



Serious Occurrence Policy and Procedures

Waterloo Co-operative Preschool is committed to the safety and well-being of the children enrolled at the preschool. The purpose of this policy and the procedures within is to provide clear instructions for staff, students and volunteers to follow for how to identify, respond to and report a serious occurrence. It ensures that there is a plan to deal with any serious incidents that may affect the health, safety and well-being of children and those working directly with children, and that these serious incidents are reported, tracked and followed up on.

Identifying a Serious Occurrence

- Under the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2024*, serious occurrences are defined as:
 1. the death of a child who received child care at a child care centre,
 2. abuse, neglect or an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child while receiving child care at a child care centre,
 3. a life-threatening injury to or a life-threatening illness of a child who receives child care at a child care centre, such as loss of consciousness, anaphylactic reaction, first time seizure, or multiple seizures lasting more than 5 minutes,
 4. an incident where a child who is receiving child care at a child care centre goes missing or is temporarily unsupervised, or
 5. an unplanned disruption of the normal operations of a child care centre that poses a risk to the health, safety or well-being of children receiving child care at the child care centre.

Note: Appendix A provides examples and scenarios of reportable and non-reportable incidents.

Reporting a Serious Occurrence

- Staff, and volunteers will notify the Supervisor, or designate, of a serious occurrence as soon as they become aware of the incident and will document immediately all details.
- All serious occurrences will be reported to the Ministry of Education in the Child Care Licensing System (CCLS) within 24 hours of the Supervisor, or designate, becoming aware of the occurrence. The email address for Identifying information such as child or staff names will not be included in the serious occurrence reports.
- If CCLS cannot be accessed (e.g. where CCLS or an internet connection is unavailable), the Supervisor, or designate, will notify the program advisor (PA) assigned to the licence by email or by telephone within 24 hours of becoming aware of the occurrence. The Waterloo Area Program Advisor is Diego Beltran (DiegoBeltran@ontario.ca 548-588-2284).
- A serious occurrence report will be submitted in CCLS as soon as the system can be accessed.
- Where a Ministry of Education PA cannot be reached by telephone, an email will be left to notify the PA of the incident.
- All updates to serious occurrences will be reported in CCLS through update reports until the serious occurrence has been closed by the Ministry of Education.
- Where the Ministry of Education requests updates to a serious occurrence in CCLS, these will be provided as soon as possible through update reports.
- Serious occurrences reported to the Ministry of Education will be documented in great detail in the daily written record with no identifying information of the children involved.

Posting a Serious Occurrence Summary (Notification Form)

- Within 24 hours of becoming aware of a serious occurrence, the Supervisor, or designate, will complete a Serious Occurrence Notification Form in either CCLS or using the form available in Appendix B.
- The form will provide a summary of the serious occurrence and of any action taken by Waterloo Co-operative Preschool.
- The summary will not include identifying information (e.g. names and ages of children, staff, or program rooms) and will contain gender-neutral language.

- The summary will be posted at Waterloo Co-operative Preschool in a place that is visible and accessible to families and on our website for a minimum of 10 business days, regardless of the serious occurrence type and the status of any related investigation.
- All updates to the serious occurrence will be added to the posted summary, and the summary will remain posted for an additional 10 business days each time any updates are added.
- All serious occurrence summaries will be retained for 3 years from the date they are created or last updated (whichever date is most recent).

Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a Child

- If any person, including a person who performs professional duties with respect to children, has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has suffered, or is at risk to suffer, physical or emotional harm or sexual exploitation or molestation inflicted by the person having charge of the child, the person will report the suspicion directly to Family and Children's Services.
- Suspected abuse or neglect that will be reported will include physical, emotional and sexual abuse and/or neglect.
- Where a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent/guardian will be advised to contact their local Family and Children's Services directly. The person who becomes aware of these concerns is also required to report the concerns to the local Family and Children's Services.
- See Suspected Child Abuse Policies and Procedures in the WCP policy manual or on our website.

Guidelines for Temporarily Missing Child

Waterloo Co-operative Preschool has a transitions policy in place to ensure the safety and supervision of children at all times including movement from to and from the playground. WCP also follows a washroom transition and supervision policy.

If after a group has transitioned and a head count conducted by staff has made them aware that a child is missing, the protocol will be as follows:

The group will backtrack to where they came from if in close proximity. If able to maintain ratios, a staff can backtrack alone or if an adult is present who is not in ratio they may take a walkie talkie and go back and check the last location, washrooms and vicinity. If found they quickly notify staff and bring the child back to the group.

If the child is found safe and not at risk of harm, a head count is conducted, and children continue the transition together. The incident is logged in the Daily Journal. The parent/guardian will be notified and an Individual Support Plan (ISP) will be established if necessary. If the child already has an ISP, a team meeting will be held and further preventative measures added if necessary.

If a child is temporarily missing for more than five minutes and found unharmed and was not in any danger, a serious occurrence will be reported providing all details. If they are not found the following protocol will apply:

- Alert all staff/others in the building.
- Do a headcount. Keep the rest of the group safe and contained and stay within ratio.
- Immediate search of the premise - indoors/outdoors/upstairs.
- Have another staff member who is not looking alert the guardians of the child involved.
- Advise police by phone and follow their direction for next steps.
- A serious occurrence will be filed with full details and individuals involved.

Procedures to Respond to a Serious Occurrence

Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences

Steps for Staff, Students and Volunteers to Follow:	Steps for the Supervisor/Designate to Follow:
<p>1. Immediately:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ask for assistance from other staff, students, or volunteers. ● Provide immediate medical assistance, if applicable, according to Standard First Aid and CPR training, where applicable. ● Call emergency services and follow direction from emergency services personnel, where applicable, ● Ensure that other children are removed from the scene and do not have access to the area, where applicable. ● Address any risks to the health or safety of the child and/or other children present to prevent the risk of further harm. ● Notify the supervisor/designate. 	<p>1. Immediately:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide assistance to children, staff, students, volunteers and families. ● Provide immediate medical assistance, if applicable, according to Standard First Aid and CPR training. ● Call emergency services and follow direction from emergency services personnel, where applicable. <p>2. Within 24 hours of becoming aware of the incident:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collect all pertinent information to report the incident to the Ministry of Education as a serious occurrence, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A description of the incident; ○ The date, time, place where it occurred, actions taken and outcome;

2. Ongoing and after the incident:

- Follow any direction provided by third-party authorities (e.g. police, CAS, public health, etc.).
- Ensure that children are supervised at all times.

3. Within 24 hours:

- Document the incident in:
 - a. the daily written record;
 - b. the child's record of symptoms of illness, if applicable; and/or
 - c. in an accident report, if applicable.
- Where an accident report is created, provide a signed copy to a parent of the child.

- The current status of the incident and child/parties involved; and
- All other parties notified (e.g., emergency services, CAS, guardians).

3. Report the serious occurrence in CCLS, or notify the Ministry of Education program advisor by telephone or email where CCLS is not available. **Note:** Where CCLS is not available, a serious occurrence report will be submitted in CCLS as soon as it becomes available.

4. Post a summary of the serious occurrence and of any action taken by the child care centre in a place that is visible and accessible to guardians.

5. Ongoing and after the incident:

- Follow any direction provided by third-party authorities (e.g. police, CAS, public health, etc.).
- Maintain confidentiality at all times.
- Update the serious occurrence report in CCLS, as required.
- Conduct an internal review of the serious occurrence with staff, students and volunteers to establish next steps and reduce probability of repeat occurrences.
- Provide children, guardians, staff, students and/or volunteers with support, if needed.
- Review with staff, students and volunteers the Waterloo Co-operative Preschool's program statement policies and procedures that set out prohibited practices and expectations of promoting the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of all children and Transition procedures, ISP plans.

Steps to Follow According to Specific Serious Occurrence Categories

Serious Occurrence Category	Steps for Staff, Students and Volunteers to Follow:	Steps for the Supervisor/Designate to Follow:
Death of a Child	<p>Death occurs while a child is receiving child care:</p> <p>See ‘Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences’ for staff, students and volunteers.</p>	<p>See ‘Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences’ for the Licensee/Supervisor/Designate, and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">a) Death occurs while a child is receiving child care:</p> <p>1. Immediately, upon becoming aware of the incident:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contact a guardian of the child, or where a guardian cannot be reached, contact the child’s emergency contact. <p style="text-align: center;">b) Death occurs while a child is not receiving child care:</p> <p>Within 24 hours of becoming aware of the incident:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contact the local Children’s Aid Society (CAS) or police services to find out if there is an investigation. If an investigation is ongoing, conduct an internal investigation after CAS or police services have completed their investigation, if applicable.
Allegation of Abuse and/or Neglect	<p>See ‘Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences’ for staff, students and volunteers, and</p> <p>Where there is a concern about the abuse or neglect of a child by any person:</p> <p>1. Immediately:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Report concerns to the local Children’s Aid 	<p>See ‘Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences’ for the Licensee/Supervisor/Designate, and</p> <p>Where there is a concern about the abuse or neglect of a child by a staff, student or volunteer, or where a person has otherwise reported alleged abuse/neglect concerns to the supervisor/designate/ board:</p> <p>1. Immediately:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Notify the person who reported concerns about their duty to report obligations under the <i>Child and Family Services Act (CFSA)</i>.

	<p>Society (CAS) as per the duty to report obligations under the <i>Child and Family Services Act</i> (CFSA).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Document the conversation with CAS and follow their recommendations. ● Notify the supervisor/designate of the incident and the report made to CAS, where appropriate. ● Refrain from discussing the allegation with others. ● Maintain confidentiality at all times. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Report the concerns to the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) as per the duty to report obligations under the CFSA, unless it is confirmed that a report has already been made to CAS. ● Document the concerns. ● Contact and notify a parent of the child, where appropriate. ● Based on the nature of the allegation and/or the direction of CAS and/or internal policies, determine next steps such as disciplinary measures and additional actions, such as an internal investigation to protect children in care. ● Determine whether the individual alleged to have abused/neglected a child is registered with a professional regulatory body (e.g. College of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario College of Teachers, etc.). If so: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Report the allegation of abuse to the appropriate regulatory body; ○ Report to the College of Early Childhood Educators when the employment of a registered early childhood educator (RECE) is suspended or terminated or if the RECE resigns. ● Refrain from discussing the allegation with others. ● Maintain confidentiality at all times. <p>2. Once all external investigations are complete (e.g. by police and/or CAS), if applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Update the serious occurrence report in CCLS, as required. ● Update all other authorities to whom the allegation was reported (e.g. College of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario College of Teachers, CAS, etc.).
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<p>Life-threatening Injury or Illness</p> <p>a. Injury</p> <p>b. Illness</p>	<p>See 'Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences' for staff, students and volunteers.</p>	<p>See 'Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences' for the Licensee/Supervisor/Designate.</p>
<p>Missing or Unsupervised Child(ren)</p> <p>a. Child is still missing</p> <p>b. Child was found</p>	<p>See 'Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences' for staff, students and volunteers, and</p> <p>1. Immediately, upon becoming aware that a child or children are missing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Alert the supervisor/designate, and all staff, students and volunteers; ● Search the child care premises, including outdoor areas (e.g. hallways, washrooms, playground, outdoor classrooms, etc.); ● Ensure that remaining children are supervised at all times. <p>a) Where the child or children are <u>not found</u> after being deemed missing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue to search the premises. ● Update the supervisor/designate. <p>b) Where the child or children <u>are found</u> after being deemed missing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Update the supervisor/designate. 	<p>See 'Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences' for the Licensee/Supervisor/Designate, and</p> <p>1. Immediately, upon becoming aware that a child is missing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assist with searching for the missing child(ren). A Time needs to be specified ie if after 5 minutes a child is not found it is determined a serious occurrence for eg. at WCP if a child is found within 5 minutes and is not in danger then it is not a serious occurrence. Incidents will be written up and documented in a journal and guardians informed. The supervisor will discuss it with the teaching team.) <p>a) Where the child or children are <u>not found</u> after being deemed missing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Call emergency services and follow directions from emergency services personnel. ● Contact the child(ren)'s parent(s), or where a parent cannot be reached, contact the child's emergency contact. <p>b) Where the child or children <u>are found</u> after being deemed missing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Update the child(ren)'s parent(s), or where a parent cannot be reached by the child(ren)'s emergency contact(s).

	<p>2. After the child or children have been found, after being deemed missing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document the incident in the daily written record. 	
<p>Unplanned Disruption of Normal Operations</p> <p>a. Fire b. Flood c. Gas Leak d. Detection of Carbon Monoxide e. Outbreak f. Lockdown g. Other Emergency Relocation or Temporary Closure</p> <p>see WCP inclement weather/emergency closure policy</p>	<p>‘Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences’ for staff, students and volunteers, and</p> <p>a) Where the incident is suspected to be an <u>outbreak</u>:</p> <p>1. Immediately:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notify the supervisor/designate on site of concerns. Separate children who are showing symptoms of illness from other children. Follow the child care centre’s sanitary practices policy and procedures. <p>2. Within 24 hours:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record symptoms of ill health in the affected child(ren)’s records, Document the incident in the daily written record. <p>b) Where the incident is not an outbreak (<u>all other disruptions of normal operations</u>):</p>	<p>See ‘Steps to Follow for All Serious Occurrences’ for the Licensee/Supervisor/Designate, and</p> <p>a) Where the incident is suspected to be an <u>outbreak</u>:</p> <p>1. Immediately:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact the local public health department. 519-575-4400 or Robyn Kelly 519 883-2226 <p>b) Where the incident is deemed an outbreak by public health:</p> <p>1. Immediately:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow instructions from the local public health department. Contact the parent(s) of the affected child(ren’s) and ensure the affected child(ren’s) are picked up by their parent(s) and/or taken to hospital. Obtain an outbreak posting from the local Medical Officer of Health and post in an area easily accessible for guardians. <p>Note: Outbreaks must be reported as a serious occurrence <i>only if deemed an outbreak by public health and causes closure of a room or entire centre.</i></p> <p>2. Within 24 hours:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notify all families of children enrolled at the Waterloo Co-operative Preschool of the outbreak.

	<p>1. Immediately:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow the child care centre's fire safety and evacuation plan and/or the emergency management policies and procedures, as applicable. <p>2. Within 24 hours:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document the incident in the daily written record. 	<p>c) Where the incident is <u>not deemed an outbreak</u>, follow sanitary practices policy.</p> <p>d) Where the incident is not an outbreak (<u>all other disruptions of normal operations</u>):</p> <p>1. Immediately:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow the child care centre's fire safety and evacuation plan and/or the emergency management policies and procedures, as applicable. <p>Note: a hold and secure (an external threat in the area) is not a reportable serious occurrence.</p>
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Appendix A: Reportable Serious Occurrences

Category 1 - Death of a Child

Definition: The death of a child who received child care at a home child care premises or child care centre.

For greater clarity, a death of a child must be reported as a serious occurrence if there may be a relationship between the child's death and the child's care in the licensed program.

The following provides some examples of what would and would not be considered a serious occurrence under this category.

Examples of Reportable Serious Occurrences

- A child was unresponsive and not breathing while receiving child care. The child was later pronounced dead by emergency medical staff.
- A child developed a severe illness while at the child care centre or home child care premises and later passed away in hospital.
- A child developed a high fever at the child care centre or home child care premises and was sent home. The child later passed away.
- A child incurred fatal injuries from an accident while on a field trip from the child care centre.

Examples of Incidents that are not Serious Occurrences

- A child died following a known illness/disease/medical condition (e.g., cancer).
- A child died due to an automobile collision while in the care of their guardians.

Category 2 - Abuse/Neglect or Allegation of Abuse/Neglect

Definition: Abuse, neglect or an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child while receiving child care at a child care centre. This includes an allegation against any person who is on-site at the child care centre (in other words, this category can apply to anyone working, visiting or otherwise attending the child care centre/program so it's broader than just employees).

The following provides some examples of what would and would not be considered a serious occurrence under this category.

Examples of Reportable Serious Occurrences

- A staff or volunteer are observed forcefully grabbing a child.
- A program received an email from a concerned parent alleging that a provider was upset that a preschooler had a urine accident and the provider refused to permit the child to change his/her soiled clothes.
- A provider is observed using harsh/degrading language to a child.
- A parent noticed a bruise on his/her child's face; the child told the parent that the staff or volunteer had hit him/her.
- A staff or volunteer observed a parent slap a child while on the premises.

Example of Incident that is not a Serious Occurrence

- A child disclosed to a provider an incident that occurred while the child was not receiving care at the child care premises. In this case, a report would be required to the local children's aid society as per the Duty to Report under the *Child and Family Services Act*.

Category 3 - Life-threatening Injury or Illness

Definition: A life-threatening injury to or a life-threatening illness of a child who receives child care at a child care centre.

For greater clarity, where the licensee or supervisor has been notified that a life-threatening injury or illness of a child has occurred, it must be reported whether it occurred while the child was receiving care at the time, or where there are any indications that the life-threatening injury or illness was sustained/developed while the child attended the child care premises.

CCLS has two sub-categories: 1) injury, and 2) illness.

Life-threatening injury or illness is defined as an incident that is capable of causing death.

Examples of life threatening injury or illness include but are not limited to:

Injuries:

Injuries to the head, back or neck resulting in unconsciousness or physical paralysis

Severe eye injury (impalement)

Injuries to the chest resulting in laboured breathing (collapsed lung), cardiac arrest, internal bleeding or vomiting blood

Anaphylactic reactions

Near drowning

Substantial blood loss

Drug overdose

First time seizure, multiple seizures or seizures lasting more than 5 minutes

Fracture with bone deformity and/or bone exposure

Illness:

E. Coli

Flesh Eating Disease

The following provides some examples of what would and would not be considered a serious occurrence under this category.

Examples of Reportable Serious Occurrences

- A child suffered a second/third degree burn.
- A child had an anaphylactic reaction.
- A child ingested a hazardous substance at the child care premises that required hospital/medical attention.
- A child had a seizure in a situation where the parent or provider was unaware that a child was prone to seizures.
- A provider administered the wrong dosage of a medication to a child, who required hospital/medical attention.
- A child was hit in the head with a baseball bat and lost consciousness.

Examples of Incidents that are not Serious Occurrences

- A child with a pre-existing seizure disorder had a seizure at the child care premises. The agency and provider were aware of the condition, had a plan in place to respond and followed the plan to appropriately respond to the incident. The child did not require emergency medical attention.
- A child fell on the premises and sustained a cut that required a few stitches.
- A child tripped while running and chipped a tooth.
- A child ingested a non-toxic substance (e.g., playdough).

Category 4 - Missing or Temporarily Unsupervised Child(ren)

Definition: An incident where a child who is receiving child care goes missing or is temporarily unsupervised.

CCLS has two sub categories: child found; and child still missing

The following provides some examples of what would and would not be considered a serious occurrence under this category.

Examples of Reportable Serious Occurrences

Missing – Child found:

- A child was left alone for more than 5 minutes and was on the outdoor playground at the end of outdoor play and was later located or was left in a location that was not safe.
- During transition time, a child was left in the class unattended as the provider and children went outside.
- A child left the child care premises and walked home. The child was greeted by the guardians at home.

Missing – Child still missing:

- A child left the child care premises through the front door. The child care provider did not notice and the child's whereabouts are unknown.

Examples of Incidents that are not Serious Occurrences

- A child went missing while in the care of their guardians.
- If a child was left and found in a safe location in under 5 minutes and was not distraught.

Category 5 - Unplanned Disruption of Service

Definition: An unplanned disruption of the normal operations of a child care centre that poses a risk to the health, safety or well-being of children receiving child care at the premises.

Unplanned disruption of service may involve program closure, relocation (not including a planned temporary relocation), immediate evacuation, and/or restrictions placed on a child care program (i.e. lockdown, outbreak).

CCLS has these sub categories: fire, flood, gas leak, detection of carbon monoxide, outbreak, lockdown, other emergency relocation or temporary closure, or Public Health ordered closure.

The following provides some examples of what would and would not be considered a serious occurrence under this category.

Examples of Reportable Serious Occurrences

- A fire caused an emergency relocation or closure of a child care centre.
- A fire occurred at a child care premises on the weekend when no children were present. The program is closed until repairs are completed or until air quality is tested.
- There was a gas leak at a child care centre (that occurred before/during/after operational hours).
- Carbon monoxide was detected at child care premises; staff and children had to evacuate.
- The local medical officer of health declared an outbreak or a contagious disease which has caused closure of a room or the entire child care centre and child care cannot be provided for some of all children.
- There is a lockdown at a child care centre.

Examples of Incidents that are not Serious Occurrences

- A program closed due to extreme weather conditions (i.e. snow storm) if closed before classes began
- If it's a planned closure then a serious occurrence related to unplanned disruption of service is not needed. If the program closes early mid-program due to unplanned circumstances then a serious occurrence related to unplanned disruption of service is needed. *If the program has to close please let the Program Advisor know even when a serious occurrence is not required.*
- A boil water advisory was in effect.
- A fire alarm was activated, the centre evacuated and fire services determined that there was no danger (ie. someone pulled the fire alarm).
- There is a 'hold and secure' due to an external threat in the area. While movement is restricted into and out of a child care centre, there is no disruption in service.

Appendix B: Serious Occurrence Notification Form

Program name/Nom du programme: Click here to enter text.
Date: (yyyy/mm/dd)/(aaaa/mm/jj) Click here to enter text.
Date of occurrence: (yyyy/mm/dd) Date de l'incident : (aaaa/mm/jj) Click here to enter text.
Type of serious occurrence: Click here to enter text.
Description: Click here to enter text.
Action taken by Licensee/Outcome: (add update if applicable)/ Mesure prise par le titulaire de permis/Résultat: (ajouter une mise à jour le cas échéant) : Click here to enter text.
Name/Nom: Click here to enter text. Date: (yyyy/mm/dd)/(aaaa/mm/jj) Click here to enter text.

Signature

Revised: February 2024 by Britney Stewart (Administrator) and Patty Fallis-Robbins (Assistant Supervisor).

Approved By: Matt McKarney (President) on February 20, 2024

Seconded By: Meg Burns Dolson (Operations Officer) on February 20, 2024