unique Minds Child Care Inc. Parents will be provided with information if their child is observed to have any significant changes in sleep patterns or behaviours during sleep.

All children are required by Ministry of Education Policies and Procedure to spend one (1) hour of quiet time on their cots whether they sleep or not, once the hour has commenced the awake children will be given the opportunity to go outside for play time or quiet activities on their beds or at the tables. Maximum sleep time set out by the Ministry of Education is 2 hours.

Duty to Report

The duty to report is an ongoing obligation. If there is reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is or may be in need of protection, by law, a report must be made to the Children’s Aid Society. The duty to report overrides the provision of any other provincial statute.

Administration of Medication and Children's Safety

- Unique Minds Child Care Inc. is a nut free environment where all nut and nut products are not used or allowed in the building. Please do not bring any snacks or beverages into the centre. If your child has peanuts or peanut butter at home, please change his/her clothing and make sure his/her hands and face are thoroughly washed before arriving at daycare. On occasion we have children enrolled, who have life threatening allergies to these products. Your adherence to this policy is essential.
- Before being granted a spot for care at Unique Minds Childcare Inc, each child, unless there is a stated medical or religious reason, should be immunized against Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus, Polio, Measles, Mumps and Rubella. ***The Centre will require a photocopy of your child's yellow immunization card.*** Immunization Records are checked by our local Health Unit.
- If prescriptions are to be administered in the programs, parents must sign a medication consent form that is available from any staff. Over the counter medications are not encouraged, unless ordered by a doctor for severe cases. Please find medications that can be administered at home and have long lasting coverage. All medications must be in their original container, with your child's name clearly labeled on it. In the event that the medicine form is not clearly filled out, giving specific instructions and signed, the medication will not be given. Specific instructions must include a specific time, a specific dosage, and a specific symptom to be addressed ('as needed' is not specific enough). All medications are to be given directly to your child's staff member, who will place them in a locked box. Refrigerated medications will be kept in a locked container in the fridge. Please ask a staff member to retrieve your medications at pick up time.
- For children who have an anaphylactic allergy, severe asthma, diabetes or seizures, an Action Plan will be established between the parent and the Program Supervisor and reviewed with program staff. All ongoing medication information and action plans must be reviewed, signed and dated by the parent annually, or if changes are made, to ensure the information is accurate and up to date. We may ask you to follow specific guidelines to ensure the safety of all children in our care.
- Children arriving at Unique Minds Child Care Inc. with undiagnosed eye infections or rashes must be seen by a doctor in order to return to child care. Fevers or flu-like symptoms, including diarrhea will not be permitted to stay at the centre. Following flu-like symptoms, a child must be symptom free for a period of 48 hours before returning to the centre, to ensure that they are no longer contagious. ***Please consider other children's health as an important factor!***

UMCC Sick Children Information

<i>Disease</i>	<i>Incubation/Contagious Period</i>	<i>Exclusion</i>
<i>Influenza</i>	High Fever, headaches, muscle aches, weakness, runny nose, sore throat, cough. Children may also have nausea, vomiting or diarrhea.	YES- Until symptoms are improving for 24 hours and no Fever. If the child returns to our care & shows any symptoms (Flu, vomiting, fever & loose Bowel) your Child will be excluded for 48 hours.
<i>Pink Eye / Eye infection (Conjunctivitis)</i>	Purulent conjunctivitis (Often bacterial): Pink or red eyeballs (the white of the eye) with white or yellow discharge (pus), matted or red eyelids and eye pain. Non-purulent conjunctivitis (often viral or irritant): Eyeball (the white of the eye) is pink or red, discharge is clear and watery, mild or no pain.	YES - Should be excluded until they have been seen by a healthcare provider or pharmacist. If deemed bacterial, can return after 24 Hours of antibiotic treatment. If deemed viral, can return immediately, as long as no other symptoms are present (I.e. fever, behavioral change.)
<i>Gastroenteritis (unknown Causes) (Flu)</i> 2 or more loose/watery bowel movements in a 24 hour period or 2 or more episodes of vomiting in a 24 hour period or 1 episode of loose/watery bowel movement and 1 episode of vomiting in a 24 hour period.	Depends on specific agent transmitted.	YES - Until Symptom free for 24 hours. Fever (Contact to pick up) - Toddler - 100.4 F(38.0 C) - Preschool - 100.4 F Children Must be on a period of 24 Hour Symptom Free, to ensure they are no longer contagious. If a child returns after 24 hours & shows symptoms of Fever or Loose Bowel they will be asked to be excluded for 48 Hours.
<i>Respiratory Illness (e.g. Common cold,</i>	Depends on the specific agent transmitted. (runny nose,	YES - Until symptoms are improving for 24 hours and no

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<p><i>COVID, rhinovirus, Enterovirus)</i></p>	<p>cough,sneezing,sore throat, headache)</p>	<p>fever. If your child returns after 24 hours & shows any symptoms they will be asked to be home for 48 hours.</p>
<p><i>Administering Tylenol</i></p>		<p>**Written Permission**</p> <p>-Written permission should specify medical needs, medication dose, and length of time to give medication. Orders such as “Tylenol can be given as needed” should not be accepted.</p> <p>- Has to be specific reasoning & Time & dose to be given.</p> <p>*If your child has a fever & you ask us to administer tylenol, this does not mean they can still attend if we call due to a fever & ask to be sent home the child must be 48 hours symptom free.**</p>
<p><i>Head Lice (Pediculosis)</i></p>	<p><i>Itchy scalp Nits on hair or live lice.</i></p> <p><i>*Eggs hatch in 7-10 days. Egg to egg cycle averages 3 weeks.*</i></p>	<p><u>NO EXCLUSION</u></p> <p>**Children with head lice should be treated. Family members should be examined and treated at the same time if infested.**</p>
<p><i>Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease (Coxsackie)</i></p>	<p>Usually 3-5 days Incubation Period. Contagious Period: Most infectious during the first week of illness. Viruses may remain in stool for 4 weeks after onset of illness.</p>	<p><u>NO EXCLUSION</u></p>

** Please note all the information provided is stated in our policies and procedures, as well as on the public Health website that we have to follow. **

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Staff Qualifications and Training

The staff hired at Unique Minds Child Care Inc. are Registered Early Childhood Educators with the College of Early Childhood Education. Some staff are hired with other childhood development training and then work closely with an Early Childhood Educator. All staff hired will also provide a Criminal Reference and Vulnerable Sector check at the time of hire and sign a declaration each year. These are renewed every five (5) years. *Note: Proof of application can be used to start employment if there is a backlog in processing Vulnerable Sector Checks. However, additional measures will have to be taken until the VSC is processed. These additional measures will be that the staff will not be allowed to be alone with the children and another staff will always need to be present. When the staff brings in their VSC, the additional measures will be taken away.

All staff working regularly in the child care building or programs are required to obtain their Standard First Aid and Child CPR.

All staff will follow the *How Does Learning Happen?* Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years and will participate in Continuous Professional Learning.

Professional Development

Unique Minds Child Care Inc. is committed to ongoing professional development and staff will be supported in the implementation of our innovative approach to program planning, through embedded professional learning and participation in ongoing professional development. This may require us to have to close the centre and the Before and After School program for staff to attend these trainings. Plenty of notice will be given so alternate care arrangements can be for your child(ren).

Posting of Serious Occurrences

The safety and well-being of your children is our highest priority, however, in spite of all the best precautions, incidents can sometimes happen. A "Serious Occurrence Notification Form" will be posted in a visible area on site, for 10 days, when an incident occurs that is deemed a serious occurrence, as per the government's definition. A serious occurrence does not mean that the program is out of compliance with licensing requirements or that the children are at risk at the centre.

Parent Notification of Serious Occurrences is required. The forms will be completed by the Supervisor of the program. It will be posted within 24 hours of the Serious Occurrence.

At Unique Minds Child Care Inc., the form will be posted with the license summary and where our license is available. It is in the front entrance area which is available to all parents.

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The form will follow all instructions regarding privacy and confidentiality. The form will be posted for ten (10) days and will remain posted for ten (10) days after any updates. Updates include any actions and any follow up actions as they are added and dated as completed. In the event that allegations of abuse and mistreatment have been reported as a serious occurrence the Parent Notification Form will be posted at the conclusion of any CAS investigation and any Ministry Investigations. Outcomes will include if the occurrence was verified or not verified.

Student and Volunteers

Volunteers and students may participate in a child care opportunity by fulfilling all requirements needed by Unique Minds Child Care Inc. Students and Volunteers at Unique Minds Child Care Inc. will be supervised at all times. All volunteers and students review and sign off on all policy and procedures in relation to working with the children at our centre, this will be done annually. This includes Behaviour Management policies, Anaphylactic Policies and all Health and Safety Regulations. Students and Volunteers will be monitored to ensure they are following the Behaviour Management Policies of the centre.

Clothing

Clothes which are comfortable, easy to get on and off and are washable are most suitable for the children to wear. Indoor shoes or slippers must be worn in the centre. Children play outside twice daily both summer and winter, so please send appropriate clothing. In the winter this would include: snow pants, hats, mitts and warm boots. Two (2) pairs of warm mitts should accompany your child each day during the winter months. We ask that you avoid using mittens with strings, as they pose a safety hazard for the children. We also ask that children do not bring scarves, as they can get caught in equipment. Please send neck warmers instead. In the spring, please send rubber boots and splash pants. All clothing and personal belongings should be clearly labeled. Please ensure that your child is sent with a full set of extra clothing as well as 2 or 3 pairs of extra socks during the wet months, and replenish their bins when they run low. Dirty or soiled clothing is the responsibility of the parent to wash and return to the centre. Clothing of children is not permitted at the centre. If you choose to leave an extra snowsuit for your child at the centre please take home and wash on Fridays or your last day in attendance that week so it will come back clean the next week for your child.

Off Site Excursions

Unique Minds Child Care Inc. on occasion will take excursions off the property. These excursions include visiting the local parks/playgrounds, and splash pads. If an excursion takes place during your child's/children's day at Unique Minds Childcare Inc the staff will document Hi Mama.

We do not take trips that require transportation in vehicles.

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Unique Minds Child Care Inc. staff will:

- Keep staff/child ratios during off site excursions
- First-Aid Kits and emergency cards with updated information and photo of each child will be brought on all off site excursions
- All staff will hold current first-aid and CPR certificates
- One (1) staff on the off site excursion is required to carry the class dedicated cell phone for emergencies and documentation during the excursions
- Prior to leaving the premises the staff are required to document on the Excursion form how many children are leaving the building as well as the time they leave and return to the centre and indicate where they are going, if their destination changes during their excursion they are required to contact Unique Minds Childcare Inc and inform either the Supervisor or another staff member.
- Emergency plans must be developed prior to any off site excursions. All staff and volunteers involved with the offsite excursion must be familiar with the emergency plan. All emergency plans should contain telephone numbers of parents, ambulance, hospital and doctor, as well as what actions are to be taken in the event of an emergency occurring
- A signed informed consent form must be received from the parent/guardian of the child prior to any off site excursion. You will see a consent form in your registration packages to approve this.

Risky Play Policy

Us at Unique Minds Child Care encourages risky play. It not only increases children's physical and motor skills but also teaches them about their own limits, and how to deal with risks in the future. It is important that we at Unique Minds help provide the children with an environment where they can engage in risky play that is as safe as necessary rather than as safe as possible. We want our children to grow into independent and unique adults. This policy is to make sure children are given the access to enjoy and explore Risky Play to extend their learning & development while being in support of their educators.

Benefits of Risky Play:

- Self-Confidence & Self-Esteem
- Emotional Regulation
- Physical - Strength, endurance & coordination
- Helps them learn that it is okay to do things out of their comfort zone.

At Unique Minds we recognise that taking risks is very important for the children building their learning and development. We encourage all children to take risks and challenge themselves in the safety of unique minds alongside one of our educators. To ensure all children can learn skills in safe risk play our staff will always adhere to our ratios. Our ratios are to ensure that children can always be supervised at all times.

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Types of risky play you may see here at Unique Minds Child Care:

- Climbing Indoors & Outdoors
- Shoes off outside during play
- Play with Impact: Jumping off something
- Vicarious Play: Watching other children engage in Risky play.
- Playing at heights : On Top of the tires or picnic tables

Sun Safety

We encourage families to protect their children from the sun by applying a generous amount of sunscreen each day, before their children arrive at the program. The staff attempts to limit sun exposure, but please sign the consent form regarding staff reapplying sunscreen if required. This consent is found on your registration form. Parents must supply child's own sunscreen. It must not be an aerosol and needs to have a clear expiry date. A sun hat is always a good idea too!

Unique Minds Child Care Inc. Daily Fees

Rate fees can be found on our website: <https://www.uniquemindschildcare.ca/> or on our registration forms.

- **Note:** Prices increase annual January 1st of each year. Parents will be notified prior to an increase. This only applies to ages 6 to 12 for Before & After School Program, March Break, PD Day and Summer Camp fees.

Toddler Daily Rate: \$21.97	Preschool Daily Rate: \$19.61
Late Fee: \$1.00 a Minute (Anytime after 5:30)	Late Fee: \$1.00 a Minute (Anytime after 5:30)

Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy and Procedures

Purpose

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

This policy will provide staff, students and volunteers with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for ensuring the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care, including what steps are to be taken when a child does not arrive at the child care centre as expected, as well as steps to follow to ensure the safe dismissal of children.

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

Policy

General

Unique Minds Child Care Inc. will ensure that any child receiving child care at the child care centre is only released to the child's parent/guardian or an individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization the child care centre may release the child to.

Unique Minds Child Care Inc. will only dismiss children into the care of their parent/guardian or another authorized individual. The centre will not release any children from care without supervision.

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

Procedures

Accepting a child into care

1. When accepting a child into care at the time of drop-off, program staff in the room must:
 - greet the parent/guardian and child.
 - ask the parent/guardian how the child's evening/morning has been and if there are any changes to the child's pick-up procedure (i.e., someone other than the parent/guardian picking up). Where the parent/guardian has indicated that someone other than the child's parent/guardians will be picking up, the staff must confirm that the person is listed on child's Emergency Contact Sheet or where the individual is not listed, ask the

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parent/guardian to provide authorization for pick-up in writing (e.g., note or email).

- document the change in pick-up procedure in the daily written record.
- sign the child in on the classroom attendance record.

Where a child has not arrived in care as expected

1. Where a child does not arrive at the child care centre and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off (e.g., left a voice message or advised the closing staff at pick-up), the staff in the classroom must:
 - inform the RECE Supervisor or that child's class RECE/Program Staff and they must commence contacting the child's parent/guardian no later than 8:30 a.m. for Before and After School Program and 9:30 a.m. for child care centre. Staff shall document the method of contacting the child's parent/guardian (eg: by calling, sending text message, or email). If no response is received within one (1) hour try contacting parent/guardian once more to confirm the absence of the child. Before and After School can make contact with the school's Principal or Secretary to confirm absence for the child from school
2. Once the child's absence has been confirmed, program staff shall document the child's absence on the attendance record and any additional information about the child's absence in the daily written record.
3. Document all information and steps taken in the daily log book. Date and initial entry.

Releasing a child from care

1. The staff who is supervising the child at the time of pick-up shall only release the child to the child's parent/guardian or individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization that the child care may release the child to. Where the staff does not know the individual picking up the child (i.e., parent/guardian or authorized individual),
 - confirm with another staff member that the individual picking up is the child's parent/guardian/authorized individual.
 - where the above is not possible, ask the parent/guardian/authorized individual for photo identification and confirm the individual's information against the parent/guardian/authorized individual's name on the child's file or written authorization.

Where a child has not been picked up as expected (before centre closes)

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1. Where a parent/guardian has previously communicated with the staff a specific time or time frame that their child is to be picked up from care and the child has not been picked up by 5:30 p.m. the program staff shall contact the parent/guardian and advise that the child is still in care and has not been picked up.
2. Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian, staff must call again and leave a message that they will reach out to the next authorized individual to pick up the child. Where the individual picking up the child is an authorized individual and their contact information is available, the staff shall proceed with contacting the individual to confirm pick-up as per the parent/guardian's instructions or leave a voice message to contact the centre.

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

1. Where a parent/guardian or authorized individual who was supposed to pick up a child from care and has not arrived by 5:30 p.m., staff shall ensure that the child is given a snack and activity, while they await their pick-up.
2. One staff shall stay with the child, while a second staff proceeds with calling the parent/guardian to advise that the child is still in care and inquire their pick-up time. In the case where the person picking up the child is an authorized individual, the staff shall contact parents first and then proceed to contact the authorized individual responsible for pick-up if unable to reach parent/guardian.
3. If the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the child, the staff shall contact Supervisor or Licensee for further direction.
4. Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized individual listed on the child's file (e.g., the emergency contacts) by 6:00 p.m., the Supervisor/Licensee shall proceed with contacting the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) 519-371-4453. Staff shall follow the CAS's direction with respect to next steps.
5. All information regarding a child not being picked up and centre is closed is to be documented in detail with all information and steps followed to reach parents and if a call to CAS was necessary in the daily log book, dated and initialled by staff.

Dismissing a child from care without supervision procedures

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