



Mount Zion
Early Learning Centre

PARENT HANDBOOK

*Nurturing Growth.
Inspiring Bright Futures.*



475 Ridgewood Crescent
London Ontario

Last Updated: July 16, 2026

and reviewed annually.

Any updates or changes made to the parent handbook will be communicated to families via email.

Welcome

Dear Families,

Welcome to Mount Zion Early Learning Centre.

Thank you for choosing us to be part of your child's early learning journey. We recognize the tremendous trust families place in us each day, and we are committed to providing a safe, nurturing, and engaging environment where every child is respected, encouraged, and inspired to learn.

Our educators believe every child is capable, competent, curious, and full of potential. Through meaningful relationships, play-based learning, and partnerships with families, we strive to create experiences that foster confidence, independence, belonging, and lifelong learning.

This handbook has been developed to help answer common questions about our programs, policies, and daily operations. We encourage you to review it carefully and keep it as a reference throughout your time with us.

We look forward to partnering with you and watching your child grow.

Welcome to the MZELC family.

We acknowledge that Mount Zion Early Learning Centre is on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak and Attawandaron Nations, on lands connected with many treaties such as the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum.

We also acknowledge our neighboring Indigenous communities: the Chippewas of the Thames, Oneida Nation of the Thames and the Munsee-Delaware Nation who continue to be sovereign Nations and who continue to thrive with their own unique and languages, cultures and ceremonies.

About Our Centre

Our Story

Mount Zion Early Learning Centre was established through the vision and dedication of the members of Mount Zion United Church, who recognized a growing need for accessible, high-quality childcare within the community. Inspired by a commitment to serve local families, the congregation worked collaboratively to transform this vision into reality.

Through the generous financial contributions of church members, along with countless hours devoted to planning, securing grants, and obtaining approvals and permits, construction of the centre began in 2025.

In late 2026, Mount Zion Early Learning Centre proudly opened its doors with a mission to provide exceptional early learning and childcare experiences for children and families in our community. Together with families, we strive to nurture not only early learning, but also character, compassion, and a strong sense of belonging. Our goal is for every child to leave each day knowing they are cared for, respected, included, and loved.

We proudly offer 127 spaces to children aged 6 months to 4 years and employ over 20 dedicated staff members.

Hours of Operation

7:30 am to 6:00 pm, Monday to Friday.

Holiday Closures

The Centre operates year-round. The Centre is closed on all statutory holidays including New Year's Day, Good Friday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Civic Holiday, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Boxing Day and Family Day. We are also closed for Staff Professional Development Days.

Signage will be posted throughout the centre and an email will be sent prior to any closures.

Inclement Weather Closures

At times, emergencies such as severe weather can disrupt MZELC operations. The decision to close will be based on the Thames Valley District School Board. If our neighboring school, Kensal Park, has deemed a school closure due to unsafe weather conditions, we will follow suit. When the decision is made to close the facility, employees and families will receive notification in a timely and efficient manner as possible.

Classrooms

We offer care for children ages 6 months to 4 years. Some classrooms may operate as infant or toddler/preschool or toddler, depending on the needs of the centre.

Dewdrops – Infants

Sprouts – Infants or Toddlers

Rainbows - Toddlers

Sunbeams – Toddlers

Wildflowers – Preschool or Toddler

Maples – Preschool

Willows – Preschool

Ratios

Infants: 10 infants with 3 educators. Ratios are never reduced.

Toddlers: 15 toddlers with 3 educators. Ratios can be reduced at the Centre's opening, closing, and rest periods.

Preschool: 24 preschoolers with 3 educators. Ratios can be reduced at the Centre's opening, closing, and rest times.

Our Philosophy

Our Mission

Provide exceptional early learning experiences while demonstrating kindness, respect, fairness, and love.

Our Vision

Helping every child become confident, capable, compassionate learners.

Our Values

We believe every child deserves to feel safe, valued, and loved. Our community is built on kindness, respect, fairness, and the many everyday expressions of love that help children grow with confidence and joy. We see each child as unique, capable, and full of possibility, and we are committed to creating a warm, inclusive environment where they can learn, play, explore, and belong.

Kindness is shown in gentle words, helpful hands, and caring friendships. Respect is practiced by listening, sharing space, and honoring each child's voice, feelings, culture, and family. Fairness guides the way we solve problems, make choices, and ensure that every child has opportunities to participate and succeed. Love is expressed through patience, encouragement, comfort, understanding, and the daily reassurance that each child matters.

Program Statement

At Mount Zion Early Learning Centre, we are committed to providing a welcoming, inclusive, safe, and engaging environment where children, families, educators, and the community work together to support children's learning, development, health, and well-being. We are committed to upholding kindness, respect, and fairness in all that we do, striving each day to embody these values in our actions and interactions.

Our program is grounded in the principles and foundations outlined in *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years* and reflects our belief that children are competent, capable, curious, and rich in potential.

We recognize that children learn best through relationships, active exploration, play, inquiry, and meaningful experiences. Educators intentionally create environments and experiences that support each child's unique strengths, interests, abilities, and ways of learning.

Our program is guided by the four foundations of *How Does Learning Happen?*:

Belonging

We foster caring and respectful relationships where children and families feel welcomed, valued, and connected. We recognize families as experts on their children and encourage open communication and meaningful collaboration. We honor diversity and create inclusive spaces that reflect children's identities, cultures, languages, and experiences.

Well-Being

We support children's physical and emotional health by creating environments that promote security, self-regulation, confidence, and independence. Educators provide responsive care and encourage children to develop healthy habits, resilience, and a positive sense of self.

Engagement

Children learn through active play, exploration, and inquiry. Educators observe, listen, and respond to children's ideas and interests to extend learning and create opportunities for discovery, creativity, problem-solving, and critical thinking. Our environments are intentionally designed to inspire curiosity and meaningful participation.

Expression

We encourage children to communicate and express themselves in many ways through language, movement, art, play, music, and relationships. Educators support children in sharing ideas, making choices, asking questions, and developing confidence as capable communicators.

Educators at Mount Zion Early Learning Centre engage in ongoing reflection, collaboration, and professional learning to strengthen their practice and respond thoughtfully to the needs and interests of children and families. Documentation and observation are used to make children's learning visible and to support continuous program improvement.

Our program promotes positive and responsive interactions and supports children in developing self-regulation, problem-solving skills, empathy, and respectful relationships. Behavior guidance

focuses on helping children understand emotions, develop social skills, and build independence within a caring environment.

At Mount Zion Early Learning Centre, we are dedicated to creating meaningful early learning experiences that lay the foundation for lifelong learning, well-being, and belonging.

This program statement is reviewed annually and implemented by all staff, students, and volunteers in accordance with Ontario's Child Care and Early Years Act and the principles of How Does Learning Happen?

Curriculum

At Mount Zion Early Learning Centre, our curriculum is grounded in Ontario's vision for early learning and is guided by the principles outlined in *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years* and *ELECT (Early Learning for Every Child Today)*. We believe children are competent, capable, curious, and rich in potential, and that learning occurs through responsive relationships, exploration, play, and meaningful experiences.

Our approach is rooted in emergent, play-based learning, where curriculum develops from children's interests, ideas, questions, developmental needs, and natural curiosity. Educators intentionally observe, listen, and engage alongside children to create learning experiences that extend thinking, encourage discovery, and support each child's individual growth and development.

Play is recognized as children's natural way of learning. Through child-led and educator-supported experiences, children explore concepts, build relationships, communicate ideas, solve problems, and develop confidence and independence. Learning opportunities are designed to support the whole child through social, emotional, physical, cognitive, and communication domains.

Our curriculum reflects the four foundations of How Does Learning Happen?

Belonging – We create environments where children and families feel welcomed, valued, respected, and connected. Through caring relationships and inclusive practices, children develop a sense of identity and community.

Well-Being – We support children's physical and emotional health by fostering self-regulation, independence, resilience, and healthy lifestyles in safe and nurturing environments.

Engagement – Children are active participants in their learning. Educators create opportunities for exploration, inquiry, problem-solving, creativity, and sustained play experiences that reflect children’s interests.

Expression – We encourage children to communicate and represent their thinking in many ways through language, movement, art, play, music, relationships, and exploration of materials.

Our curriculum is further informed by the six principles of ELECT, which guide our understanding of children and effective early learning environments:

1. **Early child development sets the foundation for lifelong learning, behavior, and health.**
2. **Partnerships with families and communities strengthen learning and development.**
3. **Respect for diversity, equity, and inclusion is essential.**
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, and reflective educators are essential.**

Educators at Mount Zion Early Learning Centre use observation, reflection, and documentation to make children’s learning visible and meaningful. Documentation may include photographs, learning stories, conversations, samples of children’s work, and reflective notes that capture the process of learning rather than only the outcome. These observations inform planning and help educators respond intentionally to children’s evolving interests and developmental needs.

Our environments are thoughtfully designed to invite exploration, encourage independence, and provide open-ended materials that support inquiry and creativity. Educators act as co-learners and collaborators, recognizing that curriculum emerges through relationships among children, families, educators, and the environment.

At Mount Zion Early Learning Centre, we are committed to creating responsive, inclusive, and engaging learning experiences that foster belonging, support well-being, encourage active engagement, and honor every child’s unique voice and potential.

Our Staff

Our warm and caring educators are the heart of our centre. Candidates are reviewed and reference checks are completed. Approval by the Ministry of Education is required for Program

Supervisors with site responsibilities. All new staff participate in a thorough orientation process. Each staff member is required to have a valid Standard First Aid certificate, Infant/Child CPR, immunization record, and a Vulnerable Sector Check prior to employment; thus, providing highly competent and capable staff to ensure quality care. All staff hired with an Early Childhood Educator (ECE) diploma must be registered and in good standing with the College of ECE.

We are dedicated to the physical, mental, and social development of people and committed to providing a friendly, safe, and respectful environment.

Employees, volunteers, program participants, and all others are expected to treat others, including children and vulnerable adults, with courtesy and respect.

MZELC is a shared experience for everyone to enjoy. Our core values are the basis of our interactions with our members and families.

At MZELC:

- People are responsible for their actions
- We respect each other and the environment
- Honesty will be the basis for all relationships and interactions
- We will care for ourselves and those around us
- We will foster healthy, inclusive communities
- Adults will act as positive role models
- Abusive behaviour and bullying of any kind are unacceptable and will not be tolerated

Safe Spaces:

- We are committed to providing an environment where everyone feels safe, supported and has a sense of belonging. Participation within the MZELC community will be based on an expectation that all will be treated with dignity and respect.
- Our staff and volunteer teams have the responsibility to interact with our community in a positive, professional manner and have the right to work in an environment that is safe and respectful. We will not tolerate verbal or physical abuse directed toward a staff member. This conduct may result in being asked to leave the site or program and possible suspension of service.

Guiding Principles:

- Every participant in our program deserves to feel safe while participating in a program or on our property
- MZELC staff/volunteers will model appropriate behaviour encouraging relationships that are based on our core values.
- MZELC staff/volunteers will engage with participants in a manner that fosters each participant's wellbeing

Family Communication

Open communication with parents is essential to a quality child care experience. Program staff will discuss your child's day with you and will ask for your feedback to ensure your child has a positive experience in our program. All issues and concerns brought forward are taken seriously and every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns as quickly as possible.

Any information requiring your attention will be emailed to the email address you have provided upon enrollment. This important information will help keep you aware of upcoming events and deadlines. Please ensure that you identify MZELC emails as a safe sender, to avoid the email going to junk mail.

Any changes to the contents of the registration package must be relayed immediately to the Director or Supervisor. Your child's safety in the event of an emergency could depend on the accuracy of this information, for example emergency contact information, address etc. When changes occur, you will be requested to sign and date the updated form as a verification of accuracy.

Parent involvement is welcome in all aspects of the program. Feedback through questionnaires and daily communication with the program staff are valuable methods of contributing to the quality of your child's care. We encourage you to consider participating on our Board of Directors and attend all general information meetings.

Parent Concerns and Issues

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

MZELC will make every reasonable effort to meet each child's individual needs so that they can participate in a meaningful, purposeful, and successful manner in the program.

All issues and concerns will be addressed within 2 business days.

Depending upon the nature of your concern, please follow the steps below:

1. Raise the issue/concern directly with program staff
2. If the issue cannot be resolved, please contact the Director at elcdir@mountzionelc.ca

For issues regarding billing, wait lists, menus, etc. please contact the Program Supervisor and they will direct your inquiry accordingly.

All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, students or volunteers that puts a child's health, safety, or well-being at risk should be reported to the Program Supervisor as soon as it becomes apparent.

Confidentiality and Privacy

MZELC values and respects the confidentiality of all families in our programs, however, outside agencies such as Children's Aid Society, the Ministry of Education, and the Middlesex-London Health Unit have the authority to ask for information about children participating in licensed programs. If asked by an authority, we will provide information as required.

Accessibility and Inclusion

MZELC is committed to providing high quality, inclusive programs and practices that respond to the individual abilities and needs of every child. We know that children need to feel valued, have friends and feel that they belong.

We provide safe, caring environments where all children are valued and have opportunities to participate with their peers, in activities that promote their emotional, physical, social and intellectual growth and development.

We foster each child's sense of belonging and feelings of self-worth through respectful and supportive relationships among staff, children, their families and the community.

We work in partnership with special needs resource agencies, such as All Kids Belong, to meet the individual needs of children and their families. By working collaboratively with parents and resource agencies, we ensure that strategies are implemented that reduce or eliminate barriers,

effectively support each child's unique needs and development, and are inclusive of all children, including children with individualized plans.

Enrollment and Fees

Wait List

In partnership with local municipalities, families are required to register on OneHSN to access care. Spaces are offered by the Director via email, phone, or text as vacancies arise. Families are contacted based on the date their child was added to OneHSN.

MZELC works closely with local municipalities to help ensure child care services are accessible to families facing barriers to accessing care.

Priority placement is given in the following order: MZELC staff, current enrolled families, Southcrest neighborhood families, and then new families. Within this process, full-time care is prioritized. Requests for part-time care will be considered only after all full-time care requests have been accommodated.

OneHSN is maintained as private and confidential. Parents/guardians may inquire about their child's position on the waitlist by contacting the Program Supervisor. There is no fee to be placed on the waitlist.

When a space is offered, families have up to two (2) business days to accept or decline. Families may decline an offer and remain on the waitlist; however, after a third declined offer, the application date will be updated to the current date and the child's placement on the waitlist will be adjusted accordingly. Once a space is accepted, care must begin within two (2) weeks.

Enrollment Policy

Once enrolled at MZELC, any new siblings receive priority consideration for future spaces. Full-time care continues to be prioritized. If a family chooses to reduce their child's enrollment to part-time care, all waitlist applicants requesting full-time care will be contacted first, and accommodation for a continued part-time space at the program may not be guaranteed.

Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC)

MZELC has enrolled in the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care system with the City of London.

We have been communicating with all families since this announcement was made and will continue to provide information as it becomes available.

Rates are based on daily cost. All fees are base fees. NSF fees are considered non-base fees. No other non-base fees apply at this time.

Fees

No refunds will be provided for absences due to illness, vacation, statutory holidays or inclement weather closures.

We have been approved for fee reductions based on the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (CWELLC) of \$22/per day.

*Fees are subject to change

Income tax receipts will be given at the end of the year unless payment of fees has not been paid in full.

Payment Schedule and Financial Assistance

All fees are payable in advance of care through pre-authorized bank account debits. Details regarding your payment schedule will be emailed prior to any withdrawals. Please add eca to your safe senders list to ensure you receive elcdir@mountzionelc.ca to these communications.

Parents/guardians may choose to have fees withdrawn either on the 1st of each month (monthly) or on the 1st and 15th of each month (bi-monthly).

Fees are calculated on a monthly basis using a daily rate that reflects the number of days in each month. This includes statutory holidays, civic holidays, and Easter Monday.

Payments that are declined by the bank (non-sufficient funds – NSF) will incur a \$30 service charge. This fee is classified as a non-base fee.

Non-payment of fees may result in the withdrawal of your child from the program.

Although the program is closed on holidays, regular fees may still apply. If a holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the program will observe the holiday on the nearest weekday—either the Friday before or the Monday after.

Late Pickup

If a parent/guardian arrives after the designated closing time they are considered late. The late pick up is recorded and a letter of reminder is sent to the family. At the discretion of the Director, after three warning letters, the family may be given two weeks' notice of withdrawal. We may assist the family in finding alternative care arrangements.

To be respectful of our educators, please ensure you pick up your child/ren before the program closes. If a child is not picked up by the program's closing time, you will be called. If there is no answer, we will call the emergency numbers you provided. If neither you nor the emergency contact can be reached within the first hour, the police and Children's Aid Society will be notified.

Withdrawal

Written notice of permanent withdrawal must be given four weeks in advance or full program fees will be charged in lieu of notice.

A space cannot be guaranteed if a family wishes to temporarily withdraw their child (i.e., summer, maternity leave).

MZELC has the right to terminate services if:

- 1.) Policies and procedures are not being followed.
- 2.) Childcare fees are past due.
- 3.) While it is our Centre's policy to provide an inclusive environment for all children a plan of withdrawal may be discussed if safety becomes an issue for the child or his/her peers.

Daily Procedures

Arrival and Departure

The centre is open at 7:30 a.m. Any child arriving before 7:30 a.m. is to be supervised by a parent/guardian until the facility is open. Parents/guardians are asked to notify the Centre by 10:00 a.m. if their child is ill, late or to be absent for any other reason. Upon arrival, parents/guardians must bring their child into the program room and see that they are under the supervision of the staff. Regular arrival and departure times help establish and maintain the routines for the programs. As a rule, parents/guardians are asked to arrive with their child no later than 10:30 a.m.

Children will not be released to any person whose name is not on their admission form. Any changes should be provided in writing to the educator in your child's classroom or directly to the office.

Please note that a person will be required to show photo identification when picking up if the staff does not recognize this person. This is for the protection of your child. We reserve the right to not release a child to any person who, in the sole opinion of the employee, is impaired or otherwise unable to suitably and safely care for the child.

In cases of custody arrangements, legal order or documentation must be provided to MZELC.

Our building closes at 6:00 pm. Please ensure you give yourself and your children enough time at pickup to be out of the building by 6:00 p.m.

Safe Arrival

The safety of children is our top priority. It is important that if your child is going to be absent or late for any reason, that you inform the centre, and report the reason for the absence.

Policy:

Arrival is a busy time at the Centre, so by communicating absences and working together, we can make sure the children are safe. Most families have the usual time for dropping off their child. This policy will provide staff, students, or volunteers with a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities for ensuring the safe arrival and 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.

Procedures:

All Parents/Guardians will communicate the absence by sending a message through email or by calling the centre.

Parents/guardians are asked to contact the Centre before 10:00 a.m. if their child is absent from the program that day. Parents/Guardians will communicate the absence by sending a message through email or by calling the centre to speak to a staff member or by leaving a message on the voicemail. **If the classroom staff do not hear from the parent/guardian of children typically in attendance by 10:00 a.m. the staff will contact the parent/guardian by calling using the phone number(s) the centre has on file.** The parents/guardian are responsible for ensuring the phone numbers they have given the centre are correct. If the parent/guardian does not email or call the centre, and if the centre cannot reach the parent/guardian to confirm an absence, the centre will call the emergency contact on your child's application form. Staff will keep administration informed if parents/guardians or emergency contacts cannot be reached.

Attendance

It is a mandatory requirement that parents sign their children in and out of program on the attendance sheet.

Health, Safety and Nutrition

Nutrition

The weekly menu is posted at the main entrance, outside the kitchen, and in each classroom. Children are served a full, well-balanced lunch, a mid-morning, and mid-afternoon snack. The childcare centre follows the Canada Food Guide and avoids processed foods wherever possible. Please inform the childcare centre if your child has any food allergies or any special diets.

Parents are responsible for supplying their infant's formula or breast milk. All food brought into the Infant Program must be in its original sealed package or container. This will help avoid any cross-contamination in the Infant room.

The centre serves whole milk for the Infant and Toddler groups and 2% for the Preschoolers.

Before enrolling in the childcare centre, the director or supervisor will meet with a child's guardians to obtain information about any medical conditions, including whether the child is at risk of having life threatening allergies.

Should a child have a history of anaphylaxis, an individualized anaphylactic plan with emergency procedures will be made in collaboration with the family and their regulated health care professionals. This plan will be reviewed annually with the family or when changes are required.

Illness

MZELC recognizes that in group care we have a responsibility to minimize the spread of illness. In partnership with families and caregivers, we can reduce the spread of illness at the centre, by understanding each child's baseline and working with families to keep children at home who show signs of illness. Although signs of illness are not always evident at drop off, having open communication between staff and families/caregivers will help determine next steps in care when symptoms present themselves.

Exclusion for illness is for the protection of your child, the other children, families and the employees of the centre. The exclusion policy is based on guidelines provided by the Middlesex London Health Unit.

If your child exhibits any of the following symptoms they would be required to stay home or will be sent home if these symptoms develop during the program:

- elevated fever
- sudden onset of cough in conjunction with one other symptom such as lethargy, fatigue, vomiting, diarrhea, mild fever
- vomiting or diarrhea (loose stool)
- discharge from eyes or ears or open sores
- undiagnosed skin rashes or infections
- Evidence of head lice
- Within 24 hours after receiving a general anesthetic
- Children prescribed antibiotics for a contagious diagnosis must remain off for at least 24 hours to allow for the antibiotics to work (they can return when they are no longer contagious and can participate in programs)

- Children prescribed new medication must be home for 24 hours to ensure there is no reaction.

*Please note that the symptoms for exclusion or frequency of them are subject to change based on the guidance provided by our local Health Unit.

Outdoor Play

Learning outdoors provides opportunities for curiosity and wonder and provides a different and meaningful learning environment. Our daily program schedule allows children the opportunity to participate in outdoor activities every morning and afternoon. To help your child feel comfortable and ready to explore the outdoors we ask that you provide appropriate clothing for the weather each day (e.g. rain boots, raincoats and splash pants for wet days: snow pants, boots, hats, extra mittens, etc. for cold, snowy days).

When possible, all groups will spend 2 hours each day outdoors. MZELC follows the weather, UV, and air quality recommendations made by the London Middlesex Health Unit.

When outdoor time is not an option, staff at MZELC will provide alternate activities indoors that still allow the children to stretch, move, and play.

Immunizations

The Child Care and Early Years Act stipulates that prior to admission, each child must be immunized as recommended by the Local Medical Officer of Health. A medical certificate confirming such immunizations and a complete medical assessment is necessary and needs to be submitted upon admission of a child to MZELC.

Parents wishing their child to be exempt from immunizations must provide a letter to MZELC stating for religious or philosophical reasons their child will not be immunized.

Anaphylaxis

Some allergic reactions range in severity from uncomfortable to severe (anaphylactic reactions). Anaphylactic reactions may begin mildly with itching around eyes and mouth, flushing, hives, or a cough. In some cases, however, symptoms can increase quickly to include swelling of the mouth and throat, difficulty breathing, nausea, vomiting, weakness, and confusion. A drop in

blood pressure may deprive the heart and brain of oxygen, leading to unconsciousness or death. All of this can occur in minutes and immediate medical relief is necessary.

Due to the unpredictability of reactions, if a child with an allergy expresses any concern that a reaction might be starting, especially if the child has suffered an anaphylactic reaction in the past, the staff will respond immediately and follow the instructions in the child's Anaphylaxis Action Plan. MZELC recognizes the importance that children with life-threatening and severe allergies have a safe environment in which to participate fully. All possible strategies to reduce the risk of exposure to the causative agents will be practiced. It must be noted, however, that it is not possible to reduce the risk to zero.

Medication

No antibiotics or over the counter medication will be administered at the Centre by staff. If a child is on regular medication, special arrangements should be made with the child's doctor that it be administered outside the hours of the Centre. If this is impossible, the parent of the child involved is responsible for administering the medication. No medication may be stored or left on the premises.

Administration of Medication in Special Circumstances

When there is any life-threatening circumstance that involves a child who is enrolled at MZELC, the Centre will store the medication in a locked box. Location TBD. It will be the parent's responsibility to give written instructions to the Centre.

The medication must be in the original container with the child's name, the name of the drug or medication, the dosage of the drug or medication and with written instructions for storage and administration outlined by the attending physician.

The Administrative staff and the educators directly working with the child will be informed of the proper procedure for administering the medication. Only the Administrative staff and the educator's working directly with the child will administer the medication. At the time the medication is administered, the details will be documented in a logbook located in the appropriate office.

Medical Emergencies

If your child requires medical attention or hospital care, you will be notified, and you are expected to attend to your child immediately.

All parents hereby authorize the Centre and its employees to arrange such transportation, and to administer such first aid or assistance as they in their sole discretion deem necessary or advisable under the circumstances, pending the arrival of medical assistance or arrival at the hospital.

Parents are responsible for any fees charged by the ambulance.

Medical Plans

Children with anaphylactic allergies or serious medical conditions will be required to complete an Emergency Protocol Plan prior to starting the program. This plan will then be updated when necessary and re-signed annually

Rest and Sleep

The well-being of all children at MZELC is supported through programming that supports each child's varied psychological and biological rhythms by providing materials, time and space for active play, rest and quiet time.

Rest is an important part of the day for all children. The need for sleep and/or rest time varies greatly among children.

Preschool and toddler aged children may sleep for up to two hours daily. If children are unable to sleep after half an hour they can get up from their cots to participate in quiet activities for the remainder of the period.

All infants under 12 months of age will be placed on their back for sleep, until they are able to roll from their back to their stomach or sides on their own. Any request to place an infant in a different position for sleep (e.g.: on their side or stomach) will require a written letter from the child's physician.

Please inform the staff of your child's sleep preferences and/or required accommodations. We work in partnership with parents to ensure that the duration of each child's rest period while participating in our program, does not disrupt normal sleep patterns at home.

SLEEP SAFETY AND SUPERVISION

To reduce the risk of harm, injury, or death during sleep, especially for infants, staff at MZELC adhere to safe sleep practices and ensure compliance within regulatory guidelines.

Staff must document visual checks using the designated sleep logs for infants, toddlers and preschoolers. These logs should include the time of the check and any relevant observations.

Logs must be completed daily and reviewed by the Supervisor to ensure compliance.

Staff are expected to adhere strictly to these policies. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action, including verbal or written warnings and, in severe cases, dismissal.

Any concerns regarding the staff performance in this area will be reported to the Director by a designated team member.

Infants

Infants will be placed on their backs for sleep in accordance with the "Joint Statement on Safe Sleep: Preventing Sudden Infant Deaths in Canada,". Infants must sleep in individual cribs with a firm mattress and a fitted sheet. No additional items (e.g., pillows, blankets, bumper pads) are allowed in the crib. Sleep sacks provided by the family are permitted.

Direct visual checks must be performed every 15 minutes. This involves being physically present beside each sleeping child, observing for indicators of distress (e.g., change in skin color, breathing patterns, signs of overheating). For children under the age of 12 months visual check must be performed at least every 10 minutes.

Any unusual behavior or changes in sleep patterns must be documented, and the lighting in the sleep area will always be sufficient for these checks.

A staff member will remain in the sleep room when there are more than 3–4 children sleeping.

Toddlers and Preschoolers

Toddlers will be assigned individual cots for sleeping. The sleep area will be well-lit to facilitate visual checks.

Direct visual checks will be conducted at regular intervals during nap time, ensuring children are breathing comfortably and are in a safe sleep position.

Behavior Guidance

Our aim is for the children and staff to have a safe and enjoyable time at the program. We establish reasonable limits for behavior which are consistently monitored by all staff. These limits are appropriate to the developmental level of the child and consider the health, safety, and the rights of all individuals.

A positive approach is used to guide the children, and each situation and child is considered individually. Our methods include redirection, logical and natural consequences, limit setting, modeling, providing choices, anticipating situations, recognizing appropriate behavior and involving children in conflict resolution.

Children are supported in developing self-regulation skills. Educators demonstrate a calm, positive approach to guiding children, and provide them with the tools necessary to help them solve problems and communicate.

Clothing and Possessions

Your child should arrive to MZELC dressed in clothes suitable for active and sometimes messy play.

Non-skid footwear is recommended for inside. Classrooms go outside each day, 2 hours a day, weather permitted. Children will need to bring weather appropriate clothing. In winter this includes snow pants, coat, hats, mitts and boots. In summer this includes a hat and outdoor shoes.

Please provide your child with an extra change of clothing including underwear, shirts, pants, socks, shorts, etc. in case of spills or incontinence.

MZELC will not be held responsible for lost clothing. Please label all your children's clothing, plastic bottles, pacifiers, shoes, etc.

Parents are responsible for supplying their children's disposable diapers and wipes. Please check your child's cubby regularly to ensure there is adequate amounts of supplies.

Emergency Procedures

An outline of the emergency procedures that are followed in the event of evacuation, as well as information regarding the evacuation site, is posted in each program room. Please familiarize yourself with this information.

If an evacuation occurs (e.g. false fire alarm) and the program can remain on site, parents will be verbally informed upon arrival to pick up their child. If an evacuation requires the program to move to the emergency evacuation site, parents/guardian's will be informed by phone as soon as it is safe to do so.

Prohibited Practices

As per Section 48 of the Ontario Regulation:

48(1) No licensee shall permit, with respect to a child receiving childcare at a childcare centre it operates or at a premises where it oversees the provision of childcare,

(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.

Serious Occurrences

The safety and well-being of your children is our highest priority, however, in spite of all the best precautions, incidents can sometimes happen.

A Serious Occurrence Notification Form will be posted in a visible area on site, for 10 days, when an incident occurs that is deemed a serious occurrence, as per the MEDU's definition. A serious

occurrence does not mean that the program is out of compliance with licensing requirements or that the children are at risk at the centre.

Fire Drills

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

Supervision

All employees must maintain Ministry approved ratios when children are in their care.

Volunteers and students on placement at MZELC will not have unsupervised access to the children. No child is to be supervised by anyone under the age of eighteen. Volunteers and students are never counted in ratios and are never left alone with children.

All employees must obtain a Vulnerable Sector Check before commencing employment working with children and maintain a valid Vulnerable Sector Check while employed. All eligible volunteers and students must have a current Vulnerable Sector Check before commencing duties at MZELC. Vulnerable Sector Checks must not be older than 6 months, prior to the first day of employment or placement.

Students and volunteers will participate in tasks and responsibilities that are directly related to their school curriculum / volunteer position. Parents will always be informed prior to a student or volunteer starting at MZELC.