

Parent Concern Policy

Creative Minds understands the trust parents put into the teachers when they drop their child off at the centre. Although parents receive and are given as much information as possible about their child's teachers, classrooms and program, it is natural for parents to have doubts or concerns about the care their child is receiving. On occasion, there may even be a serious concern in which they may need to approach the teacher or the supervisor. The parent-teacher relationship is the most beneficial when each party views the other as a valuable partner and resource.

Upon enrolment, the supervisor shares with parents the relevant policies, rules and schedules so that parents will know what to expect and to ensure the parents understand and are comfortable; however, situations arise and a concern may present itself.

General Overview

When addressing concerns and complaints, Creative Minds expects all parents and teachers to:

1. Maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.
2. Acknowledge their common goal is to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties.
3. Act in good faith and in a calm and courteous manner.
4. Show respect and understanding of each other's point of view and value difference, rather than judge and blame.
5. Understand that all parties have rights and responsibilities which must be balanced.
6. Ensure all parties are aware of their right to advocacy when communicating the issues involved in the complaint and in negotiating an outcome.
7. If at any point a parent/guardian or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the supervisor.

In addition to the expectations stated above, all parties will be expected to address complaints:

- Courteously
- Efficiently
- Fairly
- Promptly, within timelines agreed upon with the parent

It is Creative Minds intention to:

- Be open and have frequent communication with parents – parents should feel well-informed about the day-to-day experiences and care of their child
- Have an open door policy, where parents are welcome to drop-b y and be with their children
- Have a healthy and safe environment, where children are well supervised
- Ensure the teachers and supervisor is willing to work with the parents on particular problems or limitations

- Ensure parents receive notification of any changes to their child's programming
- Ensure all teachers and supervisor are non-judgmental and respect family background and values
- Ensure teachers are warm and loving with the children in their care and have both training and experience in child care

Parents

In order to promote positive, open communication, parents should keep in mind:

- To be mindful of the other person's perspective.
- The teacher(s) have chosen this profession because of their genuine interest and love for caring for children – they are making decisions based on what they feel is best for the children in their care.
- Early Childhood Educators are much more than babysitters – they are committed professionals.

Before approaching the teacher(s):

- Clearly identify the point of friction and its cause – are there underlying issues that are causing their distress?
- Have a concrete solution or resolution in mind

Teachers

If a parent comes to a teacher with a concern, observation, or complaint, the teacher will:

- Not procrastinate – teachers will meet or call a parent right away as this is the most direct method of coming to a successful resolution as soon as possible. The longer the teacher waits, the more likely the small event will fester and color all future contact with the parent.
- Acknowledge the parent's concern – teachers will confirm/affirm the parent's perception of the problem before offering their own explanation of the situation. Some complaints are obvious and direct, and others are masking underlying circumstances or conditions.
- Be assertive but not abrasive – If the issue is a breach of Creative Minds policies and procedures, the teacher will clearly state that the protocols apply to all children and parents, with no exceptions; however, the teacher will make a conscious effort to not:
 - a. Cross their arms
 - b. Roll their eyes
 - c. Furrow their brow
 - d. Frown
 - e. Use a negative tone or statements

- Document all efforts – teachers will document all and any communication they have with parents about any kind of complaint. Documentation is useful in establishing a timeline of events, if necessary.

Supervisor

If, after meeting with the teacher(s), a parent is not satisfied with the outcome of their communication with their child's teacher(s), the parent may set up a meeting with the supervisor. The supervisor will:

- Collect all relevant information from the teacher(s) involved, as well as
- Collect all relevant information from the parent
- Set-up a meeting with both parents and teacher(s) in attendance
- During the meeting:
 - The parent will present their concern
 - The teacher will present their assessment of the situation/circumstances
 - The supervisor will make a decision based on what is best for the child in 2 business days

Procedures

Nature of Issue or Concern:	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff/Supervisor in Responding to Issue/Concern:
Program Room Related E.g.: schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements etc.	<p>If a parent/guardian has a concern with their child's classroom they are to first bring their concerns to their child's teachers.</p> <p>If a resolution cannot be made and/or the parent/guardian feel the situation has not been resolved, they may report their concerns to the supervisor.</p> <p>We encourage all of our parents/guardians to communicate with their teachers before including the supervisor. We believe in</p>	<p>Upon receiving a complaint concerning their program room, the teacher(s) will receive the complaint, in writing, and a meeting will be arranged with the parent/guardian within 2 business days. This will allow for the teacher to collect an documentation or supporting reports, as well as allow the teacher(s) and the parent/guardian to reflect on the concern and come up with solutions, without the pressure of a face-to-face confrontation, especially</p>

	building strong family ties with the centre, and this can only be done through communication among the parents/guardians and staff.	during classroom hours.
General, Centre or Operations Related E.g.: child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus etc.	<p>All concerns or issues related to the daily operations, policies, staffing or licensing of the centre must be reported to the supervisor.</p> <p>Although the centre has its policies that can be updated and changed to reflect the demands of the families, there are many policies that were created to adhere to certain standards created by the Ministry, Health Department, Fire Department, etc.</p>	<p>Staff will:</p> <p>Document the concern/issue in detail. The documentation should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The date and time the issue/concern was received; • The name of the person who received the issue/concern; • The same of the person reporting the issue/concern; • The details of the issue/concern; and • Any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.
Staff, Parent, Supervisor Related	<p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, parents/guardians, 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.</p> <p>If a parent/guardian has an issue/concern with a specific employee of the centre, they are to raise their concern with that employee first. If, for whatever reason, a reasonable solution cannot be reached, the parent/guardian is expected to report to the supervisor.</p>	<p>Supervisor</p> <p>The supervisor will ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party with 2 business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Reasons for the delay will be documented in writing.</p> <p>Resolution</p> <p>The teacher(s) will provide a resolution or outcome to the parent/guardian who raised the issue/concern.</p>

Student/Volunteer Related	<p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, parents/guardians, 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.</p> <p>If a parent/guardian has a concern/issue with a student or volunteer, they are to report to the staff responsible for supervising the student/volunteer. If the staff is unable to come to a solution with the parent/guardian concerning the student/volunteer, the parent/guardian will report to the supervisor.</p>	<p>If the parent/guardian is not satisfied with the outcome or resolution, they may report to the supervisor to conduct their own investigation.</p>
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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 Supervisor, Vicki McNabb

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

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

Contacts:

Supervisor: Vicki McNabb 519-209-7485

Acting Supervisor: Caitlin Reansbury 519-7712831

Assistant Supervisor Virginia Jones 519-771-4794

Health and Safety Representative: Aimee Munro 519-774-9932

Children's Aid Society: Ross 519-753-8681

Ministry Of Education: Jen Stewart 519-852-3291

Health Unit: 519-753-4937

City of Brantford: 519-759-4150

Fire Department: 519-752-4336

Steve and or Richard Kun Landlord: 1-905-510-9424

Concerns about 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/guardian will be advised to contact the Children's Aid Society 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*.

