

Grace Note Child Care Centre (2010) Limited

# Parent Manual

April 2015

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### ***Welcome and Introduction***

We are elated that your family is going to become a part of our family at Grace Note Child Care Centre (2010) Limited (Grace Note).

This manual has been put together to familiarize you with the policies and procedures found in our centre.

If you have any questions, concerns, comments or suggestions we invite you to share them with us.

We sincerely hope you enjoy being a part of our family. Once again, WELCOME!

Heather Hawkes  
Owner

Michael Hawkes  
Owner/Manager

Cindi Smith  
Director

### ***Our Mission***

Our mission is to have every child enter and depart from the Centre with a smile on their face. Grace Note Child Care Centre (2010) Limited. is a facility whose trained professionals are committed to providing the highest quality child care services for our families. Our programs are focused on all areas of development for children ranging in age between 4 months and 10 years of age.

### ***Philosophy Statement***

Grace Note believes that early childhood development is critical in assisting children to develop to their full potential. The early years of child development are enhanced within an environment that provides for learning through both unstructured and structured play. At Grace Note we strive to introduce children to many forms of learning with the goal of making the experience for each child as complete as possible. Our goal is to provide a healthy and safe environment focused on providing positive interactions between the children, parents and teachers. The quality of relationship between teachers and parents is proportionate to the children's personal development.

### ***Contact Information***

<b>Contact</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Cell</b>
Grace Note		902-444-3480	
Cindi Smith	Director	H:902-445-5935	902-495-6971
Susan Casey	Assist. Director	H:902-405-1776	902-293-4227
Michael Hawkes	Owner/Manager	H:902-443-3062	902-229-5222

### ***Frequently Asked Questions***

Q: What time in the morning should I drop my child off at the Centre?

A: You can drop your child off any time between the hours of 7:30am and 9:30am.

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Q: Can I drop my child off after 9:30am?

A: The only exception to our 9:30am drop off deadline policy is for medical appointments for which you must provide a note from your Doctor or Dentist.

Q: By what time do I need to pick my child up in the afternoon and what happens if I'm late?

A: You need to pick your child up and be out of the Centre by 5:30pm. The reason being is that the Teachers have been working hard all day and deserve to go home at the end of their shift. The Teacher(s) at their discretion may fine you a minimum of \$15 plus an additional \$5 for each 5 minutes or portion thereof in excess of first 15 minutes.

Q: What happens when my child gets sick?

A: Based on our exclusion policy for illness, you child must remain home for a minimum of 24 hours from when they have exhibited the illness and in some cases, 24 hours after your child has started their medication. For example, if your child went home sick on Tuesday due to high fever, they would be allowed to return to the Centre on Thursday.

Q: What and when is quiet time?

A: Quiet time is between the hours of 1:00pm and 3:00pm each day. In the Infant and Toddler rooms, this means nap time. In the Preschool age rooms, it means nap time for some and quiet activity time for others. We do not allow parents to drop off children during quiet time as it creates a significant disruption to the classroom. Pick up during this time is permitted but only upon prior notification and on a limited basis to reduce disruption in the classroom.

### ***Hours of Operation***

Monday to Friday – 7:30am to 5:30pm

### ***Child Care License***

We are a licensed facility, inspected by the Department of Community Services as well as The Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency Services and the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. A copy of our license is on display in our lobby area. The license states that the maximum capacity is 88 children, ranging in age from 4 months to 10 years.

### ***Staff***

Whenever possible, the child care teachers at Grace Note will all be trained in Early Childhood Education (ECE). All are subjected to a search through the Child Abuse Registry and must be trained in Child First Aid, CPR and criminal record check.

Grace Note will support teachers to continue in their professional development. Non-trained teachers will be supported and encouraged to work towards getting their Level 1 classification. The provincial requirement for staff is 2/3 of staff; including the director will have ECE training. Substitutes or part-time teachers with their ECE will be used whenever possible.

**Information for Parents and Staff**

<b>Information</b>	<b>Location</b>
Acts and Regulations	Bulletin Board outside office
Parents Handbook	Website and Bulletin Board outside office
License for the facility	Bulletin Board outside office
Most recent LIR	Bulletin Board outside office
Behavior Guidance Policy	In Office files
Current Menu	Posted in Kitchen on counter side of Fridge and on Website
Daily Program Plan	Posted on wall outside of each classroom
List of Current Parent Committee	Bulletin Board outside office
Most recent minutes of Parent Committee	Bulletin Board outside office
Notification of Funding provide by Minister	Bulletin Board outside office
Written Policies on permitted and prohibited behavior guidance practices	Bulletin Board outside office

**Classrooms**

Our classrooms are generally based on the children's age. Groupings are flexible to a certain extent, depending on individual development and availability of spaces. We have named our rooms by color so as not to label the children according to development. Our Pink Room will have children from 4 to 18 months, our Purple Room 18 - 26 months, our Green Room 27 months until toilet trained, our Yellow Room for three and four year olds, our Blue Room for four and five year olds and our school age room for ages 5-10 years (we offer in-service days, storm days, March break and summer camp). These groupings maintain optimum learning and enjoyment levels for all of the children. They are challenged, but not over taxed, and they flourish when socializing with peers their own age.

*It is important for parents to recognize that their child is in a group care environment. Our programs are structured encourage participation from all of the children and part of the learning process and fun is the presence of the group dynamic. The Teachers also focus on the development of each of the children especially on areas of development that need assistance.*

The maximum number of children in each room is 8 in the Pink Room, 12 in the Purple room, 16 in the Green, Yellow and Blue rooms, and 20 in the school age room.

## **Daily Program**

Our day begins with the arrival of you and your child(ren). The morning cut-off arrival time of 9:30am is important because it allows the Teachers to commence their daily programs in an organized fashion after morning snack. You can appreciate that managing the activities of 12 children between the ages of 18 to 24 months is fun, but also challenging. Having a child arrive after 9:30am when the normal daily activities have commenced results in disruption and chaos. This puts additional stress on the Teachers for no reason and impacts their ability to do their jobs. It is also a distraction to the children who may be happily engaged in an activity to have it disrupted.

Quiet time is between the hours of 1:00pm and 3:00pm daily for all age groups. For the younger children, this is generally nap time, whereas for the Preschoolers, who have given up their naps, get to enjoy some quiet time. Picking up children at quiet time is prohibited unless arrangements have been made with the Teachers. The children's ability to settle during quiet time varies dramatically and interruptions only cause issues.

Our class schedules allow the children to explore all that their classrooms have to offer. Through self-directed play, they have the freedom to investigate the various learning activities and interest centers that have been prepared before their arrival.

Grace Note uses both Theme based and Emergent forms of programming. This allows teachers at times to set up their programming in advance but keeps the children's interests in mind. This can then transform into children lead and Teacher directed exploration and play. The planning reflects the children's competencies and takes in effect the time of year (Ex. Celebrations and holidays). We have a playground outside and a gym indoors for inclement days.

As "Grace Note" denotes, there will be an emphasis made on music and movement in the classrooms everyday. From playing different types of music on the CD players, to allowing the children to make as much noise as they want on instruments of their choosing, the children will be exposed to music at an early age. Teachers will be provided with the materials to incorporate music on a daily basis into programming.

## **Enrollment Requirements**

Parents must complete the following documents upon enrollment for the purpose of identifying both the specific and general requirements of your child with regard to allergies, immunizations, drop off and pick up times, identification and names of authorized pick up individuals, contact information, outings permission, etc.

- Registration Form
- Parent Agreement
- Child Medical Form
- Medication Permission Form
- Allergy Questionnaire
- Infant/Toddler/Preschool Questionnaire

### ***Arrivals, Departures and Daily Attendance***

Upon arrival, parents should notify a Teacher of their arrival. Pick up instructions that are out of the ordinary can be communicated at this time.

Please note, children are expected to arrive at the centre no later than 9:30am. If arrival is expected to be later than 9:30am, please phone the office so that your child's Teachers can be informed. *Doctor's appointments are the only valid reason for late arrival with few exceptions (weather). Excessive late arrivals will not be tolerated.*

When picking your child up, remember that the children thrive on routine. If you are going to be late, please let us know so we can reassure your child. Your child's file contains a list of people that you have authorized for pick up. If someone other than these people will be picking them up, we need to be informed in writing or verbally. Children's files should contain up to date photographs of family members and friends authorized to pick them up.

The centre closes at 5:30 pm. There will be a late charge of \$15 for every 15 minutes or part thereof that a parent is late past 5:30 pm. This money goes directly to the staff that stays late and is to pay them for their inconvenience. Consistent lateness will be cause for dismissal from the centre. We appreciate a call from you whenever you will be late.

When children are signed in, in the morning, parents are asked to also give an expected departure time. Teachers count on this pick up time when planning their activities for the day. Any change in this time should be accompanied by a phone call. This also lets us prepare your child for a change in your arrival time.

### ***Financial Arrangements***

Fees are set based on the cost of providing care for your child's age group. A fee schedule will be provided for the year in advance of your child's first day.

Fees for each age group are available from the director. Please note that only full time care is available for infants.

A non-refundable registration fee of \$50 is payable when a child is enrolled. This will hold a position for your child at the centre. The Centre has implemented a Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD) program to facilitate the payment of fees. Fees will be deducted from your account biweekly. A fee of \$25 will be charged for NSF payments. A summary of child care expenses will be issued at tax time.

### ***Withdrawal***

One month's written notice is required before a child is withdrawn from the program.

### ***Vacations and Holidays***

No credit is given for vacations and holidays. The centre will be closed for the following holidays or on the Monday following the holiday if it falls on a weekend:

New Year's Day	Labour Day
Good Friday	Thanksgiving
Easter Monday	Remembrance Day
Victoria Day	Christmas Day
Canada Day	Boxing Day
Halifax Natal Day	<b>Heritage Day – (NEW in 2015)</b>

The centre's hours on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve are 8:00am -12:30 pm.

Regular payments must still be made in order to keep your spot at the centre while you are on vacation.

### ***Storm Days***

The centre reserves the right to close due to inclement weather or problems with the facility that might make operations difficult or dangerous (i.e. flood or extended power outage). A decision will be made and the voice mail at the centre will be changed by 6:30 am. This is to allow the opening staff notice of a closure. In some cases the message may be that we are delaying opening until the roads are safe to drive on. All our decisions rely on the accuracy of the Nova Scotia weather forecast. We will contact parents and guardians via both email and phone to notify them that the Center is in the process of closing and that they are to immediately come to the centre to pick up their child. Staff will prepare the children for pick up and dress them accordingly. The Centre will not close until all of the children have been picked up consistent with normal closing procedures.

In the case of inclement weather, we urge you to pick your child up early for the traveling safety of the children and staff. If the centre feels the need to close, you will be contacted and expected to pick your child up within a reasonable time frame.

### ***Child's First Days - Orientation***

During the child's enrollment, your child's introduction to the daycare will be discussed. Your child's first week will be an intro period that allow all parties to become familiar with each other and starts the relationships between Teachers, parents and child(ren). This first 3 days (generally Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday) require that parents be present in the classroom and are shortened days. This will involve a discussion between parents and Teachers to ensure everyone understands the process. The last 2 days (Thursday and Friday) are generally full days with Mom or Dad being available if needed. The important aspects of this process are to minimize the stress to the children (both existing and new) and allow parents the opportunity to get to know the

staff. The time required for children to become comfortable in the new environment varies. Our goal is to shorten the process to the extent possible.

### **Items Required for Child Care**

While away from home, there are some necessities that your child needs to have:

- Labeled belongings
- Change of clothes
- Crib Sheet & Blanket
- Indoor shoes
- Sleepy time stuffed animal
- Diapers
- Wipes
- Appropriate outdoor clothing
- Bottles
- Formula
- Food (if necessary) (examples of this are infant food, allergies or culture beliefs)

### **Play Clothing**

At the centre we encourage the children to explore with many different creative materials, we play outside often and encourage the children to handle their own dressing and undressing as much as possible. Simple, durable clothing that cannot be ruined by the odd mishap with a paint brush or on the playground are best.

Extra sweaters, a change of clothing, and head wear should always be kept in your child's cubby. All outer wear should be clearly labeled with your child's name. Lost and found items have a funny way of piling up fast.

### **Toys from Home**

We ask that a child's toys from home be left at home or in your car. The day care has many toys for the children to share. Usually bringing their own toys leads to arguments and tears. When no one but the Teacher "owns" the toys, it is easier to share them. No guns, war toys or other toys of destruction are to be brought to school. If you have a book that may be of interest, especially during a particular theme week, we will appreciate you sharing this book with the class for a couple of days.

"Show and Tell" days are the exception to bringing toys from home. It is assumed that on these days that everyone will have brought something special from home. However, the ban on violent toys still holds for "Show and Tell".

Nap time toys that are used for security and resemble one at home may be brought in. These will be left on their sleep cots, except in extreme cases. (Ex: intro anxiety)

### ***Parent Involvement***

We always welcome your assistance in the classrooms and out. Whether you have time in your morning to sit and read a story to a few children or you can accompany the class on a field trip, we enjoy having you help. If any parent has a special skill or ability that they would like to share with a class, especially if it fits in with our weekly themes, please step forward. Other ways to help out include being a member of our Parent Committee (see Parent Committee below) who meets on a quarterly basis to discuss challenges and opportunities at the Centre. You can also assist in fundraising events throughout the year for special projects for the betterment of the Centre. General parent meetings will also be held quarterly. We will strive to find a time that is most convenient that the majority of parents can attend.

### ***Parent Committee***

Our parent committee will consist of volunteers from parents, staff and the Director. The parent committee will meet quarterly at a time that we can find most convenient. The committee will be responsible for discussing upcoming events at the centre, parent and staff concerns, and organizing fundraising events. A Chairperson, other than the director will be chosen from among willing parents. We will strive to have at least one parent representative from each classroom. The centre is always in need of amenable volunteers. Anyone who can attend a meeting is encouraged to. We need and urge your help in planning trips, programs, public relations activities, recruitment of future students, and other activities.

### ***Health and Safety***

#### **Illness and Communicable Disease**

The health and safety of all the children is a matter of great concern for all of us. Included in the enrollment forms is a medical report that must be completed in full before admission to our program. We also require that certain standard immunizations be up to date. Your child will be sent home if any of the following symptoms of illness appear during the day: fever (temperature in excess of 100.4°F/38.0°C), diarrhea, vomiting, persistent cough, breathing difficulty, rash with fever. If this occurs, you will be called immediately and your child will be isolated as much as possible from the rest of the group until you arrive.

## **Absence Due to Illness**

Children who are sent home must be symptom free for 24 hours before they can return. Children should not be brought to the centre until they can participate fully in the daily program, including outdoor activities. Please, refer to the "Common Childhood Illnesses" chart in your child's classroom for the correct amount of time that your child should be kept at home. Also posted in your child's classroom is "Strategies for Prevention of Spreading Communicable Diseases." (Source: Guidelines for Communicable Disease Prevention and Control for Childcare programs and Family Home Daycare Agencies)

## **Accident/Incident Policy**

In case of accidental injury, every attempt should be made to contact you immediately. If the injury appears to be severe, we will contact an ambulance in conjunction with contact the Parent/Guardian. Until a parent or paramedics arrive, the Director will be responsible for the care of your child. The centre will maintain a parent's signed consent form agreeing to this provision. Finally, staff are required to complete an accident report for any accident which requires first-aid treatment by the staff. It will be signed by the staff member who administered, the Director, and by the parent or guardian and placed in the child's file.

## **Medication**

**Staff will not administer any medication that has not been prescribed by a doctor.**

Medication should come to the centre only in its original bottle with the prescription on it. If you are worried about leaving your medication at the centre, you can ask your pharmacist to split the medication into two allotments, just tell them one is for day care. A medication permission form will be required for each new prescription. All administered medication is noted in your child's file with the dosage, date and time.

## **Sun Safety**

Here at Grace Note we ask the parents to provide sunscreen for their children to be applied at a minimum twice daily depending upon the activities of the day. Sunscreen must be SPF 30 or above and we recommend sunscreen that is zinc based as it does not cause eye irritation. We avoid going outside during peak UV times to avoid sun exposure.

## **Emergency Evacuation and Fire Safety Procedures**

In the event of an emergency such as fire, flood, earthquake or any event resulting in damage to the daycare facility resulting in it not being a safe location for your child(ren), we will carry out our evacuation plan consisting of the following:

- The emergency will be immediately assessed to determine which exit will be used to evacuate the Centre and GYM facility.

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- The Director will notify staff to leave the premises in an orderly fashion. Once each room is evacuated, the Director will inspect each room and close the door to prevent re-entry.
- Staff will account for all of their children. In the event of a missing child, the staff will immediately report this to the Director. The Director will immediately call (911) and then the parents.
- The Director will then instruct the staff to move the children from the building to the designated area at Superstore (their common area upstairs).
- The Director and Staff will immediately call parents as soon as the children are safe to notify them of the incident and where the children are located.
- Parents will be called in order of youngest to oldest (Pink, Purple, Green, Yellow, Blue and school age room).
- Staff will remain with the children until they are all pick up by their parents or assigned guardian.

### ***Breastfeeding***

Grace Note welcomes all nursing mothers to breastfeed anywhere in the facility.

### ***Nutrition***

Grace Note uses Canada's "Kid" Food Guide to provide nutritious lunches and snacks for preschoolers. The Centre provides a nutritional lunch and snack which is estimated to provide 1/3 of the recommended daily nutritional intake for the children. Our menu is set up on a four week rotating cycle and is posted in each of the classrooms as well as the menu board located in the hallway. It has been approved by a public health nutritionist. The Centre's Cook has received her Nova Scotia Food Handling Training Certificate and the Centre is inspected by the Food Inspector on an ongoing basis.

Staff encourage children to respond to hunger and feelings of fullness. Children are not forced to finish food that has been served.

Staff create a relaxing and enjoyable meal environment for all snacks and meals. Children are transitioned from play to meal/snack time with stories, songs and games.

All foods purchased or donated to the Centre must be approved by the director and be in compliance with the standards set by Health Canada and the Department Of Community Services.

### ***Rest Time for Children***

The centre will have a designated rest time for the children between the hours of 1:00pm and 3:00pm on a daily basis. The rest times will vary in duration based on the child's age. Children who are non-nappers will brought together during nap time and provided with table top activities(such as books, puzzles, playdough)during this time.

### ***Behaviour Management***

In accordance with the centre's mission and goals, our behaviour management is intended to foster self-reliance, self-esteem and self-discipline and incorporates both prevention and intervention strategies.

This is facilitated by the staff through:

- valuing mistakes as learning experiences
- respecting and accepting the child
- redirecting children to other activities - when and where possible, explaining to the child the impact of their behavior both positive and negative
- increase distance within the class room between children who are exhibiting inappropriate behavior toward each other for a reasonable period of time
- setting consistent and clear limits for behavior

Methods of behavior management are sensitive to the needs of each child and the safety of all children in Grace Note. The following forms of discipline shall never be used:

1. Corporal Punishment, including but not limited to the following:
  - Striking a child directly or with any physical object
  - Shaking, shoving, spanking or other forms of aggressive physical contact
  - Requiring or forcing a child to repeat physical movements
2. Harsh, humiliating belittling or degrading responses of any form, including verbal, emotional or physical.
3. The confinement or isolation of a child or children.
4. Deprivation of a child's basic needs including food, shelter, clothing or bedding.

### ***Child Abuse Reporting Policy***

The Centre's teachers are responsible to report any suspected incidents of child abuse to child welfare agency. Teachers will be trained in Child Abuse Protocol.

### ***Child Progress Reports***

Progress Reports are completed twice a year to help the staff determine the developmental needs and capabilities of your child. This helps the staff to develop a well planned program. These evaluations are tools for the Teacher's use and not meant to be a "Report Card." For this reason they will remain in your child's file for their Teacher to refer to.

#### **Final Note**

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to provide care and nurturing to your child/children. We feel privileged to do so!