



Lansing Co-operative Nursery and Preschool

## **Parent Issues and Concerns Policy and Procedures**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide a transparent process for parents/guardians, the child care licensee and staff to use when parents/guardians bring forward issues/concerns.

We believe in creating a welcoming environment that supports the co-operation between the family and Lansing Cooperative Nursery School; and, therefore communication between families and Lansing is encouraged on a daily basis. Lansing Cooperative Nursery School's approach to handling concerns and complaints is based on a commitment to:

- provide a safe and supportive learning environment
- build relationships between the children, families and Lansing Cooperative Nursery School
- provide a safe environment for everyone

This policy and its associated procedures are to ensure that concerns and complaints are dealt with in a fair and transparent way. Concerns and complaints will be handled responsibly, openly and in a timely manner, with the aim of resolving the matter to the satisfaction of all parties.

### **Definitions**

*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).

*Staff:* Individual employed by the licensee (e.g. program room staff).

### **Policy**

#### **General**

As a Cooperative, Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our child care centre and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing with our program. As supported by our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, and staff, and foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children. Our staff are available to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction.

#### **Raising a Concern or Complaint**

Lansing Cooperative Nursery School will address all concerns and complaints as promptly as possible. An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within

5 business days. The person who raised the issue or concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process. Families should follow the processes outlined in this policy, and should not contact other families about their concerns or complaints as Lansing Cooperative Nursery School will address them following due process.

Families should follow the steps below when an issue or concern arises:

- Speak with the educator involved with the child – the employee who receives the complaint will record the issue or concern in writing and direct a copy to the Director so that they are aware of any and all concerns and issues.
- Lansing Cooperative Nursery School will acknowledge all complaints, and will provide a timeline for investigating the complaint. The Centre will make every attempt to resolve the concern or complaint within the 5 days, however, if a complaint is a complex issue, Lansing Cooperative Nursery School may need more time to investigate and resolve the issue(s).
- Should the complaint involve complex issues, Lansing Cooperative Nursery School may need to take advice from outside resources which may take more time. Lansing will inform the family the new timeline for addressing the complaint and the reasons for any delays.
- At this time, it may be appropriate to discuss any other issues that the Director may feel is important concerning the child in the context of the complaint.
- If the family is still not satisfied with the results of the concerns, they will make an appointment to personally speak to the Director and the Board of Directors. If necessary, a further meeting may be required with outside agencies in order to resolve the complaint or issue.

**PLEASE:**

- Raise any concerns as soon as possible after the issue occurs
- Put it in writing, providing detailed factual information
- Maintain and respect everyone’s privacy and confidentiality
- Be calm, courteous, honest and sincere

**PLEASE ALSO:**

- Recognise everyone has rights and responsibilities that must be balanced
- Respect and understand each other’s point of view; value difference rather than judge and blame
- Realize an acceptable outcome needs to be achieved for everyone involved
- Remember that *issues and concerns will be fair, impartial and respectful to parties involved.*

**Confidentiality**

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

## **Conduct**

Our centre maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated from any party.

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 Director and/or Board of Directors

## **Concerns about the 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 will be advised to contact the [local Children's Aid Society](#) (CAS) 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*.

For more information, visit

<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaidthereportingabuse/index.aspx>

## Procedures

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
<p><b>Program Room-Related</b></p> <p>E.g: schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the classroom staff directly</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Director</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within 5 business days.</li> </ul> <p>Document the issues/concerns in detail. Documentation should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the date and time the issue/concern was received;</li> <li>- the name of the person who received the issue/concern;</li> <li>- the name of the person reporting the issue/concern;</li> <li>- the details of the issue/concern; and</li> <li>- any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Complex Issues</b></p> <p>E.g: friendship issues, behaviour concerns, developmental concerns</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the classroom staff directly</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <p>the Director</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the details of the issue/concern; and</li> <li>- any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.</li> </ul>
<p><b>General, Centre- or Operations-Related</b></p> <p>E.g: child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Director or Board of Directors.</li> </ul>	<p>Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.</p>
<p><b>Staff-, Duty parent-, Director-, and/or Licensee-Related</b></p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the individual directly</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Director or Board of Directors.</li> </ul> <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, duty parents, etc. that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the Director as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	<p>Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within 5 business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing.</p> <p>Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.</p>
<p><b>Student- / Volunteer-Related</b></p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Director and/or Board of Directors.</li> </ul> <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the Director as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	

**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 the Director.

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, police department, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Labour, fire department, College of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario College of Teachers, College of Social Workers etc.) where appropriate.

**Contacts:**

Director: Leslie Beveridge

Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care Help Desk: 1-877-510-5333 or [childcare\\_ontario@ontario.ca](mailto:childcare_ontario@ontario.ca)