

Emergency Management Policy and Procedures

Name of Child Care Centre: Toronto Waldorf School

Date Policy and Procedures Established: September 2017

Date Policy and Procedures Updated: 2026-07-01

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear direction for staff and licensees to follow to deal with emergencies. The procedures set out steps for staff to follow to support the safety and well-being of everyone involved.

Clear policies and procedures will support all individuals to manage responses and responsibilities during an emergency, resulting in the safest outcomes possible.

Definitions

All-Clear: A notification from an authority that a threat and/or disaster no longer poses a danger, and it is deemed safe to return to the child care premises and/or resume normal operations.

Authority: A person or entity responsible for providing direction during an emergency situation (e.g. emergency services personnel, the licensee).

Emergency: An urgent or pressing situation where immediate action is required to ensure the safety of children and adults in attendance. These include situations that may not affect the whole child care centre (e.g. child-specific incidents) and where 911 is called.

Emergency Services Personnel: persons responsible for ensuring public safety and mitigating activities in an emergency (e.g. law enforcement, fire departments, emergency medical services, rescue services).

Evacuation Site: the designated off-site location where shelter is obtained during an emergency. The evacuation site is used when it is deemed unsafe to be at or return to the child care centre.

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

Meeting Place: the designated safe place near the child care centre where everyone is to initially gather before proceeding to the evacuation site, or returning to the child care centre if evacuation is not necessary.

Staff: Individual employed by the licensee (e.g. program staff, supervisor).

Unsafe to Return: A notification from an authority that a threat and/or disaster continue to pose a danger and it is unsafe to return to the child care premises.

Policy

Staff will follow the emergency response procedures outlined in this document by following these three phases:

1. Immediate Emergency Response;
2. Next Steps during an Emergency; and
3. Recovery.

Staff will ensure that children are kept safe, are accounted for, and are supervised at all times during an emergency situation.

For situations that require the evacuation of the child care centre, the **meeting place** to gather immediately will be **the pre-designated area for each child care classroom**:

Rosebud: South parking lot area (facing As- Sadiq Islamic School)

Mulberry: By the exit gate of the Mulberry Playground (facing West)

Dandelion & Elderberry: Far end of the north-facing fence in the Second Yard (next to Dandelion/Elderberry Yard)

If it is deemed 'unsafe to return' to the child care centre, the evacuation site to proceed to is located at:

1. Hesperus Village, 1 Hesperus Road, Thornhill, ON L4J 0C9 / Tel: 905-764-0840
2. As-Sadiq Islamic School, 9000 Bathurst Street, Thornhill, ON L4J 8A7 / Tel: 905-695-1588

Note: all directions given by emergency services personnel will be followed under all circumstances, including directions to evacuate to locations different than those listed above.

For any emergency situations involving a child with an individualized plan in place, the procedures in the child's individualized plan will be followed.

If any emergency situations happen that are not described in this document, Child Care Administrator/Supervisor will provide direction to staff for the immediate response and next steps. Staff will follow the directions given.

If any emergency situations result in a serious occurrence, the serious occurrence policy and procedures will also be followed.

All emergency situations will be documented in detail by all Child Care Lead Teachers/ designate, Child Care Administrator/Supervisor, and/or the Assistant Supervisor in the daily written record.

Procedures

Phase 1: Immediate Emergency Response

Emergency Situation	Roles and Responsibilities
Lockdown When a threat is on, very near, or inside the child care centre. E.g. a suspicious individual in the building who is posing a threat.	1) The staff member who becomes aware of the threat must inform all other staff of the threat as quickly and safely as possible. 2) Staff members who are outdoors must ensure everyone who is outdoors proceeds to a safe location. 3) Staff inside the child care centre must: • remain calm; • lock all entrance doors, cover the windows, and turn off the light; • gather all children and move them away from doors and windows; • take children's attendance to confirm all children are accounted for; • take shelter in closets and/or under furniture with the children, if appropriate; • keep children calm; • ensure children remain in the sheltered space; • Mute all cellular phones; and • Wait for further instructions. 4) If possible, staff inside the program room(s) should also: • close all window coverings and doors; • barricade the room door; • gather emergency medication; and • join the rest of the group for shelter. 5) Child Care Administrator / Supervisor and the Assistant Supervisor will immediately: • close and lock all child care centre or school entrance/exit doors, if possible; and • take shelter. Note: only emergency service personnel are allowed to enter or exit the child care centre during a lockdown.
Hold & Secure When a threat is in the general vicinity of the child care centre, but not on or inside the child care premises. E.g. a shooting at a nearby building.	1) The staff member who becomes aware of the external threat must inform all other staff of the threat as quickly and safely as possible. 2) Staff members who are outdoors must ensure everyone returns to their program room(s) immediately. 3) Staff in the program room must immediately: • remain calm; • take children's attendance to confirm all children are accounted for; • close all window coverings and windows in the program room; • close and lock all child care room doors • continue normal operations of the program; and • wait for further instructions. 4) Child Care Administrator / Supervisor and the Assistant Supervisor must immediately: • close and lock all entrances/exits of the child care centre/school; • place a note on the external doors with instructions that no one may enter or exit the child care centre. Note: only emergency services personnel are allowed to enter or exit the centre during a hold and secure.

Emergency Situation	Roles and Responsibilities
Bomb Threat A threat to detonate an explosive device to cause property damage, death, or injuries E.g. phone call bomb threat, receipt of a suspicious package.	1) The staff member who becomes aware of the threat or the Child Care Administrator/Supervisor must: • remain calm; • call 911 if emergency services are not yet aware of the situation; • follow the directions of emergency services personnel; and • take children's attendance to confirm all children are accounted for. A. Where the threat is received by telephone, the person on the phone should try to keep the suspect on the line as long as possible while another individual calls 911 and communicates with emergency services personnel. B. Where the threat is received in the form of a suspicious package, staff must ensure that no one approaches or touches the package at any time.
Disaster Requiring Evacuation A serious incident that affects the physical building and requires everyone to leave the premises. E.g. fire, flood, power failure.	1) The staff member who becomes aware of the disaster must inform all other staff of the incident and that the centre must be evacuated, as quickly and safely as possible. If the disaster is a fire, the fire alarm pull station must be used and staff must follow the centre's fire evacuation procedures. 2) Staff must immediately: • remain calm; • gather all children, the attendance record, classroom backpack containing children's emergency contact information any emergency medication; • exit the building with the children using the nearest safe exit, bringing children's outdoor clothing (if possible) according to weather conditions; • escort children to the meeting place; and • take children's attendance to confirm all children are accounted for; • keep children calm; and • wait for further instructions. 3) If possible, staff should also: • take a first aid kit; and • gather all non-emergency medications. 4) Child Care Administrator / Supervisor and the Assistant Supervisor staff will: • help any individuals with medical and/or special needs who need assistance to go to the meeting place (in accordance with the procedure in a child's individualized plan, if the individual is a child); and • in doing so, follow the instructions posted on special needs equipment or assistive devices during the evacuation. • If individuals cannot be safely assisted to exit the building, the designated staff will assist them to the front office for extra support/assistance evacuating the building and ensure their required medication is accessible, if applicable; and • wait for further instructions. 6) If possible, the Child Care Administrator / Supervisor and the Assistant Supervisor must conduct a walk-through of the child care centre to verify that everyone has exited the building and secure any windows or doors unless otherwise directed by emergency services personnel.

Emergency Situation	Roles and Responsibilities
Disaster – External Environmental Threat An incident outside of the building that may have adverse effects on persons in the child care centre. E.g. gas leak, oil spill, chemical release, forest fire, nuclear emergency.	1) The staff member who becomes aware of the external environmental threat must inform all other staff of the threat as quickly and safely as possible and, according to directions from emergency services personnel, advise whether to remain on site or evacuate the premises. If remaining on site: 1) Staff members who are outdoors with children must ensure everyone who is outdoors returns to their program room immediately. 2) Staff must immediately: • remain calm; • take children’s attendance to confirm all children are accounted for; • close all program room windows and all doors that lead outside (where applicable); • seal off external air entryways located in the program rooms (where applicable); • continue with normal operations of the program; and • wait for further instructions. 3) the Child Care Administrator/Supervisor and the Assistant Supervisor must: • seal off external air entryways not located in program rooms (where applicable); • place a note on all external doors with instructions that no one may enter or exit the child care centre until further notice; and • turn off all air handling equipment (i.e. heating, ventilation, and/or air conditioning, where applicable). If emergency services personnel otherwise direct the child care centre to evacuate, follow the procedures outlined in the “Disaster Requiring Evacuation” section of this policy.
Natural Disaster: Tornado / Tornado Warning	1) <i>The staff member who becomes aware of the tornado or tornado warning must inform all other staff as quickly and safely as possible.</i> 2) Staff members who are outdoors with children must ensure everyone who is outdoors returns to their program room(s) immediately. 3) <i>Staff must immediately:</i> • remain calm; • gather all children; • go to the basement gym or take shelter in small interior ground-floor rooms such as washrooms, closets, or hallways; • take children’s attendance to confirm all children are accounted for; • remain and keep children away from windows, doors, and exterior walls; • keep children calm; • conduct ongoing visual checks of the children; and • wait for further instructions.

Emergency Situation	Roles and Responsibilities
Natural Disaster: Major Earthquake	1) Staff in the program room must immediately: • remain calm; • instruct children to find shelter under a sturdy desk or table and away from unstable structures; • ensure that everyone is away from windows and outer walls; • help children who require assistance to find shelter; • for individuals in wheelchairs, lock the wheels and instruct the individual to duck as low as possible, and use a strong article (e.g. shelf, hard book, etc.) to protect their head and neck; • find safe shelter for themselves; • visually assess the safety of all children.; and • wait for the shaking to stop. 2) Staff members who are outdoors with children must immediately ensure that everyone outdoors stays away from buildings, power lines, trees, and other tall structures that may collapse, and wait for the shaking to stop. 3) Once the shaking stops, staff must: • gather the children, their emergency cards, and emergency medication; and • exit the building through the nearest safe exit, where possible, in case of aftershock or damage to the building. 4) If possible, before exiting the building, staff should also: • take a first aid kit; and • gather all non-emergency medications. 5) Individuals who have exited the building must gather at the meeting place and wait for further instructions. 6) Designated staff will: • help any individuals with medical and/or special needs who need assistance to go to the meeting place (in accordance with the procedure in a child's individualized plan, if the individual is a child); and • in doing so, follow the instructions posted on special needs equipment or assistive devices during the evacuation. • If individuals cannot be safely assisted to exit the building, the designated staff will assist them to the front office for extra support/assistance evacuating the building; and ensure their required medication is accessible, if applicable; and • wait for further instructions. 7) Child Care Administrator and/or Supervisor must conduct a walkthrough of the child care centre to ensure all individuals have evacuated, where possible.

Emergency Situation	Roles and Responsibilities
Severe Storms	Every attempt will be made to operate as usual on storm days. In the event of a storm developing in the middle of the day, in the best interest of the children and their safety, parents will be contacted to pick up in a timely manner (within an hour). This will allow all children and staff to get home safely. The Child Care Administrator/ Supervisor will assess the situation and ask the children, parents and staff to remain safely in the building until the storm passes, if it is deemed too dangerous to be outside.
Snow Days	TWS Child Care adheres to the same snow day's closure policies and procedures as the school. When the school is closed due to inclement weather conditions, all other events in the school scheduled that day are cancelled as well. A 'Snow Day' closure decision is not made lightly, knowing the difficulty parents face in finding proper child care for their children on such short notice. We understand the impact school closures have on families where both parents are working. However, it is a safety concern for children, parents, and staff when driving may become risky, and that is where 'snow day' is declared and announced. The process involves a team of widely dispersed staff conferring to decide by 6:20 AM. A comprehensive communications plan is put into action: all parents are staff are sent an email regarding the closure; our website home page is updated, the school's main phone number recording changed; and we contact CBC, CFRB, and 680 News to include the information in their 'closures report' in the mornings. The 'Snow Day' closure decision is not taken lightly and is only taken when predicted road conditions at the beginning and/or the end of the day make driving especially risky. Even when buses are running and school is open, we always want families to make their own decision on whether the road conditions are safe enough to transport their children to school. Our decision to close the school certainly factors the safety of the parents and children driving to school, but also, the safety of our faculty and staff- many of whom drive from quite long distances. If the school is open, our faculty and staff are almost all needed. Our substitution pool is small and unpredictable on any given day, and so the options are quite limited if those who live farther away are unable to make it to school or decide under the circumstances that it is too risky to drive. If we were open with limited staff, we would not be able to operate meeting the required ratio, or in any resemblance of what we believe appropriate for our children and what you have come to expect of TWS Child Care. *Follow the School Closure Chain*

Emergency Situation	Roles and Responsibilities
Power Outages	TWS Child care will not open if there is no power. If there is a power outage before the service hour (8:00 AM), the local power supplier will be contacted to see how long before power can be restored. If power is not going to be restored within one hour or said to be unknown, the Child Care will not open for that day. All families will be notified about the closure due to a power outage via email by the Child Care Administrator or Supervisor. If there is a power outage during operating hours, it will be categorized as either a. short-term or a b. long-term power outage. A short-term power outage is considered to be less than 2 hours, while a long-term power outage is for two (2) hours or more. The children's safety will be considered as the first priority in the decision-making process of keeping the child care open or closed for the day. a. Short-term Power Outage (1 hour or less) Depending on the time, routine, and programming needs of the day, the child care may remain open for a full day of operation. However, basic access to clean water, toileting, temperature, and food/snacks have to be available. b. Long-term Power outage (2 Hours or more/unknown) In case of power outages lasting/expected to last for more than two (2) hours, the child care will announce an early closure due to a power outage. Parents/guardians will be contacted via email and phone to pick up their children within an hour. If the parent(s) cannot be reached, the emergency person listed will be contacted. In the case of an emergency closure, child care will not be offering any refund of fees.

Additional Procedures for Immediate Emergency Response

Other available school administration staff may assist and provide extra support to any child care classrooms for emergency response. (i.e. Business office admin. Staff, Front Office staff, cleaning staff, etc.)

Phase 2: Next Steps During the Emergency

- 1) Where emergency services personnel are not already aware of the situation, the Child Care Administrator/ Supervisor must notify emergency services personnel (911) of the emergency as soon as possible.
- 2) Where the child care centre has been evacuated, emergency services must be notified of individuals remaining inside the building, where applicable.
- 3) If the licensee is not already on site, the site designate must contact the licensee to inform them of the emergency situation and the current status, once it is possible and safe to do so.

List of Emergency Contact Persons:

Local Police Department/ Ambulance / Fire Services: 911

Child Care Administrator/ Supervisor (Helen Choi): 416-520-9387

Licensee/ Lead Administration Contact(s)

(Denis Sequeira, Director of Administration and Finance): 416-797-8218/
(Helene Gross, Pedagogical Administrator) : 416-799-2292

- 4) Where any staff, students, and/or volunteers are not on site, the Child Care Administrator/Supervisor must notify these individuals of the situation and instruct them to proceed directly to the evacuation site if it is not safe or practical for their return to the child care centre.
- 5) The Child Care Administrator/Supervisor must wait for further instructions from emergency services personnel. Once instructions are received, they must communicate the instructions to staff and ensure they are followed.
- 6) Throughout the emergency, staff will:
 - help keep children calm;
 - take attendance to ensure that all children are accounted for;
 - conduct ongoing visual checks and head counts of children;
 - maintain constant supervision of the children; and
 - engage children in activities, where possible.
- 7) In situations where injuries have been sustained, staff with first aid training will assist with administering first aid. Staff must inform emergency personnel of severe injuries requiring immediate attention and assistance.

8a) Procedures to Follow When “All-Clear” Notification is Given	
Procedures	1) The individual who receives the ‘all-clear’ from an authority must inform all staff that the ‘all-clear’ has been given and that it is safe to return to the child care centre. 2) Designated staff who have assisted individuals with medical and/or special needs with exiting the building will assist and accompany these individuals with returning to the child care centre. 3) Staff must: • take attendance to ensure all children are accounted for; • escort children back to their program room(s), where applicable; • take attendance upon returning to the program room(s) to ensure that all children are accounted for; where applicable; and • re-open closed/sealed blinds, windows and doors. 4) Child Care Administrator/Supervisor, together with Pedagogical Administrator and Director of Administration and Finance, will determine if operations will resume and communicate this decision to staff.
Communication with parents/ guardians	1) As soon as possible, all child care lead staff/ designate must notify parents/guardians of the emergency situation and that the all-clear has been given. 2) Where disasters have occurred that did not require evacuation of the child care centre, Child Care Administrator and/or Supervisor must provide a notice of the incident to parents/guardians by email. 3) If normal operations do not resume the same day that an emergency situation has taken place, Child Care Administrator and/or Supervisor must provide parents/guardians with information as to when and how normal operations will resume as soon as this is determined.

8b) Procedures to Follow When “Unsafe to Return” Notification is Given

Procedures	1) The individual who receives the ‘unsafe to return’ notification from an authority must inform all staff of this direction and instruct them to proceed from the meeting place to the evacuation site, or the site determined by emergency services personnel. 2) Staff must take attendance to confirm that all children are accounted for, and escort children to the evacuation site. 3) Designated staff who have assisted individuals with medical and/or special needs with exiting the building will assist and accompany these individuals to the evacuation site. 4) the Child Care Administrator/Supervisor will post a note for parents/guardians on the child care centre entrance with information on the evacuation site, where it is possible and safe to do so. 5) Upon arrival at the evacuation site, staff must: • remain calm; • take attendance to ensure all children are accounted for; • help keep children calm; • engage children in activities, where possible; • conduct ongoing visual checks and head counts of children; • maintain constant supervision of the children; • keep attendance as children are picked up by their parents, guardians or authorized pick-up persons; and • remain at the evacuation site until all children have been picked up.
Communication with parents/guardians	1) Upon arrival at the emergency evacuation site, Child Care Administrator/ Supervisor will notify parents/guardians of the emergency situation, evacuation and the location to pick up their children. 2) Where possible, Child Care Administrator/ Supervisor will update the child care centre’s voicemail box as soon as possible to inform parents/guardians that the child care centre has been evacuated, and include the details of the evacuation site location and contact information in the message.

Additional Procedures for Next Steps During an Emergency

E.g. documenting children’s accidents/injuries, providing water and/or snacks, etc.

If and when possible, Child Care Lead Staff will document children’s accidents/ Injuries in the child care daily logbook. If resources and situations allow, TWS child care will make the utmost effort to provide children with clean water and/or snacks.

Phase 3: Recovery (After an Emergency Situation has Ended)

Procedures for Resuming Normal Operations E.g. where, applicable, reopening the child care centre, contacting the Ministry of Education Program Advisor, responding to media and community inquiries, contacting the insurance company, informing the caterer, temporarily relocating, etc.	1. Once an emergency situation is resolved, the Child Care Administrator/Supervisor will contact the Ministry of Education (Program Advisor/ CCLS Serious Occurrences Reporting) and/or local public health authorities, and any other appropriate authority to determine what steps must be taken to ensure safety before resuming normal operations. The Director of Administration and Finance, together with the Pedagogical Administrator, will consult with the school board members. 2. The Child Care Administrator/Supervisor and the Director of Administration and Finance will provide ongoing communication with families until child care has returned to normal operation.
Procedures for Providing Support to Children and Staff Who Experience Distress	1. The Child Care Administrator/Supervisor and child care staff will talk with the children in support of the emergency situation and will answer questions in a sensitive manner. 2. The Child Care Administrator and Director of Administration and Finance will address any concerns or distress that arise with staff as a result of the emergency situation. 3. Where deemed appropriate, professional consultants will be contacted to provide support to the children, staff, and families who experience distress.
Procedures for Debriefing Staff, Children, and Parents/Guardians Include, where, applicable, details about when and how the debrief(s) will take place, etc.	Child Care Administrator/Supervisor must debrief staff, children, and parents/guardians after the emergency. • Staff during an organized staff meeting • Children during large and small group sessions • Parents through written communication and where necessary, parent meetings Where deemed appropriate, the Child Care Administrator/Supervisor will contact professional consultant to debrief children, staff and parents.