

# Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy

Name of Child Care Centre: Toronto Waldorf School

Date Policy and Procedures Established: 2023-12

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## Purpose

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

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

Note: definitions for terms used throughout this policy are provided in a Glossary at the end of the document.

## Policy

### General

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

- Toronto Waldorf School Child Care will only dismiss children into the care of their parent/guardian or another authorized individual.
- No child is to be released from child care without supervision. If parents/guardians or authorized individuals are unable to pick up their child(ren), they must notify the Child Care Administrator/Supervisor and the classroom teacher via email in advance, before 4:00 PM. Parents/guardians must provide the authorized individual's full legal name, contact number, and the time of pick-up so that they can be verified. The authorized individual must present their legal photo ID to the staff for verification.
- Toronto Waldorf School Child Care will only accept written notice (with the parent's signature) or email from the parent/guardian as acceptable forms of authorization.
- Children will only be released to an adult and not minors younger than 18 years of age.
- Where a child does not arrive in care as expected or is not picked up as expected, staff must follow the safe arrival and dismissal procedures set out below.

## Procedures

### Accepting a child into care

When accepting a child into care at the time of drop-off (8:00 AM to 10:00 AM), the program staff must:

- Greet the parent/guardian and child, conduct a visual inspection, and record their arrival time.
- Where the parent/guardian has verbally indicated that someone other than the child's usual pickup person will be coming (**who is on the Authorized Pickup List**), the staff must check the 'Toddler and Pre-school Child Details' sheet and verify if the person is listed under 'Authorized Pick-Up Persons'. Once verified, the staff must notify the child's classroom teachers and make a record in the daily written record (classroom daily logbook).
- Where the parent/guardian has verbally indicated that someone other than the child's usual pickup person will be coming (**who is not listed on the Authorized Pickup List**), the program staff must remind the parents to send an email before 4:00 PM to the Child Care Administrator/Supervisor, Assistant Supervisor, and the classroom teacher the following information: pickup person's full legal name, contact number and time of the pickup. If the email is not received, the staff will not release the child to the pickup person. Only written notice with a signature or email will be accepted as a form of verification.
- The programming staff document the change in pick-up procedure in the daily written record (classroom daily logbook) upon receiving the child into the classroom.
- It will be the classroom program staff's responsibility to sign the child in on the classroom attendance record upon arrival.

### **Where a child has not arrived in care as expected**

Where a child does not arrive at the child care centre and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off (e.g., email, phone call, voice mail), the program staff must inform the Child Care Assistant Supervisor or the Child Care Administrator/Supervisor during the attendance check-up by 10:00 AM. The Program staff in each classroom must complete filling out a **daily absence form** indicating the total number of children in attendance and the names of the children who have not arrived. The **daily absence form** is to be taped on the classroom entrance door.

The Child Care Assistant Supervisor or the Child Care Administrator/Supervisor must:

- Inform the receptionist so that the school receptionist can commence contacting the child's parent/guardian via phone between 10:00 AM to 10:30 AM. If the absent child's parent/guardian does not answer the call, the school receptionist will leave a voice message. The Child Care Assistant Supervisor shall follow up with the school receptionist to find out the reason for their absence.
- The Child Care Assistant Supervisor will also notify the School Nurse of any children who have not arrived in care as expected by 11:00 AM.
- If no response is received from the parents/guardians by 11:00 AM, then the Child Care Assistant Supervisor or the Child Care Administrator/Supervisor will follow up with an email to the parent/guardian and include the School Nurse in the email.
- Once the child's absence has been confirmed, the Child Care Assistant Supervisor or the Child Care Administrator shall document the child's absence on the daily attendance record and any additional information about the child's absence in the daily written record (classroom daily logbook).

## Releasing a child from care

### All Preschool children gather in the Elderberry/Dandelion Yard and Second Yard by 3:45 PM.

During the winter months with earlier sunset times, children will finish their outdoor play and gather in the Dandelion and Elderberry program rooms before 5:00 PM. Preschool Parents can pick up their children directly in the play yard during outdoor play time or by entering the School's main front entrance and directly from the program rooms past 4:00 PM.

Rosebud (Toddler Program)'s designated pick-up site is the same as their drop-off site by Rosebud play yard.

The program staff is to record the time of the child's departure on the daily attendance sheet and their initials upon pick up.

The program 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 whom the parent/guardian has provided written pick-up authorization for. 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 'Toddler and Pre-school Child Details' sheet or written authorization notice/email.

**If parents/guardians or authorized pick-up individuals are unable to pick up their child(ren), they must notify the Child Care Administrator/Supervisor and/or the Assistant Supervisor via email in advance, before 4:00 PM.**

Parents/guardians must provide the additional authorized pick-up individual's full legal name, contact number, and the time of pick-up so that they can be verified. The new authorized individual must present their legal photo ID to the staff for verification.

### Where a child has not been picked up as expected (before 4:00 PM)

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, within 30 minutes of the specified time or timeframe, the Child Care Assistant Supervisor or the Child Care Administrator/Supervisor shall contact the parent/guardian via phone or email and advise that the child is still in care and has not been picked up.

- Where the Child Care Assistant Supervisor or the Child Care Administrator/Supervisor is unable to reach the parent/guardian, they must email 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 Child Care Assistant Supervisor or the Child Care Administrator/Supervisor has not heard back from the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was to pick up the child the staff shall wait until the program closes and then refer to procedures under "where a child has not been picked up and program is closed".

### Where a child has not been picked up as expected (between 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM)

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, the program staff who is with the child may wait until 5:45 PM before making a phone call to the parent/guardian to advise that the child is still in care and has not been picked up.

- Where the program staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian at 5:45 PM, they shall wait until closing (6:00 PM) before following the emergency procedures under “where a child has not been picked up and the program is closed”.

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

In the event of a late pick-up without advance notice from the parent, the following Emergency Procedure will be followed:

- 6:00pm            Program staff will call the parent then notify the Child Care Administrative Staff
- 6:15pm            Program staff will call emergency contact (if parents cannot be reached)
- 7:00pm            Program staff will call the Children’s Aid Society and notify the police  
(if parents and emergency contacts cannot be reached)

### Where a child’s departure was not communicated, and the child is not found

In the case a child’s departure was not communicated and the child is not in the classroom, or their designated playground, and the time of departure was not recorded, the police will be called to report a missing child and a Serious Occurrences reporting will be submitted to the Ministry of Education.

#### Steps to follow:

1. Confirm that the concerned child is not in child care premises (visual check of the classroom and the play yard).
2. If the child’s not found- call the child’s parent(s) to verify if the child has been picked up and inform Child Care Admin. Staff.
3. If the parent(s) cannot be reached or it is confirmed that the child has not been picked up, follow the procedures set out under “If a Child is lost” in Field Trip and Lost Child Policy.

- Gather children, complete headcount/ roll call, and maintain supervision
- Assign staff to conduct a visual search of the immediate area (washrooms if present)
- If nearby/possible, ~~come back to the fenced playground area~~ stay with the children in the classroom, and notify either the Child Care Assistant Supervisor and/or Child Care Administrator that a child is missing and ask for immediate assistance
- The Child Care Assistant Supervisor and/or Child Care Administrator will provide immediate assistance in the search and/or gathering of information on the incident. Depending on the details of the missing child and time frames, the Child Care Assistant Supervisor and/or Child Care Administrator will instruct staff to contact 911 or the local police
- The Child Care Assistant Supervisor and/or Child Care Administrator will contact the family when deemed necessary
- At any given time a child is missing or temporarily unsupervised and found, the Serious Occurrences Policies and Procedures must be followed.

## Additional Policies and Procedures

- Late Arrivals: All children require attendance by no later than 10:00 A.M. Late arrivals interrupt the daily rhythm and have a negative impact on all classes. All parents/guardians are asked to arrive at school on time. For any child/ren arriving later than 10:00 A.M, it will be the parents/guardian's responsibility to drop off their child/ren to their designated class. In the event of outdoor special activities (e.g., visits to the forest, walks around the campus, etc.) where the children and staff are not present in the room, (between 10:30 A.M. - 11:30 AM), parents are to contact the Child Care Administrative Staff (Child Care Administrator/Supervisor or the Assistant Supervisor) in advance to find out where the group is scheduled to be via email or phone. If communication is not received from the parent in advance, then the parent will have to stay with their child until the group returns to the classroom to ensure that the child is safely integrated with the rest of the group and the teachers are made aware of their late arrival.
- If the group is inside the classroom, the parent/guardian is expected to knock on the door and wait for an appropriate time to let the child/ren enter the classroom.
- Parents/guardians are to contact the TWS Reception at 905-881-1611 or email the Child Care Administrator/Supervisor, the Child Care Assistant Supervisor, and the School Nurse and inform them in case the child will be absent and remain at home due to an illness/sickness and/or for other reasons.
- Any families who are going on a vacation and anticipating absence from the program must notify the Lead Teacher and/or Child Care Administrator/Supervisor or Assistant Supervisor, in writing or email before taking the time off. Please indicate the exact dates your child will be away and will be returning. There will be no reduction in child care fees for absences, **as outlined in the *Terms and Conditions* of the child care enrollment contract.**
- It is the policy of TWS Child Care to uphold the Family Law. Therefore, we are obliged to release a child to either parent unless we have a copy of Custody papers on file. In the event of one parent not being allowed to pick up a child, please inform the office immediately and the appropriate documentation and instructions for pick up must be given to the child care program staff.
- Parents will be charged for any late pickup after 6:00 PM at a rate of \$2.00 per minute. Upon the parent/guardian/authorized person's arrival, the child care staff will fill out a late slip and obtain a signature. The late slip will be submitted to the business office and late fees will be automatically charged to the child's tuition account. Late fees then will be paid out to the staff who stays with the child.

## Parent Supervision

Parents are fully responsible for their child at all times before the drop-off and after pick-up while on the school premises. Children should not be running in the hallways or accessing part of the school that is not part of child care operations. It is an expectation for the Child Care families to respect the wider school community and keep their children within arm's reach.

Parents are also expected to follow the same rules regarding cellphone usage within the school building. Unauthorized active cellphone usage is prohibited beyond the school's main lobby area. Cellphone usage can be distracting when supervising children. All parents are encouraged to be fully present during the drop-off and arrival times. Any parent-to-parent conversations are to be taken outside of the school building during children's arrival and departure times.

All of the school grounds including the forest area are not accessible for non-school programming use. Children are not to play in the forest area during the arrival and departure times even with parent supervision.

## Glossary

*Individual authorized to pick-up/authorized individual:* a person that the parent/guardian has advised the child care program staff in writing can pick-up their child from care.

*Licensee:* The individual or corporation named on the licence issued by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of the child care centre and home child agency.

*Parent/guardian:* A person having lawful custody of a child or a person who has demonstrated a settled intention to treat a child as a child of his or her family.

*Staff:* A person who is employed by TWS Child Care (the program staff or administrative staff).