

UNIVERSITY SETTLEMENT DAY CARE

PARENT HANDBOOK

- Policies and Procedures -

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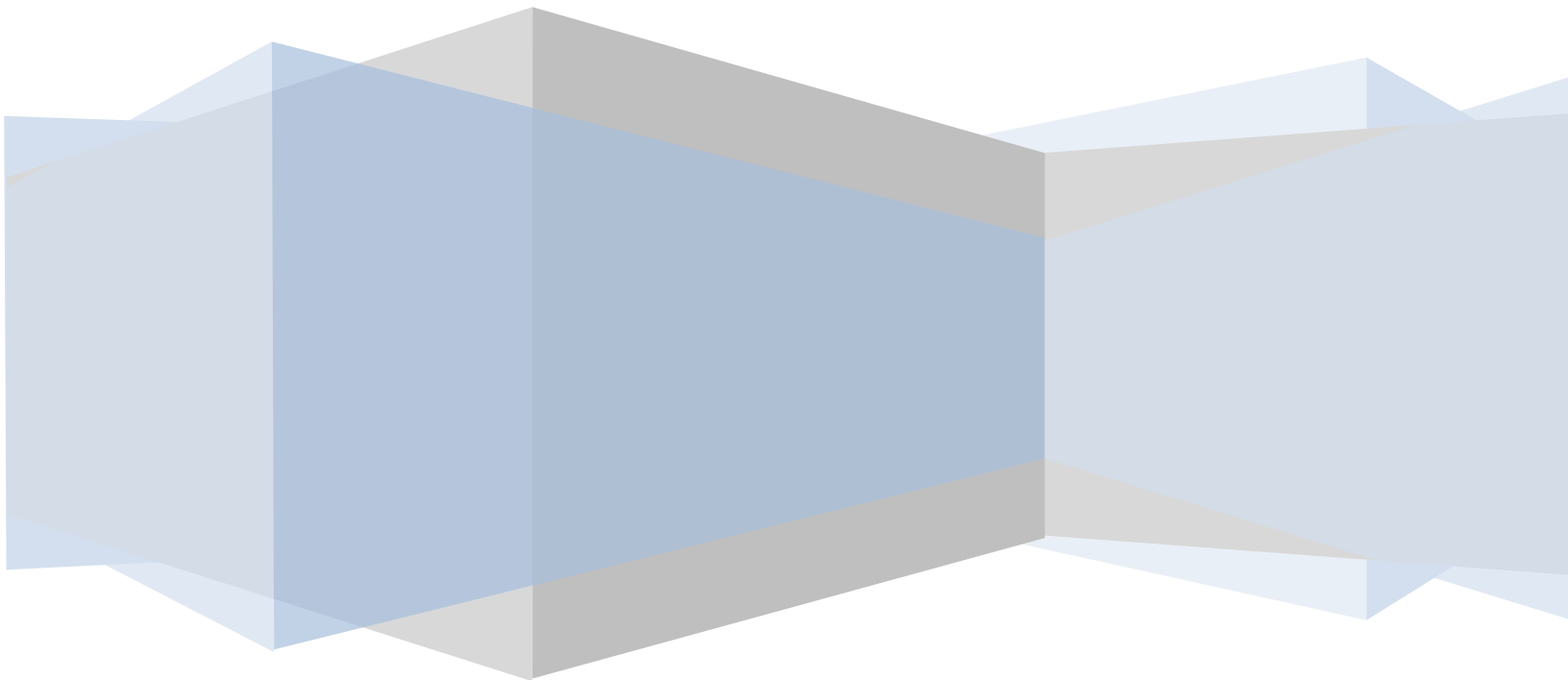


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IX. WRAP-UP

I. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the University Settlement Day Care Centre. This handbook was developed by parents, staff, and Board members to familiarize new parents with the policies, procedures, and philosophy of our Centre. We hope that you will feel free to ask about any item that may concern you.

As the Day Care is currently operating during COVID-19, please refer to “University Settlement Day Care Protocol for Childcare during COVID-19” as an accompaniment to this Handbook.

History

University Settlement is situated in the middle of Chinatown, surrounded by Grange Park, the Art Gallery and the Ontario College of Art. Being part of a community centre gives us access to gym and pool facilities, a music school, and a variety of community resources.

University Settlement opened in 1910 in a house on Adelaide Street in downtown Toronto. The University of Toronto started the centre to make use of their resources for solving some of the problems of the city. Some of their early activities were English lessons, a well-baby clinic, milk depot, social work with women and girls, a club for boys, dramatic club, and a summer camp.

The Settlement moved to its present location at 23 Grange Road in 1959. At that time, a half-day Nursery School program was started. As the needs of the community changed, the Nursery School developed into a full Day Care programme (1976). The Infant Section, always a day program, was opened in 1971. In 1976 the two centres were amalgamated under one license.

Our Current Make-Up

Currently there are 54 children divided into four groups: Infants, Junior Toddlers, Senior Toddlers and Preschoolers. The Centre employs thirteen full-time staff (including a Cook and a Director) as well as several part-time staff. This enables us to maintain proper child/staff ratios as set by the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014.

<u>Age Group</u>	<u># of Children/COVID #s</u>	<u>Approximate Age</u>	<u># of Staff/COVID #</u>	<u>Ratios/COVID Ratios</u>
Infants	10 / 6	0 to 18 months	4 / 3	3:1 / 3:1
Jr. Toddlers	10 / 5	18 months to 2 years	2 / 2	5:1 / 5:2
Sr. Toddlers	10 / 5	2 years to 2½ years	2 / 2	5:1 / 5:2
Preschoolers	24 / 15	2½ years to 5 years	3 / 2	8:1 / 5:1

**Note: The age of a child within a particular group may not coincide to what is indicated as movement depends on the availability of space in the next group for a child to move up. There are also provisions in the Day Nurseries Act that allow for underage enrolment.*

All our full-time staff are either qualified professionals trained in Early Childhood Education or are currently in training. Students from high schools and colleges, as well as volunteers, are involved throughout the year. They assist our trained staff with activities and the daily routines of the program. **The Day Care will not be accepting students or volunteers during the COVID period.**

II. DAY CARE PHILOSOPHY

The members of the University Settlement Day Care Community (teachers, families, students, volunteers) participate in a relationship whose primary objective is the care and education of infants and young children. University Settlement believes that care and learning are inseparable concepts. The many dimensions of the growing child - social, cognitive, creative, emotional, and physical - must be addressed in an atmosphere that is both nurturing and stimulating. Each

child who attends the centre is provided with opportunities to develop these dimensions of self in a group environment that takes into account the orderly and predictable stages of development through which children pass.

Philosophy in Practice

To put this philosophy into practice, careful consideration is given to the many facets or dimensions of growing children. Attention is paid to the **physical** dimension of the growing child by providing opportunities for the development of large and fine motor skills, and by providing for daily routines that encourage hygiene, safety, and nutrition. The health and fitness of children is also promoted in activities that make use of the unique location of University Settlement Day Care. In consideration of the **emotional** dimension of the child, staff tries to provide a sense of security and trust and seeks to foster a sense of self-control, self-esteem, independence, confidence, and a concern for others. Attention to the **social** dimension addresses the children's growing awareness of others through respectful interaction with adults and children. The focus here is on learning to engage in positive play activities with others, learning to value one's own culture and the cultures of others, helping to develop non-sexist, non-racist behaviours and attitudes and learning to co-operate and share. The **creative** dimension of the child is enhanced through self-expression in art materials, music, storytelling, dance, and dramatic play. Attention to the **cognitive** dimension of the growing child involves the stimulation of language development and the development of conceptual and problem-solving abilities. Emphasis is placed on the building of knowledge through interaction with an environment that is structured yet challenging.

The primary responsibility for care and education of children rests with parents but a portion of that responsibility is shared with the Day Care staff during the day. Parents are encouraged to participate in the program and to be involved in determining the general policy of the Centre. On-going communication between parent(s) and staff is viewed as critical to the partnership of caring and education.

Staff has chosen to work with infants and young children in a group setting because of a belief in the importance of the task and a strong commitment to the healthy growth and development of children. Open communication, co-operation, clear expectations, development opportunities for staff and input into the decision-making processes are essential for ensuring a high-quality Day Care program.

Program Statement

University Settlement Day Care believes that all children are **competent, curious** individuals who are **capable of complex thinking** and are **rich in potential**. We believe that parents and teachers have a tremendous influence on child behaviour and development. University Settlement teachers are committed to work with parents to create a high-quality learning environment that will help children to be interested, motivated and engaged individuals.

Understanding how children learn provides direction on how to effectively support children to achieve healthy growth and development. We therefore incorporate the four foundations in **How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years, 2014: Belonging, Well-Being, Engagement, Expression** along with their goals and expectations (see chart below), as guiding principles for program delivery.

Foundations:	Goals for Children:	Expectations for Programs:
Belonging	Every child has a sense of belonging when he or she is connected to others and contributes to their world.	To cultivate authentic, caring relationships and connections to create a sense of belonging among and between children, adults, and the world around them.
Well-Being	Every child is developing a sense of self, health, and well-being.	To nurture children's healthy development and support their growing sense of self.
Engagement	Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind and senses.	To provide environments and experiences to engage children in active, creative, and meaningful exploration, play and inquiry.
Expression	Every child is a capable communicator who expresses himself or herself in many ways.	To foster communication and expression in all forms.

The following approaches/strategies will be implemented in the program to effectively ensure a stimulating environment that connects children in active, creative, and meaningful exploration.

GOALS:	APPROACHES/STRATEGIES:
<p>a) <i>To promote the health, safety, and well-being of the children in our care.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring children are signed in and out on daily basis to maintain accurate attendance record. • Providing nutritious foods, well-balanced meals (in accordance with the Canada Food Guide) and incorporating cultural preferences into the menu • Creating a positive eating environment where teachers sit and eat with children at mealtimes; where children can decide on portion sizes; and, where children are encouraged to serve themselves. • Providing and practicing good hygiene throughout the day to reduce the spread of illness. • Maintaining a safe, clean, organized and age-appropriate environment, both indoors and outdoors, that is child friendly and where materials are easily accessible to the children. • Providing opportunities for children to participate in gross motor activities and physical exploration in a variety of environments which include outdoor playgrounds, gymnasium, pool, and community walks. • Providing opportunities to connect to the natural world by experimenting and interacting with nature. • Ensuring active play is balanced with rest and quiet time. • Following health and safety guidelines set out by Toronto Public Health, the Ministry of Education, and the City of Toronto Children’s Services Division
<p>b) <i>To support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents and caregivers.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that all parents are given a tour of the facility during the enrolment process and are introduced to the child’s teachers. • Greeting parents and children upon arrival and at departure • Ensuring constant flow of information between parents and teachers through daily verbal exchanges, written daily charts, monthly newsletters, yearly parent meetings • Inviting parents to spend time with their child in the day care. • Ensuring that teachers and parents work as partners to support the child. • Understand the unique individuality (both the capabilities and challenges) of all children and responding accordingly. • Responding to children’s needs in a supportive, positive way. • Interacting in a calm and unhurried manner • Teachers serving as role models to ensure a warm and caring manner is conveyed through positive body language and words. • Helping children understand their feelings and emotions and providing support to help children regulate their behaviour. • Ensuring that the following Prohibited Practices are never permitted under any circumstances: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Corporal punishment of the child.</i> ○ <i>physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a highchair, car seat, stroller, or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself, or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent.</i> ○ <i>locking the exits of the childcare centre for the purpose of confining the child or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the emergency management policies and procedures.</i> ○ <i>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.</i> ○ <i>depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep toilet use, clothing, or bedding;</i> <i>or,</i> ○ <i>inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.</i>
<p>c) <i>To encourage children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing consistent routines that enable children to anticipate what happens next. • Providing clear expectations • Promoting and modelling positive interactions • Providing children with opportunities to lead and follow while working in a group. • Providing opportunities to take turns, to share and to interact and communicate in a positive way. • Providing children with visual schedules to help promote language, comprehension, and sequencing. • Providing opportunities for role-play scenarios which promote empathy, compassion, and positive connections. • Supporting children in expressing, labelling, and coping with emotions

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exposing children to different languages and nurturing an appreciation of differences • Providing opportunities for children to visit different departments/programs within University Settlement, and to be visited by people employed at the agency, to encourage a sense of belonging and community.
d) To foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dividing play spaces into interest areas: block play, creative area, dramatic play, cognitive play, book centre, sensory area, science area, etc. • Providing a wide range of materials (sensory, creative, fine motor, gross motor, cognitive, reading) to sustain the interest of the children and to promote and support active learning, meaningful exploration, curiosity, and inquiry. • Providing a wide range of activities: weekly swim and music programs for all children and weekly dance class for preschoolers; opportunities for exchange of thoughts, ideas, and feelings; telling or writing stories; cooking and conducting experiments; solving problems • Providing play opportunities that allow for creative problem-solving, coping with challenges and engaging with others. • Allowing children, the freedom to select toys and activities independently. • Encouraging both spontaneous as well as planned activities.
e) To provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring children's activities, interests and behaviours and documenting daily observations • Employing daily observations to build weekly indoor and outdoor program plans that support each child's development and that are posted for parents to view. • Responding agreeably to children's requests for toys, materials, props, etc. to further encourage and support a child's right to choose. • Providing connections between home and Day Care (i.e., through family pictures) to help strengthen a child's feeling of security and sense of belonging.
f) To plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing teachers with time to pre-plan and to determine what resources are required for programming. • Providing programs that are inclusive of all children and learning styles. • Developing trusting, caring, respectful relationships with the children and their families • Promoting positive interactions where children learn to negotiate, collaborate, communicate and care for others. • Modelling and encouraging children to express feelings, recognize others' feelings and help others.
g) To incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, into the day, and give consideration to individual needs of the children receiving childcare.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posting and following daily schedules which allow times for indoor play, outdoor play, active play, rest, and quiet time. • Posting indoor and outdoor program plans that specify planned activities and skills to be practiced daily. • Stocking playrooms with age-appropriate toys and ensuring that all play materials are accessible to the children. • Promoting collaboration between all rooms to ensure the needs of all children are attended to. • Providing active play opportunities in gymnasium or auditorium, or leading walks around the agency if playgrounds are not available due to inclement weather. • Recording observations of individual children's developmental level, needs and interests and incorporating these observations into the program plans. • Providing appropriate supports for children with special needs.
h) To foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiating daily contact with parents upon arrival and departure and engaging in open discussions about the child • Providing daily written charts for each child to further allow for exchange of information. • Encouraging positive, trusting relationships by valuing, and trying to accommodate parental requests. • Maintaining an open-door policy where parents are welcomed to observe or participate in daily activities. • Sharing resources and materials about community supports and activities. • Assessing each child's development and sharing assessments with parents. • Organizing Annual BBQ, Annual General Meeting and General Parent Meetings to promote a sense of community and to help develop trust, confidence, and a sense of belonging. • Establishing a Day Care Advisory Committee consisting of staff and parents to meet monthly to

	<p>review, give feedback, voice opinions on matters that affect the Day Care and the Agency at large</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inviting parent participation in program development.
i) To involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and caregivers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using community partners (Public Health Nurses, Dental Hygienists, Resource Educators, local library, etc.) as a resource and support to families • Accepting placement and co-op students from local universities, colleges, and high schools to assist with program delivery and providing students with hands-on experience. • Inviting families, staff, and other community members to share customs, professional experiences, hobbies, talents, skills, etc. • Taking the children on walks through the agency to visit other departments or to observe other programs (i.e., seniors, community development, recreation, fitness) and to witness community members at work and at play.
j) To support our teachers in relation to continuous professional learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging and supporting teachers to attend professional development training and learning. • Encouraging RECEs to participate in the College of Early Childhood Educators Continuous Professional Learning Program as is required by their membership. • Keeping abreast of new ideas and strategies that support child development. • Contributing to the fee of approved Educational Courses taken by teachers.
k) To document and review the impact of the strategies outlined above on the children and their families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring teachers are continually self-reflecting, having discussions and are fostering ongoing collaboration amongst themselves, and with the parents, to provide the best possible learning environment for the children. • Providing teachers with meeting times to share ideas and information, to develop their program, to reflect on the impact of their activities and strategies including successes and challenges and to adjust accordingly. • Providing teachers with scheduled planning time to better enable them to analyse information gathered and to focus on programmed activities that best meet the needs and interests of the children in their care. • Ensuring that all program plans are posted. • Providing visual documentation (photographs) of the children engaged in programmed activities. • Organizing yearly parent meetings where teachers provide information sharing sessions by reviewing daily/weekly/monthly activities with the parents and encourage feedback. • Providing program updates at monthly Parent Advisory Meetings and acting on feedback when appropriate • Acting on any recommendations or non-compliance issues identified by Public Health, The Ministry of Education, and the City of Toronto Children's Services Division.
l) To ensure that all new staff, students and volunteers review the program statement prior to interacting with children and at any time when the program statement is modified.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requiring all new staff, students, and volunteers to review the program statement prior to interacting with the children and at any time the program statement is updates and to sign-off on the review.

Curriculum Model

University Settlement Day Care Centre provides a **play-based** setting that encourages children to pursue their own interests and goals in a controlled environment. Our teachers use ELECT (*Early Learning for Every Child Today: A Framework for Ontario Early Childhood Settings*) as a guide to support their curriculum. ELECT is based on six overarching principles:

1. Early child development sets the foundation for lifelong learning, behaviour and health.
2. Partnerships with families and communities strengthen the ability of early childhood settings to meet the needs of young children.
3. Respect for diversity, equity and inclusion are prerequisites for honouring children's rights, optimal development and learning.
4. A planned curriculum supports early learning.
5. Play is a means to early learning that capitalizes on children's natural curiosity and exuberance.
6. Knowledgeable, responsive early childhood professionals are essential.

University Settlement believes that children and adults learn best through active experiences with people, materials, events, and ideas. We provide a consistent routine that enables children to anticipate what happens next. This routine also includes time for small and large group activities and time for outdoor play. Each room is divided into interest areas (block play, creative area, dramatic play, cognitive play, book centre, sensory area, science area). Our teachers select and arrange materials in each of these areas to sustain the interest of the children and to promote and support active learning. Children are free to select a toy/activity independently and are then encouraged to “tidy up” their play area once they have completed the activity. The teachers take daily observations of the children’s activities and behaviours. They discuss these notes during team planning sessions and use the observations to develop weekly program plans. They also use the Nipissing District Developmental Screen (NDDS) to evaluate the children’s development.

Parents and staff work together to create the Day Care environment. The Day Care Advisory Committee, made up of both parent and staff representation, meets regularly to consider program issues and to give feedback and direction or to make suggestions on Day Care and other Agency matters. They can also influence policymaking by making recommendations to the Board of Directors.

Parents are urged to participate in the daily program as their own work/study schedules allow. Above all else, staff and parents must work together to ensure that daily lines of communication are open and clear. Informal chats, daily charts, a parents' bulletin board and annual parent interviews are all part of this process. Evening general parent gatherings are also held at least twice a year to allow for exchange of information.

The staff at University Settlement House have regular planning meetings to co-ordinate their efforts and to plan the ongoing program for their group and for the Centre. Clear job descriptions and regular performance evaluations ensure that expectations are open and explicit. Opportunities for staff development are also provided to help keep staff well-informed.

Access and Equity Guidelines

It is understood that children come to day care with a range of skills, needs and abilities. University Settlement believes that every child, no matter how unique or special his/her needs, has the right to equitable access to quality care, services and supports. If staff and/or parents suspect a child may require specialized services, the day care (with written consent from the parent) may contact an outside agency for support. The day care will then work with the agency through documentation, observational records, and reports, to develop specialized individual program plans. These plans will be shared with the parents and will help with the implementation of short-term objectives and long-term goals.

If, for any reason, the day care is unable to accommodate the child’s needs or family demands, the day care reserves the right to request the withdrawal of any such child from the program (see *Removal of Children from the Centre*). Reasons the Centre may require the withdrawal of a child include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The day care does not have the resources required to meet the needs of the child.
- The child poses a danger to him/herself and/or others.
- The family refuses to give consent for outside support.
- The family does not follow through with suggestions/recommendations identified by staff and/or outside services.

Prohibited Practices

The following behaviour management strategies **are not permitted by anyone** on the premises:

- corporal punishment of the child
- physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a highchair, car seat, stroller, or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself, or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent.

- locking the exits of the childcare centre for the purpose of confining the child or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the 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; or,
- inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

**Note: A copy of our Prohibited Practices Policy is available upon request.*

Behaviour Management

Children are encouraged to solve their own problems and attain self-control using positive and supportive strategies when undesirable behaviour occurs. If an infant, for example, is attracted to a potentially harmful situation, the teacher will redirect the child to a more appropriate alternative (i.e., "Chairs are not for climbing, you can do your climbing here on the climber.")

As toddlers begin developing language, they will be encouraged to express their feelings verbally rather than resorting to physical action. Hitting, scratching, biting, pushing, etc. are not acceptable and will be expressed as such: "Tell him/her you don't like that. Biting hurts!" Because children of this age have few words to express frustration, they often display it in the form of tantrums. Staff will not give in to tantrums. Once the child has regained self-control, the teacher will approach the child, help the child gain some understanding of the problem, and offer alternate options.

If the child is displaying an extreme form of temper tantrum, he/she will be removed to a safe area (i.e., a mat with pillows) to ensure his/her physical safety as well as the safety of others.

When a conflict occurs between preschool children, a teacher will help them to:

1. Define their problem.
2. Come up with possible solutions.
3. Put their solution into practice.
4. Evaluate how their solution worked.

The use of logical, natural and defined consequences will also allow your child to experience the results of his/her own behaviour, within a safe environment. A child, for instance, will be asked to mop up the water he/she has been pouring on the floor from the water table.

For further information on conflict/resolution strategies contact the room staff or the Director.

Code of Conduct

We are committed to providing a safe, caring, and welcoming environment for those we serve. We believe in equality and respect. We believe in an environment for learning and growth that enhances a child's self-esteem, thus fostering healthy social and emotional development.

To achieve this goal, an atmosphere of mutual respect, collegiality, fairness, and trust that is free of unwanted and unacceptable behaviours is essential. The Centre is committed to establishing and implementing a standard of excellence in every aspect of its operations, while promoting and ensuring ethical and responsible conduct.

As part of the contract between a family and the Centre, the Centre reserves the right to withdraw or deny services to anyone demonstrating unacceptable behaviours and/or behaviours contrary to the policies of University Settlement.

The decision to terminate service will be based on, but not limited to, the following types of incidents and/or behaviours:

- Bullying (physical, verbal, emotional, social, or cyber bullying), including comments, actions or visual displays that are intentional, hurtful, and repetitive.
- Harassment, including unwelcomed behaviour that degrades, demeans, humiliates, or embarrasses.
- Swearing, angry outbursts or inappropriate physical gestures.
- Abuse (sexual, physical, or psychological), including verbal, written, or otherwise.
- Discrimination against any person or group based on the prohibited grounds of the *Ontario Human Rights Code*
- Actions that put another person at risk of harm, including violent physical acts with or without a weapon or threats of violent acts
- Conduct that leads to a stressful or hostile environment for the children, employees, parents/guardians and/or visitors (i.e., spreading harmful gossip, excessive criticizing or complaining)
- Mistreatment of the Centre's property

Our Advocacy Role

As an agency we believe in a universal, high quality, accessible, affordable, non-profit childcare system.

We are members of the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care and the Toronto Coalition for Better Child Care. These organizations are committed to improve the quality of childcare in Ontario and Toronto. They lobby the different levels of government for funding, they organize conferences, workshops, rallies, and demonstrations, they also develop standards and guidelines for quality childcare, and promote further research in the field of early childhood education and development.

Our parents and staff are encouraged to support the efforts made by these organizations by attending demonstrations, signing petitions, writing advocacy letters, etc.

If staff plan on taking children to an advocacy function, parents will be asked to sign a release form giving permission for their child/ren to be present at the function.

III. MAKING DECISIONS AT THE CENTRE

Board of Directors

University Settlement Recreation Centre is operated by a volunteer Board of Directors. The Board is responsible for seeing that the agency is well managed and for carrying out the agency's mandate. This body is elected annually by the membership of the agency. Parents are encouraged to become involved by presenting their candidacy at the Annual General Meeting.

Day Care Advisory Committee

Some programs at University Settlement have an Advisory Committee that makes recommendations to the staff concerning matters such as overall direction, policy, and budget requirements. The Day Care Committee is made up of the Day Care Director, two staff representatives and at least two parent representatives. Representatives stand for a 2-year term with an overlap.

Minutes of Day Care Advisory Committee meetings are posted on the entrance Board.

Union

Our staff works in a unionized environment. Most of the staff are members of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (C.U.P.E.), Local 2998.

Day-to-Day Operations

The day-to-day organization and administration of the Day Care Centre is the responsibility of the staff, under the direction and supervision of the Day Care Director. The Executive Director is responsible for the overall administration of the agency, and all its programs.

Parent Issues/Concerns

Refer to “University Settlement Day Care Protocol for Childcare during COVID-19” for acceptable methods of communication.

It is to be expected that conflicts will occasionally arise between parents and staff. Our experience has shown that the way such matters are handled has a direct impact on the overall functioning of the Centre. It is very important that any parent/staff who has a problem in the Day Care follows the procedures outlined below.

1. Any parent/staff who has a concern should feel free to approach the parent/staff in question. This should be done in the spirit of cooperation, not merely as a complaint. It is important that parents and staff approach one another at a time that is appropriate for both and that they be prepared to suggest positive action that could be taken to resolve the issue.
2. If either the parent or the staff feel dissatisfied with their discussion and are unable to resolve the matter informally, a meeting with the Director may be arranged. At this meeting, the conflict will be reviewed, and a course of action will be recommended.
3. If the concern is about the Day Care Director, it should go directly to the Executive Director.

**Note: Conflicts between staff and parents should be brought out in the open and resolved. They must not be allowed to continue indefinitely and adversely affect the quality of the program. A copy of our Parent Issues and Concerns Policy and Procedure has been included as an attachment to this Parent Handbook for your convenience.*

IV. OUR STAFF

All the full-time staff working with children are Registered Early Childhood Educators. They have degrees or diplomas from a recognized educational institution and a variety of suitable background experiences.

All staff must comply with the following requirements:

- A satisfactory criminal reference check upon employment and every three years thereafter (with yearly signing of Declaration of Offence forms)
- An assessment, completed by their physician, of their current immunization status.
- Up to date First Aid/CPR-C Training

Our teachers are encouraged to attend professional development training and learning opportunities and the Centre will contribute towards the cost of approved Educational Courses taken by the teachers. As members of the College of Early Childhood Educators, our teachers also participate in the *Continuous Professional Learning Program* offered through the college.

Teachers' Role

Our teachers work together to establish and maintain a supportive, loving, non-judgmental environment. Our teachers provide experiences that invite children's interest, stimulate their creativity, and satisfy their desire to explore and discover. It is their responsibility to ensure that the program strives to help promote the physical and emotional well being of the children in their care. This includes the implementation of fair and consistent practices which help foster the children's self-esteem as well as ensure readiness for social experiences such as sharing, cooperation, trust, respect for others and self-sufficiency.

Confidentiality

All records and business concerning the child and the family of the child will remain strictly confidential among staff; unless the family gives permission to open these matters to other agencies or persons outside of the Day Care.

Volunteers

The Day Care will not be accepting volunteers during COVID-19.

The Day Care does, on occasion, accept volunteers to help support the day-to-day operations of the Centre.

All volunteers must comply with the following requirements:

- A satisfactory criminal reference check (i.e., no crimes of a violent nature).
- An assessment, completed by their physician, of their current immunization status, including a tuberculin skin test.
- Current First Aid/CPR-C certification.
- A review of our *Program Statement* and all Policies and Procedures before commencing their placement and annually thereafter.

Volunteers are interviewed by the supervisor prior to start date, to determine their suitability for volunteer status. Once they begin their volunteer service, they are never left alone with the children and are not counted in the staffing ratios.

The term “volunteer” can be used to describe any one of the following:

- Students in the ECE field that are required to complete a practicum in a childcare facility.
- Post secondary students from a field other than ECE that are required to complete hours of volunteer work.
- Secondary school students that are required to complete community volunteer hours.
- Individuals from correctional services* that are required, by court order, to complete community volunteer hours.
- Individuals who are required to complete community volunteer hours to qualify for social assistance*.
- Individuals that are interested in volunteering their time in a childcare facility.

**Note:* Individuals coming via correctional services and social assistance are screened for interest and suitability by the appropriate placement body. University Settlement Day Care then works on a case-by-case basis to assess whether these volunteers will both benefit the program and benefit from it, and to ensure that the individuals have a genuine interest in and aptitude for working with children in a supervised setting.

“HiMama” (Daily Communications)

The Centre uses an application called “HiMama” for direct communication with families. This app allows the teachers to send parents daily reports/information regarding the child’s diaper changes, food intake, and naps taken. Teachers can also exchange messages and comments with parents as well as share pictures of their child involved in various aspects of the childcare program. Upon admission to the Centre, parents will be asked permission for photographs/videos of their child to be sent to them through the app. Along with photos, videos and daily reports, the app also provides parents access to the planned weekly menu, monthly calendar of events, and daily program plans.

Parents will receive an invitation to download the app on their child’s first day in care.

(For further information on the app, including their privacy policy and terms of service, visit their website at www.himama.com/parents).

V. THE PARENTS

The Day Care believes that at no time in a child's life is a close relationship between home and caregivers more important than during the pre-school years. We endeavour to create a positive attitude towards Day Care and we hope that parents will reinforce this notion at home. Parents with special needs are given ongoing support by staff who can empathize and are willing to listen and not make value judgements. It is our feeling that a good Day Care program is a supplement to the home and can extend and strengthen the family.

Parent Participation

Refer to “University Settlement Day Care Protocol for Childcare during COVID-19”.

University Settlement Day Care Centre is committed to a philosophy of parent involvement. We encourage parents to participate both in their child's program and in helping to formulate the policies and procedures of the Centre. There are many ways in which parents can become involved:

- Help the Day Care staff plan for special or cultural celebrations.
- Assist with regular Day Care activities e.g., accompanying your child/ren swimming, on field trips, walks, etc.
- Help organize and participate in special events (both Day Care and Agency events).
- Donate time for specific tasks e.g., sewing bed sheets, repairing toys and equipment, etc.
- Serve on an agency committee.
- Help promote early childhood education and care by writing letters, making phone calls, signing petitions, etc.
- Join the Day Care Advisory Committee.
- Run for a position on the University Settlement Board of Directors.

Over the years we have developed several different mechanisms to maintain on-going communication between home and Day Care.

- Monthly calendars keep everyone posted on important happenings within each program.
- Meetings, including the University Settlement Annual General Meeting, our annual summer Potluck BBQ and annual Parent Meeting.
- Daily reports are entered on the HiMama app which gives parents a summary of what is occurring in the child's day (i.e., sleep, toileting, eating, interactions, issues of concern, etc.).
- Weekly planning sheets for both indoor and outdoor programs are posted on HiMama and outline daily activities and intended skills to be developed.
- Picture sharing on HiMama of the children engaged in activities.
- Email blasts of current articles on child development and issues of interest keep you updated on what is happening in the field.
- A Parent Resource Binder is available.
- Posted schedules for both children and staff help you become familiar with your child's schedule at the Day Care as well as the organization of the room itself.
- Our menu plan is posted on HiMama and indicates what is being served for snack and lunch.

VI. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Admission and Waiting List

The University Settlement Day Care Centre is licensed for 54 children from birth to 5 years of age. The Director admits new children based on a first-come-first-served waiting list for each age group. Priority admission will be given to:

1. Employees of University Settlement
2. Siblings of children already in care at University Settlement
3. Children that temporarily leave the Centre and request a priority re-admission.
4. Children looking to be placed in a full-time position.

It is recommended that prospective parents come to visit University Settlement Day Care for an orientation when filling an application to be put on the waiting list. Parents should contact the Director to schedule a date and a time that is convenient to both parties. **Only virtual tours are available during COVID-19.**

After a period of six months, parents are expected to contact the Centre to renew their application. Failure to do so may result in the child's name being removed from the waiting list.

There is no fee to have your name added to the wait list. When a parent is offered a space at the Day Care, they will be asked to pay the first month's fees up front to hold the child's spot. This amount is non-refundable. Should a parent be offered a space at the Day Care but is unable to take it at that time, the parent will retain their position on the waiting list. Subsequent refusals may result in the child's name being taken off the list.

Note: A copy of the Waiting List Policy has been included as an attachment to this Parent Handbook.

Hours of Operation / Statutory Holidays

The hours of operation are from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday to Friday.

The Centre will be closed on statutory holidays.

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

Note: *The Centre closes at 12:00 noon on Christmas Eve and remains closed until the first workday after January 1st.

Parents will be charged for all the statutory holidays during this period but not for the actual days of closure.

**Because Easter Monday is not a statutory holiday, parents will not be charged for this day of closure.

Orientation to the Centre

Parents can schedule a tour of the Day Care during COVID-19, once their child has started the Day Care. See "University Settlement Day Care Protocol for Childcare during COVID-19".

Discuss a transition schedule with the teachers and/or the Director.

When a child first comes to the Centre, parents are encouraged to introduce their child to the Centre slowly. This gradual transition to the new environment will allow the child time to familiarize themselves with the surroundings, staff, activities, and other children.

Parents must remember that every individual is unique and for this reason the adjustment period for each child will vary.

The following is a suggested schedule:

First Day	:	Morning only
Second Day	:	Morning and Lunch
Third Day	:	Morning, Lunch, Nap
Fourth Day	:	All Day until 4 p.m.
Fifth Day	:	All day

We recommend that a parent ensure that their time be as flexible as possible during their child's first week so that the transition from home to day care can be as smooth as possible. Staff will share with parents any concerns regarding the child's adjustment to the Centre and will make recommendations. Again, parents should feel free to offer suggestions to staff or to express any concerns they may have.

Access to the Day Care

Parents and children will be screened into the Day Care from the west entrance doors (along the path in Grange Park just north of John Street). If the doors are locked, ring the doorbell.

See "University Settlement Day Care Protocol for Childcare during COVID-19".

Peanut Free Environment

Peanut allergies are usually severe and can be fatal. To reduce the risk of accidental exposure for peanut allergic children, the day care environment shall be kept as peanut free as possible. Peanuts and peanut containing foods (i.e.: chocolate) are not permitted within the Centre.

Arrival

To allow your child to settle into the program and to maintain the continuity and smooth operation of the planned

activities, it is suggested that children arrive before 10:00 a.m. By 10:00 a.m. the Centre should have a clear indication of how many children would be present that day.

Room Extension Numbers and Centre Cell Phone Number

If your child is sick or will not be attending the day care, please notify the program area or the Director before 10:00 a.m. The day care phone number is **(416) 598-3444**; extensions are as follows:

- Office - 246
- Infant Room - 247
- Preschool Room - 248
- Junior Toddler Room - 250
- Senior Toddler Room - 251
- Cell Phone Number - (647) 291-2295

Departure

Children must be picked up no later than 5:30 p.m.

Children will be allowed to leave the Centre only with their parent(s) unless staff has been notified otherwise. Parents will be required to list the names of those people who can pick up their child on the Emergency Pick-Up form that is part of the Admissions Package. Any person (other than a parent) assigned to pick up a child must be 16 years of age or older. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure that the Pick-Up list is kept up to date. If someone other than a parent is to pick up a child, the staff should be personally notified in advance of the identity of that person, or a signed note of consent from the parent should accompany the person. Parents must also remind the person to bring proper ID so that staff can release the child. Day Care staff cannot allow a child to leave the Centre with a person they do not know unless the above precautionary steps have been taken.

If someone other than a parent will regularly be picking up the child, we suggest that their name be added to the child's pick-up list and that the parent bring them to the Day Care to introduce them to the staff and to the routine (changing the child, checking the chart, etc.).

Late Pick-up Policy

Parents who are late picking up their child/ren will be charged a late fee. A fee of \$5.00 will be imposed for the first five minutes and \$2.00 for each additional five minutes thereafter. At 6:00p.m., the late fee increases to \$1.00 per minute. A one-time 15-minute (or part thereof) grace period per family will be allotted to a first late. The regular penalty will be imposed once the 15 minutes have expired and the child/ren have yet to be picked up. Fees are payable to the Staff on duty and must be paid within five working days. Failure to pay may result in the child/ren not being admitted to the Centre. The charge will be calculated per family, not per child; likewise, the grace period will apply per family, not per child. No receipt will be issued for a late fee, as the charge is not for a service but is rather a penalty. Parents will be required to sign a Late Pick-up sheet. The Day Care cannot make exception for unforeseen circumstances that may impede a parent's timely arrival (weather, transit strike, heavy traffic, etc.).

If a child has not been picked up by 5:45 p.m., staff will begin contacting parent(s). If parent(s) cannot be reached, staff will begin phoning emergency contact names provided. Staff will continue calling parents and contact names. If staff is unable to contact anyone on the contact list or the parents themselves by 7:00 p.m., staff will call the Children's Aid Society.

Parking Letters

For parents who drop their children off and/or pick them up by vehicle, letters are available through the Director, that are to be placed on the dashboard of the vehicle to alert police officers that the vehicle is temporarily parked on Grange Road for the purpose of picking up or dropping off your child. Please do not abuse the system, as it is our only safeguard against being ticketed.

Strollers

Storage for strollers is available in a space located adjacent to the building. The code to this storage space can be obtained from the Day Care Director.

Vacations for Subsidized Clients

Parents with subsidy are entitled to four weeks vacation at the assessed fee. Thirty-five (35) enrolment days per child per year is the maximum allowed without documented approval from Children's Services. Full fee will be charged daily for children who take more than the approved vacation days. Parents have the right to appeal to the Division for extended vacation time. Should you require this service contact the Director to discuss the criteria and appeal procedure.

Vacations for Non-Subsidized Clients

Full fee-paying parents are not restricted to any specific number of vacation days but will be charged the full monthly rate regardless of whether their children are in attendance at the Centre. Parents do have the option of withdrawing their child/ren if they are planning an extended vacation and they can request a priority re-admission. The day care would still require a three-week notice of withdrawal and though the day care cannot guarantee a space on their return, the parents will be offered the first available space in their child's age group. It is suggested that parents consult first with the Director to determine what the odds of attaining a space would be.

Absence Due to illness

If a child is absent due to illness for ten (10) days or more, the parent is required to submit a doctor's certificate on the child's return to the Centre.

Other Absence

In case of an extended absence or leave for other reasons, parents are required to maintain payment of full fees or withdraw the child from the Centre. A three-week notice of withdrawal is required. Again, a parent can request to have the child put on priority readmission.

Movement to the Next Age Group

The Director will organize the movement of a child from one age group to the next in accordance with the general age guidelines for each group and after discussion with both staff and parent(s) concerning the readiness of the child. Movement can only occur once a space becomes available. If a vacancy exists in the next age group and the child has reached the starting age of that age group, a parent can only request a delay to the next age group if their child has been clinically diagnosed with a developmental delay that would require for the child to be held back. If, on the other hand, a vacancy exists in the next age group and the child is underage, a parent can request that the child be held back until the child reaches the starting age of that next group.

Withdrawal

Parents are expected to give the Director a **minimum of three weeks written notice of withdrawal**. Parents are responsible for fees for that three-week period. Failure to settle accounts on withdrawal may disqualify parents from receiving subsidized day care from any centre in the future.

Removal of Children from the Centre

When the Centre's program, staffing and/or space cannot accommodate the ongoing or future needs and demands of a child currently enrolled in the Centre, or, if the Centre cannot accommodate family demands, the Day Care reserves the right to request the withdrawal of any such child from the program. This process will involve documentation of an initial meeting between the Centre Supervisor and the parent(s). The Centre Supervisor will then notify the Executive Director of University Settlement, who, in turn will notify the Board of Directors. The Centre's Children's Services Consultant will also be notified. A written three-week notice of withdrawal will then be given to the parent(s).

Should the parent(s) request assistance and advice with respect to the appropriate referrals for the child's continued

care and education, the Director, with the support of local community programs and/or government agencies where appropriate, will attempt to assist and suggest alternative placements and/or appropriate care.

Payment of Fees

Day Care fees are set according to the on-going costs of operation. Parents are billed for every single weekday of the month, including all statutory holidays (except for Easter Monday and Christmas Closure Days). Part-time care is not charged for statutory holidays as this charge is already included in the daily rate. All parents are also charged for any vacation days, sick days, or any other absences the child may be taking. Also note that the Day Care cannot accept liability for unforeseen circumstances that may require cancellation of services or early closure (bad weather, evacuation notices, etc.).

Upon registration, parents will provide the Day Care with credit card information that will be used to automatically deduct fees within the first week of each month. Parents are requested to provide the Day Care with any changes to credit card information at least 5 days prior to the first of the month.

Our current fees are posted on our website at www.universitysettlement.ca.

Agency Membership Fees

All users of University Settlement programs, including Day Care parents, are charged an annual agency membership fee of \$20.00 plus HST. The University Settlement (US) Agency Membership also provides individuals and their children with access to some of our facilities during community time and allows you to register for regular programs that require additional fees. Membership also provides parents with AGO Family passes, priority notification of all US programs and special events, and gives voting privileges to all individuals 18 years of age and older at our Annual General Meeting.

Overdue Fees

The following actions will be taken for the collection of overdue fees:

1. The Director will verbally remind the parent(s) of the overdue amount.
2. If payment is still not received, the Director will issue a written reminder. A meeting with the parent(s) may be scheduled during which a plan of action for the payment must be agreed upon.
3. If the parent(s) fail to implement this plan of action the case will be taken to the Finance Manager. At this point, parents may be asked to withdraw their child/ren from the Centre.

**Note: The Day Care has the right to impose a \$10.00 per week fine on consistent overdue payments.*

VII. PRACTICES

Participation in the Program

The University Settlement program is planned by trained staff to incorporate a variety of activities to meet the physical, creative, intellectual, and emotional needs of the children. The children are expected to try to participate in all facets of the program. If a child is unable to participate in a particular aspect of the program, the parent(s) should discuss this with the Director at the time of admission if special consideration is to be given.

Field Trips

Excursions are a wonderful way of introducing children to new learning environments. Parents will be notified in advance of any trips and advised of any specific requirements for the trip. Periodically, staff may also take advantage of low ratios or community events and plan an unscheduled outing. Part of the admission package includes a consent form for walks and outings from the Centre.

For special events, children may be required to arrive by a specific time. Notice of early arrival will be posted two weeks prior to the trips. Any outings requiring the use of public transportation necessitate a signed parental consent form.

Remember that a trip requires a lot of preparation and energy and we need your full cooperation to make it possible. Parents that arrive after the group has departed must remain with their child until the group has returned from its outing.

Field Trip Ratios:

- Infants: 3 to 1
- Toddlers: 3 to 1
- Preschoolers: 4 to 1

Ratios for trips requiring public transportation:

All age groups: 3 to 1

Celebrations

The Centre celebrates all major holiday seasons including Christmas, Hanukkah, and Chinese New Year. We stress the cultural, racial, and religious diversity of our society. We welcome parents who would like to help us develop program plans for the celebration of other festivals representative of their culture.

Children's birthdays are also celebrated. The daycare cook prepares a birthday cake that is shared with the child's classmates during afternoon snack on the Friday of the week that the birthday falls on. To ensure that all birthdays are celebrated equally, please do not bring in items from home. i.e., birthday cakes, goodie bags, ice-cream, etc.

Clothing

We suggest that the children wear clothing that is easily handled by little fingers. This helps foster a sense of independence when children are dressing themselves and encourages development of self-help skills. Children should also be dressed in clothing that is comfortable for table and floor play both indoors and out. While we provide paint shirts for messy activities, expect your child to get dirty. We therefore suggest that children save their "best" clothes for home.

To make sure your child's possessions are returned, and to help the staff identify all unclaimed articles, everything must be labelled. The Centre is not responsible for loss or damage to any personal effects left at the Day Care.

Since the children go outdoors each day, please dress your child appropriately for the weather. Different seasons bring different needs.

Spring:	rain boots, raincoat or light jacket, sunhat
Summer:	sunscreen, sunhat, shorts, t-shirt, light clothing
Fall:	jacket, sweater, pants, thicker clothing
Winter:	mittens, hat, boots, snowsuit, indoor shoes

Please always have an extra complete set of clothing in your child's cubby. Wet or soiled clothing will be placed in a plastic bag and left in your child's outside cubby.

Toys

Please DO NOT send toys to the Centre with your child. The children have a large selection of toys that have been screened for appropriateness at the Centre to play with.

Sleep or Naps

Children need time to relax and rest after a busy morning. All children will be expected to take a nap or have a quiet time after lunch. This is necessary for the child to regain his/her energies in a hectic day. Staff will help children settle down by patting their backs and providing quiet music. Parents of infants under 12 months must provide a sleep sack. Blankets and bed sheets for children over 12 months are provided by the Day Care. Children may bring a special blanket

to take to bed but please NO TOYS! Nap time is scheduled from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. Regular sleep checks will be conducted on each child during nap time. Programming will resume for early risers at 2:00 p.m.

Infants of course will nap as they require. All infants under 12 months will be positioned on their backs or according to written instructions by the infant's health care provider. No extra items (i.e., toys, loose bedding, pillows, etc.) will be allowed in the crib.

Diapers

Cloth diapers will not be permitted during COVID-19.

Parents are responsible for providing diapers. If your child's supply of diapers is exhausted, a disposable diaper will be supplied by the Day Care at the cost of another diaper.

Toilet Training

There is no sense in rushing toilet training. The child's age does not matter nearly as much as the child's readiness to be toilet trained.

Toilet training is achieved when the child has control over urination and bowel movements. This happens at very different ages. Even though your child may perform on the potty, it does not necessarily mean that she/he has control over her/his elimination. Some of the key indicators that your child is ready to begin toilet training include:

- staying dry for longer periods
- recognizing when diaper becomes wet or soiled
- communicating the need to eliminate

When the child begins to show interest, the staff will work closely with the parent(s) on the training procedure. Please provide plenty of training pants, several complete changes of clothing and a bag for soiled clothes. The clothing should be easy for the child to take off. Be prepared for lots of laundry the first few weeks.

It is important that the child receive positive reinforcement when deserved, so praise him/her for making it to the toilet on time, and do not get angry if he/she has an "accident". Instead, reassure your child that accidents sometimes occur, and when they do, it is not a big deal.

Toilet training takes time. It is also quite common for a child to regress at some point. This often happens if something may be upsetting him/her. Toilet training is most successful when there is no stress. It is therefore a good idea to avoid beginning the process at busy times such as the arrival of a new baby, during a trip, etc.

"HiMama" Program (Daily Communications)

The Centre uses a program called "HiMama" for direct communication with families. This app allows the teachers to send parents daily reports/information regarding the child's diaper changes, food intake, and naps taken. Teachers can also exchange messages and comments with parents as well as share pictures of their child involved in various aspects of the childcare program. Upon admission to the Centre, parents will be asked permission for photographs/videos of their child to be sent to them through the app. Along with photos, videos and daily reports, the app also provides parents access to the planned weekly menu, monthly calendar of events, and daily program plans.

Parents will receive an invitation to download the app on their child's first day in care.

(For further information on the app, including their privacy policy and terms of service, visit their website at www.himama.com/parents).

Body Awareness

The children learn about their bodies through creative activities like body painting, swimming, water play, songs, and

games. It is important that all children be comfortable with their bodies. Classes in swimming, kindergym and music are held once a week. All children are encouraged to participate at their own level.

Swimming

Swimming Program has been cancelled during COVID-19.

The Day Care has access to the swimming pool twice a week. Our Fitness and Recreation Department provides us with a lifeguard and swimming instructors. Preschoolers swim every Tuesday from 10:00am to 11:00am, both Junior and Senior Toddlers swim on Thursdays from 10:00am to 11:00am; and an Infant room staff accompanies one baby swimming, both Tuesdays and Thursdays, rotating turns amongst the infants.

If a parent arrives at the Day Care Centre to find their child's room has already made its way to the pool, the parent must obtain the change room access code from the front receptionist, escort their child to the change room, help the child undress, then place and settle the child into the program. Remember, parents are always welcome to join us for our weekly swim program.

Music

Music Program has been cancelled during COVID-19.

The Day Care provides a half hour music session once a week for each of the age groups. Using songs, simple instruments and improvisation children are exposed to and encouraged to explore the fundamentals of music - rhythm, melody, and form. Check with room staff to determine when your child is scheduled to attend his/her music program.

Kindergym

Kindergym has been cancelled during COVID-19.

Preschoolers participate in a weekly kindergym program in the gymnasium. Staff plan and prepare activities that encourage the development of gross motor skills in a playful, non-competitive atmosphere. A scaled-down version of the kindergym program is also available for the toddler groups in the auditorium.

Creative Dance

Dance Program has been cancelled during COVID-19.

Preschool children participate in a creative dance program designed to encourage them to explore the many dimensions of rhythmic, patterned bodily movements guided by music. Children are separated into groups of 8 and work with a Teacher for a 30-minute period once a week.

**Note: Days and times of programs may change without notice due to availability of instructors as well as availability of appropriate rooms/facilities.*

Videos

The Day Care does not promote the use of videos as a regular aspect of the program. Staff may, on occasion, show a video that is theme related or in conjunction with a special event. When videos are shown, they will be offered to those children who wish to watch. Other programmed activities will also be made available for children who prefer to engage in active play.

VIII. HEALTH, SAFETY & NUTRITION

Health Policies

Also refer to "University Settlement Day Care Protocol for Childcare during COVID-19".

These policies were developed to ensure the health of all children and staff of the Day Care and to help reduce the frequency and severity of infection in the centre. Children in group care come in contact with many children so they have a much greater chance of spreading infections to each other.

Parents need to develop a contingency plan for when their child becomes ill. There is a good chance that at some time

or another your child will have to stay home. Please cooperate by keeping your child home if she/he is sick and by telling the staff about any condition that might affect your child's, or another child's, health.

Children are required to have a health examination done prior to entering the Day Care. Parents are also responsible for regularly updating all medical information on the child, including immunizations.

No Smoking

University Settlement is a smoke free environment. Smoking, or handling a cigarette, is absolutely prohibited on the premises and in the playgrounds, whether children are present or not.

Safe Drinking Water

All water taps in the day care are flushed every morning for lead before the day care opens for the day and the water is required to run for five minutes. Water samples will be tested for lead on a yearly basis.

Hand Sanitizers

As an added precaution against the spread of infection, we ask that all persons use the hand sanitizers provided by the screening station upon arrival.

Human Rights Policy

The agency has adopted a comprehensive policy concerning the rights of employees, clients, and members of the community to be treated in a completely non-discriminatory fashion. A copy of our *Human Rights* policy is available from the Director upon request.

Child Abuse Policy

University Settlement Day Care recognizes that each of us has a responsibility for the welfare of children. As Early Childhood Educators, it is our professional duty to report promptly the suspicion that a child is suffering, may be suffering, or may have suffered abuse to a Children's Aid Society. A copy of the complete Child Abuse Policy may be obtained from the Director.

Daily Health Watch

Also refer "[University Settlement Day Care Protocol for Childcare during COVID-19](#)".

Caring for your child's health requires cooperation between staff and parents. It is very important that parents keep staff informed about any illness or symptoms their child may have.

On arrival, the staff is required to do a visual assessment of the child. Parents should notify the staff of any marks, bruises, or other ailments the child may have sustained.

Parents should also notify staff of any medication the child is receiving at home (e.g., tempera, cough syrup, antibiotics, etc.) and whenever the child receives a vaccination. Staff should be made aware of any possible side effects that may affect the child.

Staff will let all parents know if there is a communicable disease in the centre. A notice will be posted outlining the symptoms to watch for.

Accident Reports

Parents will be informed of any injury a child may have sustained while at the Day Care. Staff will complete an "Accident Report", explaining the nature of the injury and describing how the injury occurred. Parents will be asked to sign the report as verification that they have been made aware of the situation. Staff are not permitted to release the name(s) of offenders when altercations between children have occurred.

Serious Occurrences

All serious occurrences will be reported to the Ministry of Education, which is responsible for childcare licensing. A serious occurrence could include a serious injury to a child, fire or disaster on site, or a complaint about a service standard (see our Serious Occurrence Policy for exact definition). Information about a reported incident will be posted in the entryway.

Biting Incidents

When a bite occurs, staff will inform the families of the biter and the bitten individual(s). When a bite has broken skin, Toronto Public Health suggests that both the biter and bitten individual(s) contact their physicians.

Support Services

The Day Care has access to a Resource Educator from the City of Toronto's Children's Services Division who provides a Special Needs Resource Service, with parental voluntary consent, to children who may require special supports.

Exclusion Criteria

Also refer to "University Settlement Day Care Protocol for Childcare during COVID-19".

During the day staff will look for changes in child's behaviour or appearance and specific signs of illness such as fever, diarrhea, etc.

If a child develops any of the following symptoms while at the Centre, the parent(s) will be notified immediately and will be expected to make arrangements to pick up the child as soon as possible:

- An episode of diarrhea, or diarrhea with fever, vomiting or blood in the bowel movement (*Note: Diarrhea is defined as an increase in the frequency of stools and/or a change to unformed loose or watery stool*).
- A fever of 102F/39C.
- Excessive listlessness, drowsiness, sleepiness, or lack of interest in surroundings.
- Irritability, fussiness, crankiness, inconsolable crying, high-pitched crying or screaming, weak crying.
- Poor skin colour.
- Difficulty breathing.
- Any other unusual, undiagnosed condition (i.e., skin sore, rash, excessive drooling).

If staff feel that the parent(s) should seek medical attention for the child, they will make every effort to contact the parent(s) by telephone so that they can arrange an appointment with their doctor as soon as possible.

A child will also be excluded from the program if one or more of the following conditions exist:

- The illness prevents the child from participating in the program.
- The illness results in greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the care of other children.
- The child has an infectious illness such as impetigo, measles, rubella, chicken pox, etc.

Parents must advise staff as soon as possible once their child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease so that proper measures can be put into place.

**Note: See attached copy of "Toronto Public Health Guidelines for Common Communicable Diseases".*

Isolation Procedure

Also refer to "University Settlement Day Care Protocol for Childcare during COVID-19".

When a child falls ill, staff will make every effort to isolate the ill child from other children. If the Director is available, the Director will tend to the ill child in the Day Care office until the parents arrive. If the Director is not available, staff will try to isolate the child in a particular area of the room (i.e. book centre).

Outbreak Policy

Refer to “University Settlement Day Care Protocol for Childcare during COVID-19”.

When to Return

Refer to “University Settlement Day Care Protocol for Childcare during COVID-19”.

Medication

Staff will only administer current prescribed medication in its original bottle provided by the pharmacy.

Parents must complete a Medication Form (available from the Screener at the screening station) in order for staff to administer medication. Teachers will carry out the instructions as stipulated on the Medication Form. The forms will then be signed and the time the medication was given to the child will be noted.

All medicines will be kept in the First Aid Cupboard or in a refrigerator if refrigeration is required.

If your child is receiving any medication on a regular basis (i.e., inhaler for Asthma), a doctor's letter should indicate the illness and instructions as to when it should be administered.

Non-prescribed over the counter medication such as cortisone creams, fever reducing medication, cough syrups, etc. for the treatment of an ailment or illness, will only be administered on the written advice of the doctor. Again, the letter must refer to the current illness and must indicate a specific period during which the child should receive the medication. Forms for on-going administration of medication and/or administration of non-prescriptive medication to be filled out by the physician, can be obtained from the Director.

Homeopathic (herbal) remedies also require a doctor's note before they can be administered.

Creams / Powders / Lotions

A parent's written consent is required for the administration of creams, powders or lotions that are to be applied for protective or preventative measures (i.e. sunscreen or diapering products and moisturizing lotions). Forms can be obtained from the Director.

Sunscreen

Parents are required to provide their own sunscreen during COVID-19. See “University Settlement Day Care Protocol for Childcare during COVID-19”.

The Day Care does provide sunscreen lotion that staff applies to children's exposed skin before exposure to the sun.

Parents have one of three options:

1. Allow staff to apply sunscreen provided by the Day Care.
2. Provide their choice of sunscreen product for their child.
3. Request that staff not use sunscreen products on their child. If a child is not to use sunscreen products, it is advised that parents ensure that the child is properly equipped with a sun hat and loose clothing that covers the arms and legs to protect as much of the child's skin as possible.

Again, all three of the above options require written permission.

**Note: A doctor's consent is required for the application of sunscreen for children under 6 months.*

Outdoor Play

The *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* requires that programs for each child who is in care for six hours or more include 2 hours of outdoor play. Children should be exposed to fresh air and sunlight daily and need to experience the

outdoor environment to become more familiar with it. Therefore, the Centre will ensure outdoor periods are part of the daily program offered and supply the equipment promoting both child development and large muscle development. The parent will ensure adequate and appropriate clothing is always available to ensure his/her child/ren may participate in outdoor activities. In the event of inclement weather, gross motor activities will be provided indoors.

Sun Protection

With the arrival of warm weather in the Spring and Summer months, much of our program is taken outdoors and thus, outdoor play periods are extended. As too much sun can cause eye damage, premature skin aging and cancer in later life, the following precautionary measures will be taken:

- Activities will be set up in shaded areas of the playground.
- Staff will try to create shade using gazebos, tents, etc. in sunny areas.
- All children will be required to wear a hat, preferably with a wide brim or with a back flap to help shade eyes, ears, and neck areas.
- Sunglasses worn by children must be unbreakable and should offer 100% UV protection.
- Sunscreen will be applied (with written consent from parents)
- Children without written consent for the application of sunscreen will require long sleeve shirts and long pants to help block UV rays.

Air Quality Alert Days

During summer months, our teachers will log on to the Ontario Smog Alert website (www.airqualityontario.com) for real-time air quality data.

The Air Quality Index (AQI) categories range from 0 - 100+. Readings from 0 - 15 are considered "very good", 16 - 31 are classified as "good". If the air quality value is below 32, the air is good and there are no known health effects for most of the population. If the air quality value is in the 32 - 49 range it is considered "moderate" and there may be some adverse health effects for very sensitive people. An index value in the 50 - 99 range is termed "poor" and may have adverse effects on the most sensitive people or may cause damage to plants and vegetation. A reading of 100+ is classified as "very poor" and may affect the health of a large number of people as well as plant life and property.

The readings are given on an hourly basis and thus may fluctuate throughout the day. As the Day Care schedules both a morning and afternoon outdoor play period, staff will refer to the most recent readings before carrying through with the outdoor programming. The decision as to whether children will be going outdoors depends on the AQI reading at the time. If the air quality is below 49 (in the "very good", "good", or "moderate" category), our outdoor programming will continue as scheduled. If the reading is over 50 (in the "poor" to "very poor" category) then outdoor programming is cancelled and the children will remain indoors. Should outdoor play time be cancelled due to poor air quality, a Smog Alert Form will be posted in the Day Care hallway advising parents of such.

Safety

Staff will make every attempt to ensure that the children are properly supervised in an environment that allows for plenty of play opportunities and exploration.

Rooms, equipment, and playground areas are checked for possible hazardous materials daily, before children have access to them.

Fire drills are conducted monthly to ensure that all staff and children are familiar with their escape routes and emergency procedures.

Emergency Procedures

Staff at the Day Care have taken courses in First Aid and CPR which are updated regularly. Each room is also equipped

with a first aid kit.

If a child has an accident at the Centre the staff will apply the necessary first aid, try to contact the parent at work or home through the emergency numbers on file, and if required, take the child to seek medical attention.

Anaphylactic Policy

The Day Care has developed an Anaphylactic Policy whereby parents and staff are expected to work together to ensure that proper procedures are in place to protect children with life-threatening allergies. Parents of a child with an anaphylactic allergy must complete an *Anaphylactic Emergency Plan* form. Copies of the form, and copies of the policy, are available through the Director.

A child with an anaphylactic allergy **MUST** have an up-to-date auto-injector at the Day Care at all times. Staff are not permitted to serve food to a child that is at risk of anaphylaxis and who does not have an epinephrine auto-injector.

To further reduce risk of exposure to children with life-threatening allergies, parents are reminded that the Day Care is a peanut-free environment. **Peanuts and peanut containing foods are not permitted within the Centre.** Parents should not send food from home to the centre unless special arrangements have been made with the department director.

Rules for parents who send food with their child to the centre:

- All food shall be stored in plastic (unbreakable) containers. Glass containers are not permitted.
- All food must be clearly labelled with the child's name.
- The food item and all ingredients in the food must be clearly labelled.
- Food must not contain peanuts, peanut products or shellfish

For a list of strategies that have been developed to reduce the risk of exposure, ask for a copy of the Anaphylactic Policy.

Emergency Evacuation Site

In the event of an emergency the Day Care has an Emergency Management Procedure that will be followed. Depending on the situation, staff will try to inform parents of any emergency as soon as possible by phone. It is therefore imperative that parents keep their contact information up to date. Should the Day Care be required to vacate the building (i.e., flooding caused by broken water pipe, gas leak, etc.) the designated emergency shelter is as follows:

Ontario College of Art and Design (OCAD) - 100 McCaul Street - #416- 977-6000

Day Care Cell # 647-291-2295

Food Policy

University Settlement Day Care believes that healthy eating habits contribute to both the physical and emotional well being of the young child. Eating should be a positive and pleasurable learning experience. It should convey a sense of family and should help develop a child's independence.

The children are provided with a hot, nutritious lunch and two snacks daily. Weekly menus are planned in accordance with the Canada Food Guide and are posted on the parent bulletin board. Any changes to the menu will be noted.

The Centre has developed the following food policies:

- No peanuts or peanut containing foods will be served or used in food preparation.
- A variety of foods from all food groups will be served.
- All foods will be prepared on the premises using fresh, wholesome ingredients.
- Whole grains will be used whenever possible.
- Salt and sugar content will be kept to a minimum.
- Fresh homogenized milk (not powdered or frozen) will be used for Infants and Junior Toddlers; 2% milk will be

served to Senior Toddlers and Preschoolers.

- Our menu will contain a variety of dishes from different cultural backgrounds. (As many cultures prohibit the use of pork, pork will not be used in any of our meals).
- Meals will be prepared and served in an attractive manner to encourage the tasting of new foods. Children will never be forced to eat but will be encouraged to taste.
- Food will never be used as a punishment or reward.

Infants and Food

- Infants will be fed on demand whenever they are hungry.
- Parents must provide anything the child takes from bottle. The bottles should come already prepared and will be kept refrigerated. All bottles and accessories must be labelled and must also be of unbreakable plastic.
- Breast milk must be identified as such to ensure that staff handle it as a bodily fluid.
- A written daily record will be kept on feeding times, type of food offered, and amounts accepted/rejected.
- Parents will be asked to complete a food chart identifying the foods that have been introduced into the child's diet and how they take their food (i.e., blended, or regular). Parents are responsible to update the chart as new foods are introduced to the child's diet (we request that parents introduce new foods at home first before allowing them to be served at the Centre).
- Infants on solid foods will be given the opportunity to feed themselves.
- For safety purposes, mobile babies will be required to sit down while drinking a bottle.

Toddlers, Preschoolers and Food

Also refer to "University Settlement Day Care Protocol for Childcare during COVID-19".

- Toddler and Preschool children will be expected to sit at the table for snack and lunch.
- Lunch time will be of a family style. Children will be seated in small groups. The teachers will engage children in conversation and encourage mealtime skills (i.e., please and thank-you, proper use of spoon, fork, cup, etc.).
- Preschoolers can eat as much or as little as they like. They will be encouraged to make their own choices on amounts.
- Smaller portions for the toddlers will be preferable to larger ones so as not to overwhelm them. They can then ask for more if they wish.

Please notify staff in advance if your child has allergies or is on a special diet. A list with the names of children and their food restrictions will be posted in both the child's room and in the kitchen. Should a child be on a special diet, parents may be requested to help supplement their snacks and/or meals with products that may not be available through the Day Care's own food distributors.

IX. WRAP-UP

Finally, University Settlement Day Care would like to thank you for entrusting us with the care of your children. We want to assure you that every effort will be made to try to provide your child with an environment that is physically and psychologically safe and stimulating, an environment that is responsive to the needs of children, families and caregivers alike, and an environment that models healthy, respectful relationships.

We hope you enjoy your stay here with us!

University Settlement Policy

Subject:	Parent Issues and Concerns Policy and Procedure	Page:	1 of 4
Issued:	July 20, 2017	Updated:	January 2020

Policy Statement

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

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

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

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within 2 business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. 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.

Purpose

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

Definitions

Licensee: The individual or agency licensed by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of each childcare centre it operates (i.e., the operator).

Staff: Individual employed by the licensee (i.e., program room staff).

Confidentiality

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

Conduct

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

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

Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a Child

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

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

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

For more information, visit

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

Procedures

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

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
Student, Volunteer-Related	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Director <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	<p>Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.</p>

Escalation of Issues or Concerns: Where parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may escalate the issue or concern verbally or in writing to The Executive Director – See Community Complaints Policy.

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

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

Contacts:

Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care Help Desk: 1-877-510-5333 or childcare_ontario@ontario.ca

[Public Health, 1-877-543-8931](tel:1-877-543-8931)

[Police Department, 416-808-2222](tel:416-808-2222)

[Ministry of Environment, 416-325-4000](tel:416-325-4000)

[Ministry of Labour, 1-877-202-0008](tel:1-877-202-0008)

[Fire Department, 416-338-9050](tel:416-338-9050)

[College of Early Childhood Educators, 1-888-961-8558](tel:1-888-961-8558)

University Settlement Policy			
Subject:	Waiting List Policy	Page:	1 of 2
Issued:	August 4, 2016	Reviewed:	January 2020

POLICY STATEMENT:

University Settlement Day Care is committed to managing its admissions fairly, effectively, and transparently.

SCOPE:

The policy applies to all families who are interested in their placing their child on a wait list for University Settlement Day Care.

GUIDELINES:

Parents wishing to add their names to the Day Care wait list must complete an Application Form. Application Forms are available on the Centre’s website and at our front reception. Parents can also have their name added to the wait list by calling the Centre directly.

The Day Care files Application Forms on a first-come-first served basis (according to the date of application) for each age group and according to the month for which care is required. Priority admission will be given to the following, in the following order:

5. Employees of University Settlement.
6. Siblings of children already in care at University Settlement.
7. Children that temporarily leave the Centre and request a priority re-admission.
8. Children looking to be placed in a full-time position.

Should there be more than one applicant in any of the above categories, the applications will be filed according to the date of application.

Parents can inquire as to the status of their child on the wait list by contacting the Day Care Director. The information on the wait list will be made available in a manner that maintains the privacy and confidentiality of the children/parents/guardians listed on it. Parents will not be given a number to identify where their child is placed on the wait list but rather will be told how many families are waiting ahead of them for the month in which they require care.

If a space becomes available at University Settlement Day Care, families are contacted based on the following criteria:

1. The age group where the vacancy occurs.
2. The month in which the vacancy will occur and the families waiting for care for that month.
3. The date of application.

Parents are expected to contact the Day Care within six months of applying for care to renew their application and to update information. Moreover, if a family is not offered a space for the month that they requested care and should they want to remain on the wait list for a future spot, it is the family’s responsibility to contact the Day Care and to inform the Centre of such. Failure to do so may result in the child’s name being removed from the wait list.

University Settlement Policy

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Issued:	August 4, 2016	Reviewed:	January 2020

If the family accepts the space they are offered, the family will be asked to pay the first month's childcare fees up front to hold the spot. This payment is non-refundable. They will also be given an Admissions Package with information that will have to be completed for when their child starts the Day Care.

When a family is offered a space, they will be given 24 hours to decide as to whether or not they will accept the space. The family has the option of declining the space without losing its spot on the wait list. If the family declines to take the space the family may opt for the next available space or may request to have their anticipated start date changed to a later date.