PARENT HANDBOOK

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FOREWARD

On behalf of Open Arms Preschool, I would like to personally welcome you and your child to our preschool where we strive to provide a warm, friendly environment to promote a safe home-like feel.

With the many choices for childcare services available, we are pleased that you have selected us to care for your child. We have many exciting features and programs that will assist in your child's growth and development.

We strive to keep you involved in your child's day and have implemented interactive Apps to close the gap between your busy schedule and your child's day.

We have created this handbook as a guide to help you make the most of our preschool. Please take a moment to read and understand the material. We are here to do our utmost to care for your child's needs and address any questions you may have. Any of our staff will gladly answer your questions and address any concerns. If you ever need to contact me directly, please feel free to do so. I look forward to welcoming your child and you personally to our preschool.

Ms. Anita Wong, Director [R.E.C.E.]

Email: anita@oaps.ca

Tel: 905-508-1000

PARENT INFORMATION

PROGRAM STATEMENT

We believe in an integrated program that involves your children, the parents, our teachers and the community.

We are committed to providing children with a stimulating, play-based program that focuses on all aspects of a child's development – social, emotional, physical and cognitive.

In line with "How Does Learning Happen," Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years, all children are recognized as competent, capable, curious and rich in potential, as we strive to design our program to build on their strengths and abilities.

Our Curriculum accommodates various ethnic backgrounds, that allows each child a balance of exhilarating experiences, challenges and opportunities to express themselves through play and interacting with others.

Our aim is to provide optimal service by our professional team of Educators, to care for the developmental needs of your children and promote a healthy, safe and positive environment. We believe that each child is an individual and should be treated as such.

Our childcare facilitates the best care possible, to contribute to the children's growth, during these important and special early years of life.

At Open Arms, we believe that:

- Every child has a sense of belonging as they cultivate authentic, caring relationships between parents, teachers and the world around them.
- Every child develops a sense of self, health and well-being, as they are nurtured in a positive, healthy program and environment that meets their physical and physiological needs.
- Every child is immersed in an environment that allows them to engage in active, creative, and meaningful exploration, play and inquiry.
- Every child has an opportunity to initiate various forms of expression to communicate feelings, experiences, ideas and meaningful interaction with peers and adults, regardless of their abilities.

Our Goals

(a) Promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children

- We strive to do this by using an in-house cook that provides homemade, healthy nutritious meals that meet the Canada Food Guide, ensuring positive eating environments
- Setting up cameras in the classrooms with a parent app, so parents can see their children and stay connected throughout the day
- Keeping our building secure and locked at all times and parents and authorized guests will use their code to enter

(b) Support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, childcare providers and staff

- By cultivating authentic, caring relationships and connections with everyone, to create a family environment and sense of belonging
- Acknowledging their feelings and using positive guidance

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

- By listening, responding to and encouraging children to listen and express themselves to one another
- Through role-modelling

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

- By providing and engaging children in a variety of interesting open-ended materials that encourages imagination and exploring with their senses
- Brainstorming off the children's ideas

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

- By encouraging children to practice self-help skills such as eating by themselves, getting dressed and making their own choices
- Basing our curriculum on the children's interests and developmental needs

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

- By keeping our classrooms clean, free of clutter and thoughtfully organized

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

- By planning daily routines with limited interruptions and transitions to maintain a sense of calmness and simplicity throughout the day
- Allowing 2 hours of outdoor play and 2 hours of rest each day, as directed by the children

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

- By keeping our parents connected with our unique designated App, that provides a daily report of how their child is doing, sending notes and pictures and allowing for parents to respond to posts and documentation
- Having end of day discussions with parents, following up on their children

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

- Offering opportunities for parents with Subsidy to enroll their children in our program
- Having Early Interventionists work with our staff for children with special needs

(j) Support staff, or others who interact with the children at a childcare center in relation to continuous professional learning

- By keeping up to date with the College of Early Childhood Educators and participating in any childcare programs that will enhance the skills and professionalism of all our staff

(k) Document and review the impact of the strategies set out in this program statement on the children and their families

- Conduct regular discussions with staff and collaborate as a team how we can maintain and improve in each area set out in the goals
- Highlight and document children's work, activities, projects with photos and description

CURRICULUM

At Open Arms, we strive to create an environment that is bright, pleasant and stimulating to your child's senses. Our rooms are divided into various activity areas, including water play, painting and play-acting. Music and arts are mixed with many activities throughout the day. As part of our curriculum, your child will be exposed to reading, music and various languages that fit the diversity of our community. Our view is that every child has the capacity and desire to learn, and our role is to respond by providing as many varied opportunities and activities to fill those desires.

DAILY REPORTS

Communication with parents is an integral part of our program. We promote parents having an active role in their child's growth and educational experiences. A considerable amount of investment has been made to provide tools to allow you to stay in touch with your child's teachers via your smartphone or PC, view daily activities, routines, pictures and share any concerns and information about your child.

These ongoing communications tools will reassure you that your child is receiving the best care possible. We encourage parents to comment and enjoy the precious moments of their child's day.

POLICY BINDER

Open Arms maintains a Policy Binder that provides policies and procedures for the preschool's daily operations. This binder is composed of acts compiled by the Ministry of Education that govern the safe operations of a daycare.

Our Policy Binder contains policies that are adapted from the *Childcare and Early Years Act* that are used by Open Arms to comply with the safe operations of our preschool. These policies are enforced on our staff members and are available for parents to review. If you would like access to these policies, please schedule an appointment with the office administrator.

GENERAL INFORMATION

OPERATING HOURS

Open Arms is licensed to provide care for children between **6 months** and **4 years** of age. Our preschool's standard hours of operation are **Monday to Friday**, **7:00am – 6:00pm** and are closed for **Statutory**, **Civic** and select days with prior notice of closure days to parents between Christmas and New Year. Our programs operate on a calendar year schedule (January 1 to December 31). Refer to ***Appendix C*** for list of closure days.

STAFF

Our team of warm, friendly and qualified staff are certified in Early Childhood Education (ECE) and are registered with the *College of Early Childhood Educators*. We also have on staff suitably qualified Early Childhood Assistants (ECA) that provide assistance to registered ECEs, ECE students, apprentices and volunteers. Each member of staff is carefully selected to provide the same level of service demanded by Open Arms Preschool.

Each room will have an adequate number of staff to child ratio required to maintain the standards of *The Childcare and Early Years Act, 2014*. The minimum ratios you can expect for your child's class are as follows:

Infants (6-18 Months) 1 Staff to every 3 Children (3 Staff for 10 Children)

Toddlers (18-30 Months) 1 Staff to every 5 Children

Preschool (30 Months – 4 Years) 1 Staff for every 8 Children

All staff (RECE, ECA, students, apprentices and volunteers) are required by law to complete a criminal reference check and confirm their immunization records are up to date.

Supervision of Students & Volunteers

In order to support students pursuing a career in early childhood studies and to promote local community involvement, Open Arms welcomes students and volunteer placements to work at our preschool.

From previous experience we have discovered that students bring their knowledge of emerging education approaches into the preschool and invigorate us with their enthusiasm and creativity. A volunteer brings with them a wealth of experience outside of the early childhood education field and widens our children's learning experience.

These avenues ensure we give back to our community and promote the early childhood education field.

Please be assured, and as per *The Childcare and Early Years Act,* that at no time a placement student or volunteer will have direct unsupervised access to a child, nor will they be counted as part of the child-teacher ratio requirements.

Students and volunteers will always be supervised by an employee and never permitted to be alone with any child or group of children who receive child care.

If you have any cause for concerns with any of our staff, please contact the Director immediately.

CODE OF CONDUCT & ETHICS

Each staff is required to read and acknowledge all Open Arms Preschool's policies and sign a statement of confidentiality. These policies ensure our staff are well acquainted with the requirements and adhere to the high standard of care and professionalism Open Arms demands. Please be assured that any information relating to your child will be handled in the strictest of confidence.

PROHIBITED PRACTICES

Open Arms believes that behaviour management must be exercised in such a way that the rights of the child are respected and the child's self-esteem is enhanced. In dealing with the children, all staff are fully aware of what the expectations are and what the consequences are if these expectations are not met.

Staff must comply with the standards set out in the Childcare and Early Years Act pertaining to Prohibited Practices. This provision forbids corporal punishment and other harmful practices to protect the emotional and physical well-being of the children. These practices are not permitted at Open Arms Preschool:

(a) Corporal punishment of the child;

(b) Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;

(c) Locking the exits of the childcare centre or home childcare premises for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures;

(d) 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;

(e) Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or

(f) Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

Each staff member is required to confirm and acknowledge that these practices are not allowed and do not occur in the program.

Parent Code of Conduct

At Open Arms, we have definitive standards of behaviour that apply to all individuals involved in our preschool. This includes parents, guardians, volunteers, students and teachers.

Our code of conduct applies equally while they are on preschool property, at an event sponsored by Open Arms or any location where our preschool is a subject of discussion.

Being Respectful

All members of Open Arms are to be treated with respect and dignity regardless of race, creed, sexual orientation, disability or any other ground protected by Ontario Human Rights Code.

Being Civil

All adult members have the responsibility to act civil and be an example of good behaviour. Foul language, such as swearing, name calling and shouting are not appropriate and will not be tolerated on preschool property or an event sponsored by our preschool. Individuals engaging in such behaviour will be asked to leave the premises immediately. Failure to do so will result in the appropriate local authorities being contacted.

Free From Harassment

Inappropriate behaviour or harassment of any kind towards a child, parent, staff or any other person on Preschool property will result in immediate intervention up to and including the family's expulsion from the center and/or police intervention. The type of behaviour not tolerated includes, but not limited to:

- Physical or verbal harassment or abusive language
- Intimidation by written note, email, verbal, gestures or body language
- Carrying of weapons
- Smoking or vaping
- Use of alcohol or illicit drugs
- Endangering the safety and security of the preschool

None of the above activities will be tolerated on preschool property. The consequences for failure to comply will include but is not limited to the family's expulsion from the center and intervention from local authorities.

PRIVACY

The privacy and confidentiality of our parents, guardians, children and staff are important to Open Arms. Below are just some circumstances where the privacy and confidentiality of our members may be compromised.

- Gossip and public criticism are unacceptable. There should be no reason to complain or criticize the school or other parents through social media or other public mediums. All complaints against the school or other parents are to be handled directly between the parties involved. Failure of which should follow the escalation process outlined below.
- **NO** photography is allowed on preschool's premises without explicit Director's permission. Any such permission is assumed for private and personal use only. No parent should publish pictures of other children without permission from the child's parent or guardian.
- Children's cubbies are used for the purpose of facilitating a personal space for each child's supplies. They are not to be used for distributing or promoting any form of communication between parents unless specific permission has been granted by the Director or Supervisor.
- Whilst parents are encouraged to interact with each other and discuss daycare activities and general socializing, we cannot facilitate the distribution of unsolicited communications to other parents.

These policies are strictly enforced, if you have any concerns, comments or complaints please address them with any member of the staff. Should such discussions not address your concerns, the next step would be to review the situation with the preschool Director. Upon failing a resolution, the matter will be referred to the owner/ operator.

PARENT ISSUES AND CONCERNS

There are policies and procedures developed by the Ministry that govern how parent's issues and concerns are addressed. A copy of Open Arms policy can be found in ***Appendix A*** of this handbook.

ADMISSIONS & WITHDRAWAL

ADMISSION

Prior to admission, a registration package including all required documentation and fees must be submitted for each child.

These include:

• Completed Enrolment Forms

• Signed Parent Agreement/Consent forms

• Registration Deposit

• First Month's Payment

• Completed Emergency Contact Details

• Copy of Child's Immunization Record

• Completed Allergies and/ or medication forms (if applicable)

Please note your enrolment is not guaranteed until the above items are received.

WITHDRAWAL

We are always sad to see children leave our preschool for various reasons. However, when you choose to withdraw from any of our programs, we do require a minimum of 30 days advance notice. All outstanding balances should be settled prior to the child's last day.

On rare occasions and when all other options have been exhausted, your child may be withdrawn from our centre. Our decision may be based on one or more of the following reasons:

- If your child shows continued signs of aggression or disruptive behavior
- We feel your child is a threat to other children and staff
- Non-payment of fees
- Continued late payment of fees
- More than 5 late pickups per Month
- Less than 8 days of attendance per Month

- Violation of daycare policies
- If we feel that our preschool is not meeting the needs of your child
- At our sole discretion

Waiting List Policy & Procedure

Open Arms maintains a waiting list for prospective parents wishing to enroll their child at our Preschool. Prospective parents can request to be added to our waiting list at any given time when there are no spaces available.

This list helps maintain priority and sequence of children waiting to enroll in our programs. There is no charge or collection for fees or deposits whilst on the waiting listing for admission. The order of such waiting list is determined on a first come first serve basis per program.

The number of children on our waitlist is available for those inquiring without providing personal information of the child or their parent.

No staff or member of Open Arms is authorized to reveal any personal or confidential information of current or any prospective children on the waiting list.

Fees & Payments

Open Arms Preschool is enrolled in the Canada-Wide Early Learning & Childcare (CWELCC) program. Our fees are subject to Government regulations that supports parents in fee reductions for childcare services. The following guidelines will be enforced for fees and payments:

- Base fees are a fixed Monthly charge for *all* days including:
  - Statutory & Civic Holidays
  - Sickness or isolation days
  - Vacation days
  - School closure days
- Exception to above are closures being enforced by Public Health, Ministry of Education or Government of Ontario.
- If your childcare fees are subsidized you are responsible for any surcharges, app charges and full fees for absent days that exceed your absence allowance.
- Fees are due and payable on or before the first of every month.

- We encourage **Pre-Authorized Debit** payments; however, the following payment methods are also accepted:
  - Interact e-Transfer payable to payments@oaps.ca, payments@oans.ca or payments@oael.ca depending on the centre your child is enrolled.
  - Cheques payable to "*Open Arms Preschool*" or "*Open Arms Nursery*" or "*Open Arms Preschool & Early Learning Centre*" depending on the centre your child is enrolled.
  - Credit card (subject to non-base fee surcharges)
- A $35 non-base fee charge is applied to each returned payment (cheque or direct debit)
- Base Fees are regulated by the CWELCC program; however surcharges and non-base fees are subject to increases.
- Program fees are based on the age of your child regardless of which classroom or program your child is placed in
- In order to accommodate the high demand for enrolment in our centres, your child may be placed in an alternate program when they meet the minimum entry requirement for that program, are within our mixed-age grouping allowance and we feel they will thrive and develop
- All registration deposits are non-refundable prior to start date and thereafter only applied to final invoice
- A minimum of a 30-day written notice by mail or email is required for program withdrawal
- The registration deposit can only be applied as a credit toward your final invoice at withdrawal
- If less than a four-week withdrawal notice is given, your registration deposit will be used for daycare charges for the 30-day notice period
- Our preschool closes at **6pm daily**. If you become aware you are unable to pick up your child before this time, please contact us immediately to notify us of your delay. This allows us time to arrange for qualified staff to stay after hours to care for your child until your arrival.
- We enforce a late fee of **$1.00 per minute** per child after 6:00pm and **$2 per minute** after 6:20pm. The charge will be applied to the next billing cycle.

If you feel you have an exceptional situation or circumstance that will not allow you to adhere to these guidelines, please feel free to speak to the Preschool Director to make appropriate accommodations.

The **2025/ 2026** Base Fee at Open Arms Preschool is **$22/day** for all CWELCC programs and payable Monthly and calculated as an average of 21.75 Days/ Month:

(Please refer to posted fee schedule for most up to date fees)

Richmond Hill Locations

Infant Program (6 - 18 Months) **$1450**/ Month (**$478.50** with CWELCC)

Toddler Program (18 - 30 Months) **$1250**/ Month (**$478.50** with CWELCC)

Preschool Program (30 – 48 Months) **$1150**/ Month (**$478.50** with CWELCC)

Bolton Village Location

Infant Program (6 - 18 Months) **$1740**/ Month (**$478.50** with CWELCC)

Toddler Program (18 - 30 Months) **$1340**/ Month (**$478.50** with CWELCC)

Preschool Program (30 – 48 Months) **$1250**/ Month (**$478.50** with CWELCC)

Registration Deposit $500 (Applied to final invoice and **Non-Refundable** for non-enrolments)

For subsidized parents, a nominal deposit is collected for non-base fees

Base fee includes Nutritious Breakfast, Lunch and Afternoon Snack

Additional non-base fees:

- Video streaming service - $25/ Month
- Daily activity App - $15/ Month
- Late fee charged at **$1/Min** past 6pm and **$2/Min** past 6:20pm
- Surcharge for credit card payment at 3%
- $35 charge for late, NSF or rejected payments

There are no fees for being on our Waitlist

Peel & York region offer Childcare Subsidy programs. Please refer to below links for more information:

https://peelregion.ca/children-parenting/child-care-subsidy

https://www.york.ca/support/financial-assistance/child-care-fee-subsidy

Drop Off & Pick Ups

Children depend on regular routines for their own sense of stability. We suggest you try to establish fixed times for dropping off and picking up your child. Your child should be at the center no later than 9:30am. It is the parent's responsibility to drop their child to his/her teacher and ensure their belongings are in the designated place.

If you have made alternative arrangements for your child's pickup or drop-off you must notify the preschool in advance. If the alternate person is not listed as an authorized pick up, we will require your written authorization in advance. The person must be prepared to show photo identification before your child is released.

CUSTODY AGREEMENTS

We do not have the power to deny any parent access to his or her child. However, in cases where a custody agreement or restraining order is in force the center requires a copy with an appropriate court seal.

Absence

We will be concerned if your child is not present at our preschool when expected. If your child is sick, late or absent, please contact the center and leave a message or speak directly to a staff member. Please refer to our safe arrival policy in Appendix B.

Clothing & Objects from Home

Happy, active children will get dirty when they play so it is important to dress your child in clothes that can stand the stress of play both inside and outside the center. It is important that your child's clothing be appropriate for the weather and season. We strongly recommend that a complete set of spare clothing (shirt, pants, underwear, sweater and socks) be kept at the center at all times. Wet or soiled clothes will be placed in a bag in your child's cubby. No responsibility will be taken if your child's clothes get damaged.

All clothing should be clearly labeled with your child's name.

All personal items brought from home must be labeled with the child's name. Toys brought in for show and tell must be safe, age appropriate and not be of a violent nature.

No valuables (eg. Jewellery, electronic devices, toys etc.) are to be sent with your child into the Preschool. Open Arms is not responsible for lost, stolen or damage to any such items.

While we take every precaution to protect your child's personal items that are required for your child's day, Open Arms is not responsible for any lost, stolen or misplaced items of clothing or toys.

BEDDING

To ensure your child has a comfortable, cozy rest period, please bring a child-sized blanket, pillow (optional) and your child's favourite soft toy (optional). Bed-sheets are provided by Open Arms and washed every Friday.

FOOD & NUTRITION

Each day Open Arms provides two nutritious snacks and a wholesome hot lunch. In addition, we carry various drinks and light snacks should your child be in need during the day.

Our menus are created in-house and our meals are made fresh daily by our staff cook. We provide a four-week rotation menu that is reviewed and approved by a Registered Nutritionist. We ensure all our meals and snacks are healthy and in line with Canada's Food Guide and the Childcare and Early Years Act.

Please be sure to advise supervisor during enrolment if your child has any allergies or dietary restrictions. In exceptional circumstances, should you need to send pre-prepared meal with your child, this must be discussed and agreed between parents and Supervisor. Food brought from home must be in a sealed container with the child's name clearly marked. The food must not contain ingredients listed in current list of known allergies. Pre-prepared food will be served as per the program meal schedule.
Specialized meals can be arranged at an additional cost, please contact the Supervisor for more information.

Open Arms is a nut-free environment

HEALTH & SAFETY

PRESCHOOL SECURITY

For the safety of your child and our staff, our preschool is secured at all times. Secured automated entry is available for approved and authorized guests only. All other guests are required to call for assistance. Parents are expected to enter and exit from the main front door of the preschool. No other entrances are permitted to be used to enter or exit the building.

SECURITY CAMERAS

Open Arms respects your privacy and the need to maintain a safe environment for your child. For this reason, we have installed security cameras throughout the preschool.

In recognizing the demand of parents wanting to share their child's day, we offer a streaming service that allows each parent selected views of their child's classroom and common play areas. We will gladly offer additional access for immediate family members if requested. We trust you have the same respect for other's privacy and not make any attempts to screenshot, record, download or share this data and access with anyone outside of the approved members of your family.

Any violation of this policy will result in this feature being permanently removed for the family and possible withdrawal from the Preschool.

ILLNESS

It's always an unpleasant experience going through sickness, and a sick child does not function well. Their presence may infect other children or put other children's health at risk. In an abundance of caution if your child shows signs of sickness, staff will use their discretion to disallow your child from attending the program.

Your child will not be allowed to attend Open Arms if they show of any of the following signs or symptoms and have not been symptom-free for the minimum periods stated:

- Fever or Persistent pain (24 hours)
- Diarrhea (48 hours)
- Vomiting (48 hours)
- Respiratory illness
- Stomach pain
- Rash or hives
- Any unexplained bodily discharge
- Head Lice
- Any other signs of communicable diseases such as Chicken Pox, HFM, etc.

A doctor's note *may* be required for your child's re-admission in certain circumstance and if they have been absent due to an extended illness of two or more weeks resulting from any contagious illness, diarrhea (for at least 3 days), or hospitalization.

If your child becomes ill during the day and the staff feel they are too ill to participate in the program, you or your emergency contact will be notified, and staff will keep your child in a comfortable and isolated area until your arrival.

If your child has been diagnosed with a reportable disease, Open Arms is required by law to report this incident to the Public Health Department, who in turn may contact you if further follow up is required.

MEDICATION

There are a number of regulations regarding administering medication to children enrolled in our preschool. These regulations are in place for the protection of our staff and the well-being of your child. Staff and parents must adhere to the following regulations:

- A Doctor's note must be prescribed for all medication, including over-the-counter medicines such as cough medications and decongestants.
- A Doctor's authorization or pharmacist's label must be attached to the bottle or container, and include:
    - Child's name
    - Name of medication
    - Recommended dosage
    - Original package or container

- Parents must complete and sign a "Medication Form" before any medication can be administered to your child.
- Children who require Epinephrine because of a severe allergy, will have a posting in all rooms of the preschool. EpiPen® will be stored in a medical pouch that will be brought along to wherever the child will be.
- Self-administering fever reducing or other medications that mask vital symptoms are prohibited and could result in immediate withdrawal of your child from our program.

ALLERGIES

When enrolling your child or when becoming aware of an allergy, parents must identify all known allergies or medical conditions that the child may have. This information will be added to the child's emergency card and posted visibly in the center.

For any child with an anaphylactic allergy, an individualized plan and emergency procedures will be developed in consultation and collaboration with the child's parent.

INCLUSION RESOURCE SERVICES

If you have concerns about a child's development or special needs, early intervention services are available to provide support. Please don't hesitate to speak with the Supervisor for guidance or reach out directly to:

- York Region Children's Services: https://www.york.ca/support/childrens-services
- Peel Region Children's Services: https://peelregion.ca/services/services-children-who-need-extra-support-child-care

SMOKING

Open Arms is a **SMOKE & VAPE FREE** building; therefore, no smoking or vaping allowed within 20 metres of the premises or anywhere where children are present.

OUTDOOR SHOES

We strive to keep our classrooms as sanitized as practical; therefore, we have implemented a *no outdoor shoe* policy. Please arrange to send your child with indoor footwear that your child can easily put on themselves with minimal assistance.

Visitors will be provided with disposable shoe covers if footwear is not easily removable when entering the classrooms.

ACCIDENT & SERIOUS OCCURANCES

Bumps and bruises are a part of every child's life. Open Arms has strict safety standards and practices them to minimize such occurrences. However, there may be times when your child has incurred a minor accident that our staff had not witnessed or noticed. If you happen to notice a bump or scrape that hasn't be mentioned to you, please bring it to the staff's attention.

All parents should make staff aware of any incidents that your child has had at home. This will lessen our concern and ensure your child is given the necessary care and attention during the day.

SERIOUS OCCURRENCE REPORTING

In the event of a serious occurrence, a *Serious Occurrence Form* will be completed by staff. This form includes information about what happened, when, and actions taken by our staff as well as the outcome. Each occurrence is brought to the parent's attention and a remediation plan discussed. In rare cases of a severe incident, local authorities are involved and will complete necessary investigations as necessary.

The completed *Serious Occurrence Form* will be posted in a visible location near the entrance of each preschool classroom for a period of 10 business days from completion or the last update.

EMERGENCY & OUTDOOR PROCEDURES

Open Arms holds Monthly practice fire drills to ensure children and staff are aware of emergency protocol and can handle them in a calm manner. Staff are well informed of procedures to follow in the unlikely event of an actual emergency. Written instructions are also posted in each classroom and readily available if needed.

Every effort will be made to notify parents immediately during an emergency situation. However, our immediate priority is to call for help. In the event of an emergency, we may need to transport your child to the hospital or a medical facility. Under such circumstance, emergency help may be called before parents can be notified. Should an evacuation at Open Arms be necessary, staff will take the children to a designated site. Please feel free to ask the preschool's Supervisor for your child's emergency evacuation site and procedures.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

To protect the health and safety of children and staff in the event of an emergency, Open Arms has emergency management policies and procedures in place which outline the staff's roles and responsibilities. In the event of an emergency parents will be contacted by phone with the information provided on their emergency contact records. In cases of evacuation, our childcare centre's voicemail box will be updated as soon as practical to inform parents that the childcare centre has been evacuated and include details of the evacuation site location and contact information in the message.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Weather permitting, children will engage in outdoor activities twice a day. Please ensure you provide appropriate clothing for your child that will allow them to participate in such activities and stay comfortable. We recommend at least a warm hat, scarf, jacket, gloves, snow pants and boots. Please speak to any of our staff if you have any questions about outdoor activities and recommendations on outdoor attire.

SUNSCREEN

Summer Months can bring exposure to direct sunlight whilst your child is in the outdoor playground. We encourage parents to apply sunscreen to their child

each morning prior to their arrival. Staff will re-apply sunscreen prior to outdoor play, as authorized and instructed by each parent in their registration package.

Sunscreen is to be provided by the parent and labeled with the child's name. On the odd occasion where parents have not replenished their child's sunscreen supplies, staff will opt to apply some from our preschool's supply as we prefer your child be protected from the sun during outdoor play. If you have any concerns with this procedure, please discuss your options with the Supervisor.

Field Trips

Open Arms offers children a variety of outings that extend their horizon and enrich their learning experience. Your child may be participating in walks to explore the neighbourhood or local parks.

For your child to participate, you will be asked to sign a consent form to allow your child to participate in these activities.

OTHER INFORMATION

MEDIA RELEASE

Our goal is for you to be a part of your child's development during their time at preschool. We take great pride in our programs and have incorporated a daily activity application to allow you to see these moments as your time allows.

In addition, our preschool is monitored by a secure video surveillance system to provide your child with a safe and secure environment. We offer limited viewing for you or your family members to view your child throughout the day[1] for a nominal non-base fee charge.

Whilst the video surveillance monitoring is mandatory and required to maintain a safe environment, we do provide you options to select what consent you provide to capture your child's photo and videos. Please review the consent forms carefully to ensure your wishes are expressed.

Please be assured that any photos and videos taken in our center are kept under strict privacy control. We do not display your child's name and they are never shared on any social media unless your consent has been received to post on the preschool's website (www.oaps.ca) or Facebook page (facebook.com/RichmondHillOpenArmsPreschool)

CHANGE OF INFORMATION

It is important to keep us informed of any changes to your child's information that we have on record. This includes any name changes, medical conditions, prescription changes or updates, allergies or Doctor's information.

During any emergency situations we want to be sure we have the latest information on hand and are able to give your child the best care possible and keep you aware of the situation.

[1] Login time is limited to 20 mins per session and up to 20 logins per day

We take your child's care very seriously and want to ensure we return your child back into your safe hands. Therefore, it is vital you notify us of any change to authorized drop off, pickup and alternative emergency contacts.

If there are any changes, please notify the supervisor or send us a message via email (info@oaps.ca) or voicemail (905-508-1000)

We will be sure to follow through and ensure our records are current and updated.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We want to be sure you have read and understood Open Arms Preschool's Policies and Procedures as outlined in this Parent Handbook. If you have any questions, concerns or need to discuss anything in this handbook, please arrange to meet with the Supervisor.

If you need a copy of this handbook in another language or need to discuss with someone who can explain these policies in your language, we will gladly facilitate this for you. Please speak to the Supervisor.

Once you have read and understood the policies outlined in this handbook, please sign and keep a copy for your personal records. A copy of the latest parent handbook can always be downloaded from: www.oaps.ca/handbook or available through the daily activity App.

APPENDIX A

PARENT ISSUES AND CONCERNS

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 (e.g. program room staff)

POLICY

General

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 each and every one at Open Arms 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 3 business day(s). The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

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

Confidentiality

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

Conduct

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

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

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*[2] (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*

[2] http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaid/reportingabuse/CASLocations.aspx

<table>
<tr><th>Nature of Issue or Concern</th><th>Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:</th><th>Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:</th></tr>
<tr><td>Program Room-Related

E.g: schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.</td><td>Raise the issue or concern to
- the classroom staff directly
or
- the supervisor or licensee.</td><td rowspan="3">- Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised
or
- arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within 3 business days.

Document the issues/concerns in detail. Documentation should include:
- 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;
- If other staff need to be communicated of the situation, make a record in the Daily Written Record, and
- any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.

Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.

Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within 3 business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing.</td></tr>
<tr><td>General, Centre- or Operations-Related

E.g: childcare fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, health and safety, etc.</td><td>Raise the issue or concern to
- the supervisor or licensee.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Staff-, Duty parent-, Supervisor-, and/or Licensee-Related</td><td>Raise the issue or concern to
- the individual directly
or
- the supervisor or licensee.

All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, duty parents, etc. that puts a child’s health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</td></tr>
</table>

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	Raise the issue or concern to - the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student or - the supervisor and/or licensee. 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.	Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.

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 Supervisor or Licensee.

Issues/concerns related to compliance with requirements set out in the Childcare and Early Years Act., 2014 and Ontario Regulation 137/15 should be reported to the Ministry of Education's Childcare 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:

Open Arms Preschool	905-508-1000 option 1 (*info@oaps.ca*)
Open Arms Nursery	905-508-1000 option 2 (*info@oans.ca*)
Open Arms Early Learning	905-508-1000 option 3 (*info@oael.ca*)
Anita Wong [Director]	416-704-2578 (*anita@oaps.ca*)
Simmi Louie [Supervisor]	647-403-9690 (*simmi@oans.ca*)
Romina Parisi [Supervisor]	416-710-9257 (romina*@oaps.ca*)
Daljit Dhillon [Owner/ Operator]	416-358-9154 (*dhillon@oaps.ca*)
York Region Health	1-877-464-9675
Peel Region Health	1-800-361-5653
Ministry of Education	1-877-510-5333 (or *childcare_ontario@ontario.ca*)

APPENDIX B

SAFE ARRIVAL POLICY

Purpose

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

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

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

Policy

General

- Open Arms Preschool will ensure that any child receiving Childcare at the Childcare centre is only released to the child's parent/ guardian or an individual that the parent/ guardian has provided written authorization the Childcare centre may release the child to.
- Open Arms Preschool will only dismiss children into the care of their parent/ guardian or another authorized individual. The centre will not release any children from care without supervision.
- **Where a child does not arrive in care as expected or is not picked up as expected, staff must follow the safe arrival and dismissal procedures set out below.**

Children may only be released to an adult that are on the approved pickup list or an alternate adult if written authorization has been provided by parent or the legal guardian of the child.

Procedures

Accepting a child into care

1. When accepting a child into care at the time of drop-off, program staff in the room must:

- greet the parent/ guardian and child.
- ask the parent/ guardian how the child's evening/morning has been and if there are any changes to the child's pick-up procedure (i.e., someone other than the parent/ guardian picking up). Where the parent/ guardian has indicated that someone other than the child's parent/ guardians will be picking up, the staff must confirm that the person is listed on the child's emergency contact information or where the individual is not listed, ask the parent/ guardian to provide authorization for pick-up in writing (e.g., note or email).
- document the change in pick-up procedure in the daily written record.
- sign the child in on the classroom attendance record.

Where a child has not arrived in care as expected

1. Where a child does not arrive at the Childcare centre and the parent/ guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off (e.g., left a voice message, notified on communication app or advised the closing staff at pick-up), the staff in the classroom must:

- inform the supervisor, designate or program staff and they must commence contacting the child's parent/ guardian no later than 11:30 am.
- Staff shall contact the child's parent or guardian via the center's communication app, phone, email. or text message at least once, leaving a message if no response

Once the child's absence has been confirmed, program staff shall document the child's absence on the attendance record and any additional information about the child's absence in the daily written record

Releasing a child from care

1. The staff who is supervising the child at the time of pick-up shall only release the child to the child's parent/ guardian or individual that the parent/ guardian has provided written authorization that the Childcare may release the child to. Where the staff does not know the individual picking up the child (i.e., parent/ guardian or authorized individual):

- confirm with another staff member that the individual picking up is the child's parent/ guardian/authorized individual.
- where the above is not possible, ask the parent/ guardian/authorized individual for photo identification and confirm the individual's information against the parent/ guardian/authorized individual's name on the child's file or written authorization.

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

1. Where a parent/ guardian has previously communicated with the staff a specific time or timeframe that their child is to be picked up from care and the child has not been picked up shortly thereafter, the supervisor, designate or program staff shall contact the parent/ guardian via phone call or center's communication app and advise that the child is still in care and has not been picked up:

- Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/ guardian, staff must call again and leave a message for the parent/ guardian. Where the individual picking up the child is an authorized individual and their contact information is available, the staff shall proceed with contacting the individual to confirm pick-up as per the parent/ guardian's instructions or leave a voice message to contact the centre.
- Where the staff has not heard back from the parent/ guardian or authorized individual who was to pick up the child the staff shall contact emergency contact or wait until program closes and then refer to procedures under "where a child not been picked up and program is closed".

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

1. Where a parent/ guardian or authorized individual who was supposed to pick up a child from care and has not arrived by 6pm, staff shall ensure that the child is given a snack and activity, while they await their pick-up.
2. One staff shall stay with the child, while a second staff proceeds with calling the parent/ guardian to advise that the child is still in care and inquire their pick-up time. In the case where the person picking up the child is an authorized individual, the staff shall contact the parent/ guardian first and then proceed to contact the authorized individual responsible for pick-up if unable to reach the parent/ guardian.
3. If the staff is unable to reach the parent/ guardian or authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the child, the staff shall contact authorized individuals listed on the child's file.
4. Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/ guardian or any other authorized individual listed on the child's file (e.g., the emergency contacts) by 6:30pm, the staff shall proceed with contacting the local Children's Aid Society (York region CAS 905-895-2318 or Peel region CAS 905-363-6131). Staff shall follow the CAS's direction with respect to next steps.

Dismissing a child from care without supervision procedures

Staff will only release children from care to the parent/ guardian or other authorized adult.

Under no circumstances will children be released from care to walk home alone.

I have read Open Arms Preschool's Parent Handbook and acknowledge the following:

- ☐ Daycare Policies and Procedures
- ☐ Terms of CWELCC fees
- ☐ Deposit refund and withdrawal policy
- ☐ Daycare fee surcharges
- ☐ Parent Code of Conduct
- ☐ Health Requirements
- ☐ Illness Policy

Child's Name: _____

Parent/ guardian's name: _____

Relationship to child: _____

Parent/ guardian's signature: _____

Date (dd/mm/yyyy): _____/_____/_____

APPENDIX C

CLOSURE DAYS

Our 2025/ 2026 program will be closed on the following days and **FEES ARE CHARGED** to families:

- Christmas Day: December 25, 2025
- Boxing Day: December 26, 2025
- Christmas Closures: December 29, 2025 to December 31, 2025
- New Year's Day: January 1, 2026
- Family Day: February 16, 2026
- Good Friday: April 3, 2026
- Victoria Day: May 18, 2026
- Canada Day: July 1, 2026
- Civic Holiday: August 3, 2026
- Labour Day: September 7, 2026
- Thanksgiving Day: October 12, 2026
- Christmas Day: December 25, 2026
- Boxing Day: December 28, 2026
- Christmas Closures: December 29, 2026 to December 31, 2026

Fees for these closure dates are already included in your monthly fees

UNPLANNED CLOSURES

To keep you, your children, and our staff safe, we will close when the York or Peel District School Board schools close due to severe weather conditions. We will notify you via the daily activity App.