



*Our Children  
The Future*

# The Regional Municipality of Durham Social Services Department Child Care and Early Years Division

## Directly Operated Early Learning and Child Care Parent Handbook



If you require this information in an accessible format, please contact 1-800-387-0642.

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## Regional Early Learning and Child Care Centres (ELCC)

Welcome, and thank you for choosing a Regional Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) program for your child. With more than 50 years of experience in child care, we recognize that every child and family is unique. Our programs are thoughtfully designed to help each child thrive by fostering a strong sense of belonging, supporting well-being, encouraging self-expression, and promoting active engagement in learning and play.

Our child care centres are welcoming, positive environments for children and families. We provide high-quality programs that embrace and celebrate diversity and ensure inclusion for all children, regardless of race, age, ability, language, culture, ethnicity, or family structure. Educators work in partnership with families and community organizations to support each child's growth and development. All ELCCs follow a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) policy that sets clear expectations for educators, families, and children. This policy ensures that every child, family, and educator feels welcomed, valued, and supported, and that our programs reflect safe, respectful, and inclusive environments.

Our child care centres operate from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. (except for Sunderland ELCC which opens at 6:45 a.m.), including before and after-school programs during non-instructional school days. Before and after-school care is provided from 7 a.m. until the start of the school day and from the end of the school day until 6 p.m. During extended breaks such as winter holidays, March Break, and summer, most school-age programs are combined at one designated location. Programs are led by Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs). To verify an RECE certificate of registration, including any terms, conditions, or limitations, or to learn more about the College of Early Childhood Educators, please visit <https://www.college-ece.ca/>.

Our programs are part of Ontario's Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) system. As a CWELCC-enrolled provider, we continue to implement child care fee reductions under the national Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care plan. Current fees (base fees) are posted within the ELCC and online at <https://www.durham.ca/en/living-here/regional-early-learning-and-child-care-centres.aspx> and reflect the reductions already in place. Any future fee reductions will be applied automatically; no action is required from families.

### Wait List

Each centre maintains a wait list for child care spaces. Families can join by completing the online form on our website. There is no fee or deposit to be added.

Submission of the online form automatically generates a timestamp, which establishes their position on the wait list. The wait list will be maintained according to the timestamp generated at the time of form submission. Exceptions to standard placement order may be made for subsidized clients, children with special needs, siblings of currently enrolled children, on-site school staff, regional staff, and for proactive 'move-up' planning where appropriate. While on the list, families are asked to email the child care every three months to update their information and confirm that they still require the space. During the parents' contact, they can request information on their wait-list position, and they will be provided with their numerical placement. If there has been no contact from you after one year, your child will be removed from the wait list.

Further information about the wait list can be found [here](#).

### Regional Early Learning and Child Care Centres – Contact Information

The Region of Durham directly operates eight licensed child care and early learning centres serving children from six weeks to 12 years of age. At this time, programs offer full-time enrolment only.

Part-time care options are not available in order to prioritize the current community demand for full-time spaces. We do not offer drop-in services.

**Ajax ELCC** — 22 Centennial Rd., Ajax, ON L1S 3K4

Phone: 905-683-4001 | Email: [ajax\\_elcc@durham.ca](mailto:ajax_elcc@durham.ca) | Ages: Six weeks to five years.

**Clara Hughes ELCC** — 610 Taylor Ave., Oshawa, ON L1H 2E7

Phone: 905-404-8012 | Email: [clarahughes\\_elcc@durham.ca](mailto:clarahughes_elcc@durham.ca) | Ages: 12 months to 12 years.

**Edna Thomson ELCC** — 410 N. Scugog Ct., Bowmanville, ON L1C 6T1

Phone: 905-623-6717 | Email: [ednat\\_elcc@durham.ca](mailto:ednat_elcc@durham.ca) | Ages: 12 months to five years.

**Lakewoods ELCC** — 353 Chaleur Ave., Oshawa, ON L1J 1G5

Phone: 905-725-1425 | Email: [lakewoods\\_elcc@durham.ca](mailto:lakewoods_elcc@durham.ca) | Ages: Six weeks to four years.

**Lakewoods ELCC – Before & After School Program** — 323 Chaleur Ave., Oshawa, ON L1J 1G5

Phone: 905-725-1425 | Email: [lakewoods\\_elcc@durham.ca](mailto:lakewoods_elcc@durham.ca) | Ages: Four to 12 years.

**Pickering ELCC** — 1262 Radom St., Pickering, ON L1W 1J4

Phone: 905-839-5831 | Email: [pickering\\_elcc@durham.ca](mailto:pickering_elcc@durham.ca) | Ages: 12 months to five years.

**Sunderland ELCC** — 41 Albert St. S., Sunderland, ON L0C 1H0

Phone: 905-404-4792 or 705-328-7171 | Email: [sunderland\\_elcc@durham.ca](mailto:sunderland_elcc@durham.ca) | Ages: Two to 12 years.

**Village Union ELCC** — 155 Gibb St., Oshawa, ON L1J 1Y4

Phone: 289-928-6301 | Email: [villageunion\\_elcc@durham.ca](mailto:villageunion_elcc@durham.ca) | Ages: Four to 12 years.

**Whitby ELCC** — 501 Dunlop St. E., Whitby, ON L1N 1S8

Phone: 905-668-4751 | Email: [whitby\\_elcc@durham.ca](mailto:whitby_elcc@durham.ca) | Ages: 12 months to five years.

## Enrolling Your Child

To enroll your child, you will be required to complete a registration package, provide proof of age and submit an up-to-date immunization record before your child starts the program. Please share as much information as possible about your child to help us deliver the best care tailored to their needs. The supervisor will take you on a tour of the centre so that you and your child can meet the educators and become familiar with the environment. For safety, our child care centres remain locked during operating hours and you will be given an access code for entry. Please do not share this code with anyone except people who are authorized pick-up your child.

## Safe Arrival and Dismissal

Our centre follows the requirements of the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017 (CYFSA) for Safe Arrival and Dismissal.

### Safe Arrival Procedures

Families must inform the centre before program start time if their child will be absent. If a child does not arrive as expected and we have not received notice, staff will:

- Attempt to contact the parent/guardian.
- If unreachable, attempt to contact emergency contacts.

- Document all attempts.
- Escalate concerns to the supervisor as required.

### Dismissal Procedures

Children are released only to parents/guardians or authorized individuals with photo ID. If a child is not picked up as expected, staff will:

- Call the parent/guardian.
- Call emergency contacts.
- Continue attempts for up to one hour after closing.
- If still unable to reach anyone, contact the Children's Aid Society and follow their direction.

### Procedures for School Age

- Where a school-age child does not arrive at the child care centre as expected for before school care, no further action will be taken as the school will follow their Safe Arrival Policy for all absent children.
- On non-instructional days, the centre will follow the process above for when a child does not arrive at their expected time of arrival.
- Where a school-age child does not arrive as scheduled for after school care, DOC staff must contact the school to determine if the child was present at school.
  - If the child was absent from school, no further action will be taken.
  - If the child was present for school but has not arrived as scheduled for after school care, DOC staff must notify the supervisor or designate immediately and then arrange for someone to look for the child.
  - The parent/guardian must be notified if the child has not arrived as scheduled and has not been found within five minutes.

## Program Statement

At the Regional Municipality of Durham, we view every child as capable, competent, curious, and rich in potential. Together with families and educators, we create high-quality programs that build on each child's strengths. In our approach, we are all co-learners, growing, exploring, and discovering alongside the children. How Does Learning Happen? forms the basis of our programs.

## Foundations of Learning

Our programs support children's healthy growth and development through the four foundations:

- **Belonging** – Children feel connected, valued, and included.
- **Well-being** – Children develop a strong sense of self, health, and emotional well-being.
- **Engagement** – Children are active, curious learners who explore through play.
- **Expression** – Children communicate and express themselves in many ways.

## What Families Can Expect to See in Our Centres

### Health, Safety and Well-being

- Secure environments with sign-in/out procedures and visitor controls.
- Nutritious menus aligned with Canada's Food Guide, with water available throughout the day.
- Clean, well-maintained centres with daily and nightly cleaning routines.

- Balanced daily routines including active play, rest, and quiet activities.
- Strong compliance with Ministry of Education and Durham Region Health guidelines.
- No television, video games, or unsupervised computer use.

### Positive and Responsive Relationships

- Warm, welcoming enrolment processes and ongoing communication with families.
- Educators who interact at the children's level using calm, respectful language.
- Strong collaboration between families and educators to support each child's needs.
- Inclusive environments where every child feels they belong.

### Behaviour Guidance

- We use a positive, supportive approach that helps children understand and regulate their emotions.
- Educators focus on strengths, problem-solving, and social-emotional development.
- Prohibited practices, as outlined under the Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA), are never used (e.g., corporal punishment, humiliation, deprivation of basic needs).

### Play-Based Learning and Inquiry

- Children learn through play, exploration, and inquiry, supported by caring educators.
- Environments are thoughtfully prepared to encourage creativity, problem-solving, and curiosity.
- Experiences support the development of life skills such as cooperation, resilience, literacy, and numeracy.

### Child-Initiated and Educator-Supported Experiences

- Children have opportunities to lead their own play.
- Educators plan experiences based on observations and children's interests.
- Weekly program plans are posted and evolve as children's ideas grow.
- Minimal transitions allow for deeper engagement in learning.

### Supporting Individual Needs

- Programs offer a balance of indoor/outdoor play, active/quiet experiences, and rest.
- Cozy spaces are available for quiet play or rest.
- Individual support plans are developed when needed.
- Educators respect each child's pace, interests, and developmental goals.

### Supporting Individual Needs – Additional Supports

- Some children may benefit from additional supports to fully participate in the child care program. The Region of Durham works in partnership with community Special Needs Resourcing (SNR) agencies to support inclusive practices within our centres.
- SNR professionals collaborate with educators to support children's participation in the program and assist in the development and implementation of Individual Support Plans (ISPs) when required. These plans help ensure that each child's strengths, needs, and goals are supported in an inclusive environment.
- If individualized services or supports are recommended for your child, parent/guardian consent will always be obtained before services are initiated. Families are important partners

in this process and will be involved in planning and decision-making related to their child's support plan.

## Communication with Families

- Families are partners in their child's learning and development.
- Ongoing communication includes:
  - Daily information (infants/toddlers).
  - Learning documentation and portfolios.
  - Accident/incident reports when required.
  - Notices, newsletters, and centre updates.
  - Use of the Lillio app for real-time communication (families are required to register).
- Families are welcome to visit the centre during operating hours and are encouraged to share insights, culture, and experiences.

## Community Connections

- Children participate in planned community excursions.
- Centres collaborate with community partners to support children and families (with parental consent).
- Educators support families in connecting to community resources and services.

## Professional Learning and Quality Improvement

- Educators engage in continuous professional learning to reflect best practices.
- Required training includes First Aid/CPR, Health and Safety, and ongoing RECE professional learning.
- Teams reflect annually on the Program Statement to support continuous improvement.

## Documentation and Sharing Learning

- Educators document learning using photos, learning stories, portfolios, and observations.
- Documentation supports planning, family engagement, and understanding each child's development.
- Learning is made visible throughout the centre and shared with families.

Further information about our Program Statement can be found [here](#).

## Students and Volunteers

Early Childhood Educator (ECE) students and volunteers are a part of our centres and are required to obtain a Criminal Record Check if they are 18 years of age or older. Students and volunteers are not left alone with the children, but gain experience when educators share their skills and knowledge. You will be notified when students and volunteers are in the programs. Employees responsible for the supervision of children must be at least 18 years of age and act in accordance with our Policy and Procedures Manual.

**Important Note:** We also hire paid students during the summer months who are returning to studies in an ECE or related field. These paid students are considered staff members and may be left alone with children, as they meet all employment requirements and follow the same policies and procedures as other educators.

## **Duty to Report**

Under the Child and Family Services Act (CFSA), anyone in Ontario who believes a child has been, or may be, abused or is at risk must immediately contact the Children's Aid Society (CAS). Individuals who work with children carry an additional legal responsibility to report any suspicions of abuse without delay. All Regional staff are required to call the CAS if they suspect a child may be experiencing abuse; this is essential to protect the safety of every child. Staff follow CAS guidance regarding notifying families after a report is made. Our responsibility is to report suspicions, not to determine guilt; that is the responsibility of CAS (and, if required, the police).

## **Outdoor Play**

The Child Care and Early Years Act requires that children in a full-day program spend at least two hours outdoors daily, and children in a school-age program spend at least 30 minutes outdoors each day. Outdoor play, both planned and spontaneous, is an important part of children's learning and development. Please ensure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather. Children must be well enough to participate in outdoor programming to attend the child care centre.

On the admission form, we request written permission for your child to participate in neighbourhood outings. Additional permission forms will be provided for any special trips.

## **Daily Essentials: Clothing, Sun Safety, and Supplies**

To ensure your child is comfortable and safe throughout the day, please provide the following:

### Clothing

A spare set of clothing labeled with your child's name to be kept at the centre. Update seasonally and as your child grows. Non-skid, closed-toe shoes for indoor and outdoor play.

Winter clothing as appropriate:

- Hat that covers ears.
- Waterproof mittens or gloves.
- Warm, waterproof boots.
- Indoor shoes.
- Warm coat and snow pants.

Dress your child in comfortable play clothes. Smocks are provided for creative/sensory activities, but clothing may still get dirty.

### Sun Safety

All centres follow a Sun Safety policy. Parents must provide:

- A bottle of sunscreen labeled with your child's full name (kept at the centre).
- A wide-brimmed hat that protects the face, neck, and ears (baseball caps do not provide adequate coverage).
- Protective clothing such as lightweight long-sleeved shirts and pants.
- A refillable water bottle to remain at the centre.

Sunscreen will be applied as needed throughout the day. Parents must sign a permission form authorizing staff to apply sunscreen; consent is also documented on the admission form.

## Supplies

If your child uses diapers, please provide diapers, wipes, and any necessary creams. Parents must also supply infant formula as needed.

## **Rest Time**

Non-school-aged children have a daily rest period of up to two hours. During enrolment, parents will be asked about their child's sleep routine. Activities are available for children who do not sleep. Educators follow Public Health Agency of Canada guidelines when placing children under 12 months of age to sleep. In the infant and toddler programs, educators check all sleeping children every 30 minutes for signs of distress or unusual behaviour and record observations on a sleep tracking chart. Any significant changes in sleep patterns or behaviours will be shared with parents, and adjustments to supervision will be discussed as needed. Each child (18 months to five years) is provided with a cot and bedding for rest time.

## **Nutrition**

Children in full-day programs receive nutritious snacks and a balanced lunch. Menus and substitutions are posted at each centre. Please list all allergies, dietary, or religious needs on your admission form; we will provide alternatives whenever possible. Allergies are posted in classrooms, and if your child requires an EPI-PEN, you must supply one and an individual plan will be created.

To protect children with allergies, do not bring food from home. Nut products are strictly prohibited.

Children in before/after school programs (44 months and older) may bring food from home on non-instructional days only (e.g., PA days). No nut products are allowed.

## **Use of Scented Products**

To help keep our child care centres safe and welcoming for everyone, we ask that families, staff, and visitors avoid wearing or bringing in scented products. Some children and adults experience allergies or sensitivities to scents, and exposure can cause serious health concerns. Fragrances can be found in many products, such as colognes, perfumes, soaps, hair and skin products, cosmetics, laundry detergents, and cleaning supplies. For the well-being of all, we kindly ask that only scent-free or scent-reduced products be used when attending our centres.

We also recognize and respect that some cultural and spiritual practices involve the use of traditional medicines or ceremonies, which are exempt from this policy. If a strong scent causes a health concern, we may need to ask the individual to step out of the centre until the issue is resolved, and in rare cases, parents may be contacted to pick up their child.

We appreciate your cooperation and understanding in helping us provide a healthy and inclusive environment. Please share this reminder with anyone who may be dropping off or picking up your child.

## **Potassium Iodine Pills**

Four of the eight Regional child care centres are within 10 kilometres of a nuclear power plant. On the admission form, you are asked to provide permission for potassium iodine pills to be given to your child in the event of a nuclear emergency. During a nuclear emergency, the centre would follow directions from the Medical Officer of Health. Please speak with the supervisor if you would like more information.

### III Children

To protect the health and wellness of the children and educators, a basic health check will be completed to ensure your child is asymptomatic upon arrival. Your child's wellness will also be monitored throughout the day.

If your child is sick or has new symptoms, they must stay home until symptom-free for 24 hours (or 48 hours for nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea).

Please inform us of the reason for any absence, as we are required to record this.

If your child becomes ill while in care, we will call you or your emergency contact. Pick-up is expected within one hour. While waiting, your child will rest in a quiet space away from the group.

Please refer to this chart when considering when your child may return to child care after illness;

| Symptom  | Isolation Guideline*              |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Fever and/or chills greater than temperature of 38°C/100.4°F | 24 hours fever-free (unmedicated) |
| Cough or barking cough (croup)                               | Symptom improved for 24 hours     |
| Shortness of breath  | Symptom improved for 24 hours     |
| Decrease or loss of taste or smell                           | Symptom improved for 24 hours     |
| Sore throat or difficulty swallowing                         | Symptom improved for 24 hours     |
| Runny or stuffy nose/congested nose                          | Symptom improved for 24 hours     |
| Headache   | Symptom improved for 24 hours     |
| Extreme tiredness  | Symptom improved for 24 hours     |
| Muscle aches or joint pain                                   | Symptom improved for 24 hours     |
| Abdominal Pain   | Symptom improved for 24 hours     |
| Pink Eye   | Symptom improved for 24 hours     |
| Decreased or no appetite (young children only)               | Symptom improved for 24 hours     |
| Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea                                 | Symptom-free for 48 hours         |

\*Guidelines may change based on direction from [Public Health](#)

Ontario Ministry of Health states that a doctor's note may be required to ensure your child is healthy and able to return to the child care program. Please speak to your centre supervisor for more information regarding Public Health direction.

### Medication

Whenever possible, please administer your child's medication at home if it does not interfere with the treatment schedule. If your child requires prescription medication while in care, please follow these guidelines:

## **Prescription Medication**

- Complete an Administration of Medication Form.
- Provide the medication directly to a staff member in a clearly labeled prescription bottle for proper storage.
- Ensure prescription labels are accurate and placed on the actual medication (e.g., puffer, EpiPen, or bottle), not on the box. Staff must follow directions exactly as printed.

## **Non-Prescription Medication (for medical reasons)**

A doctor's note is required and must include:

- Child's name.
- Name of medication.
- Date of note.
- Dosage and frequency.
- Condition being treated.

**The doctor's note is valid for one year unless otherwise stated.**

## **Non-Prescription Items (e.g., diaper cream, soap, sunscreen, skin cream)**

Parents may provide signed permission for these items. Staff will supply a form for consent and any specific instructions. All products must be labeled with your child's full name.

## **Emergency Information**

All employees are trained in Standard First Aid/Infant CPR. If your child experiences a minor accident requiring first aid, a report will be completed with details for you to read, sign and keep. If your child requires medical attention, 911 will be called, and your child will be transported to a hospital. You will be notified immediately by phone.

Each centre follows an Emergency Management policy. In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation, you will be contacted by phone and asked to pick up your child from the designated emergency site. Educators will care for your child until you arrive. Families will be debriefed after the emergency.

When completing the admission form, please list individuals authorized to pick up your child in an emergency if you cannot be reached. Emergency contacts will only be called after attempts to reach you have been made. It is essential to keep all contact information up to date.

## **Serious Occurrences**

If a serious occurrence happens at the child care centre, a Notification Form will be posted. This form outlines the incident and includes both short and long-term actions to prevent similar situations. For privacy reasons, no identifying information is shared. A serious occurrence could include:

- Life-threatening injury or illness.
- Death of a child.
- Missing or temporarily unsupervised child.
- Abuse or Neglect (or allegation of).
- Unplanned disruption of service posing risk to children's health/safety.

## **Conflict Resolution, Issues or Concerns**

If you have any concerns about the centre, or the care your child is receiving, you can request a meeting with your child's educator. If your concern is not resolved, please request a meeting with the supervisor. The supervisor will work with you to find a solution. If you are unsatisfied with the outcome, or if your concern involves the supervisor, contact the program manager. If concerns remain, you may submit a formal written complaint to the Manager of Directly Operated Programs. All concerns will be acknowledged and followed up within 24 hours. If your concern is related to an allegation of abuse, please contact the Children's Aid Society at 905-433-1551.

Further information on conflict resolution, issues or concerns can be found in the [Parent Issues and Concerns Policy](#).

If your issues or concerns are still not satisfactorily addressed, you may reach out to the Ministry of Education to make a formal complaint at 1-877-510-5333.

## **Children's Code of Conduct**

Children are encouraged to treat other children, educators and adults with respect. Children are supported by educators to have good attitudes, including calming themselves, skills to work through disagreements, and the use of proper language. Verbal and physically unsafe issues are dealt with right away, recorded, and you are told what happened if your child was involved. If your child's behaviour is seen as a safety risk to themselves and/or others, you will be contacted and asked to pick up your child. Behaviour that is seen as a safety concern may result in changes to your child's program. For example, your child may not be allowed to go on a field trip. Field trip rules must be followed for the safety of everyone. In this case, the supervisor may ask to meet with you in order to talk about any concerns. Although it is rare to withdraw services from a family, this may happen if the supervisor feels there may be safety issues for the other children or staff. In such cases, a minimum of two weeks' notice would be provided.

## **Public Code of Conduct**

The Region of Durham is committed to providing excellent customer service by ensuring a respectful, equitable and harassment-free workplace and space for employees and customers. The Region has adopted a [Public Code of Conduct Policy](#) which outlines expectations for appropriate behaviour by all individuals when interacting with Regional Employees, Members of Regional Council, and other patrons and users of Regional facilities and services. All customers and employees of the Region of Durham are entitled to a respectful and harassment-free environment at all of our facilities and public spaces.

## **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA)**

The Region of Durham Early Learning and Child Care Centres are committed to fostering environments where diversity is respected, equity is actively pursued, inclusion is embedded in daily practice, and accessibility is prioritized for children, families, and educators. Our Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) Policy outlines clear expectations for respectful conduct, inclusive programming, equitable service delivery, and the prevention of discrimination and harassment. Families are required to review the full DEIA Policy [here](#).

## **Attendance**

At registration, you will be asked to confirm your child's regular attendance hours. This helps us ensure proper staffing in all programs.

At drop off in the morning, please bring your child to their room and make contact with their educator so they know your child has arrived. At pick up, go to your child's room and let the educator know that your child is leaving for the day.

If your child will be absent, please notify the centre by 8 a.m. by phone, through the Lillio App or via email and provide the reason for their absence.

## **Late Pick-Up**

Children must be picked up by 6:00 p.m. If you anticipate being late, please arrange for an authorized person (listed on file) to pick up your child and call the centre to provide their name. This person must provide photo identification before your child is released.

Regular late pick-ups, absenteeism, or failure to comply with the agreed hours of care may result in withdrawal from the program. Families will receive two weeks' notice if care is to be withdrawn.

## **Release of Children**

Anyone picking up your child from child care should be 18 years of age or older.

Please provide the centre with the names and phone numbers of two emergency contacts who can pick up your child if we cannot reach you. Children will only be released to these individuals after photo identification is provided.

If you are separated or divorced, the centre requires a copy of your legal custody papers clearly stating custodial rights. Access cannot be denied to either parent unless specified in a court order. The centre will share information such as accident reports, portfolios, development, goals or attendance with both parents unless a court order states otherwise. Personal information about you or the other parent will not be shared.

## **Fee Payments**

Use the link provided below to view base fees for all regional child care centres. At this time, the region does not charge non-base fees. Fee schedules are also posted in each child care centre. Fees must be paid in advance (weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly) by cheque, cash, or e-transfer to [childcarepayments@durham.ca](mailto:childcarepayments@durham.ca). Please include the name of your Child Care Centre and your child's first and last name in the e-transfer.

[View Regional child care fee chart.](#)

A non-sufficient fund (NSF) fee (non-base fee) of \$48 is charged for returned cheques. Receipts are issued immediately for all cash payments. Monthly invoices from the Region of Durham's Finance Department are emailed to families.

You may also pay your fee directly to the Finance Department via mail or in person at:

The Regional Municipality of Durham  
Finance Department, 4<sup>th</sup> floor  
605 Rossland Road, East, PO Box 623  
Whitby, ON L1H 8B6  
905-668-7711

**Please note:** Accounts overdue by 30 days may result in termination of child care services. Outstanding balances will be sent to collections.

- Tax receipts are issued yearly, directly to families, by the Finance Department.
- You will be given 60 days' notice of any fee increases.
- Families are encouraged to speak with their supervisor to arrange payment options or discuss special circumstances.

Circumstances in which refunds or credits will or will not be provided (for example, refunds of pre-paid fees) will only be provided in the following circumstances:

- **Advance Payment with Notice of Withdrawal:** Clients who have paid in advance will receive a refund for any fees paid beyond the child's last day of attendance, provided they give at least one week's notice of withdrawal.
- **Child Care Fee Subsidy Adjustments:** If a client has begun receiving the child care fee subsidy and is retroactively paying the amount, adjustments will be made accordingly.
- **Billing Errors:** If a parent has been charged an incorrect amount due to our billing error, a refund or credit will be provided to correct the mistake.
- **Emergency Closures:** Families will be charged for up to two days of emergency closure (e.g., school closures, power outages). If the closure extends beyond two days, families will not be charged and will receive a refund for any prepaid days.

Contact the centre supervisor for refund inquiries.

## Child Care Fee Subsidy

Child care Fee Subsidy helps with the cost of child care. Anyone can apply for child care Fee Subsidy.

For more information about the child care Fee Subsidy, or to apply, please visit: [durham.ca/childrensservices](http://durham.ca/childrensservices).

You can also contact us at: The Regional Municipality of Durham  
 Social Services Department  
 Child Care and Early Years Division  
 605 Rossland Road. East  
 Whitby, ON L1N 6A3  
 Telephone: 905-668-6238 or 1-800-387-0642

## Designated Holidays

The Regional Early Learning and Child Care Centres are closed on the following statutory holidays:

|                |               |             |              |
|----------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|
| New Year's Day | Family Day    | Good Friday | Victoria Day |
| Canada Day     | Civic Holiday | Labour Day  | Thanksgiving |
| Christmas Day  | Boxing Day    |             | Monday       |

Your regular child care fee includes the above holidays. Any other days the centre is closed including Easter Monday, Christmas Eve, and New Year's Eve, are free of charge. Due to low attendance during the holiday season, the centres may close from Christmas Eve to New Year's Day. Parents will be surveyed about their care needs between Christmas Eve and New Year's Day, prior to closing.

## **Absent, Sick and Vacation Days (for non-subsidized clients)**

Families are required to pay the full cost of care for absent, sick and vacation days. Fees are charged based on the care that was expected to be given. For example, if your child was to be in care for a full day you will be charged for a full day.

## **Absent, Sick and Vacation Days (for subsidized clients)**

Families are allowed a fixed number of absentee days during the first year, based on the month you enrolled their child (see the chart below); with a maximum of 36 days per child, per year for subsequent years. These days include absent, sick or vacation days. You are required to pay your regular fee rate for absent, sick and vacation days, and statutory holidays.

If you exceed the allotted number of absentee days, you will be charged the full daily rate for each additional day.

| <b>Month of enrollment</b> | <b>Absentee allotment entitlement</b> | <b>Month of enrollment</b> | <b>Absentee allotment entitlement</b> |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| January                    | 36 days                               | July                       | 18 days                               |
| February                   | 33 days                               | August                     | 15 days                               |
| March                      | 30 days                               | September                  | 12 days                               |
| April                      | 27 days                               | October                    | 9 days                                |
| May                        | 24 days                               | November                   | 6 days                                |
| June                       | 21 days                               | December                   | 3 days                                |

## **Withdrawal**

A minimum of one week's written notice is required to withdraw your child from a child care program. If notice is not provided, you will be responsible for paying up to five days' fees.

## **Gift Giving**

While gift-giving is a very kind and appreciated gesture, child care staff (managers, educators, volunteers, etc.) are unable to accept gifts. This includes but is not limited to any type of gift, gratuity, entertainment, service, discount, or any other favour. All client gifts will be auctioned and the proceeds donated to the Corporate United Way program.

## **Closing Statement**

Thank you for taking the time to review our Parent Handbook. At the Region of Durham Early Learning and Child Care Centres, we are committed to providing high-quality, inclusive, and engaging programs where every child feels valued, supported, and inspired to learn. We recognize that families are our partners, and your involvement, feedback, and collaboration help us create the best possible experiences for your children.

We look forward to supporting your child's growth, curiosity, and development, and to building strong, positive relationships with your family. Should you have any questions or need further information, please do not hesitate to reach out to your centre supervisor. Together, we can ensure a safe, welcoming, and nurturing environment where every child can thrive.

Notice of any updates to the Parent Handbook or any relevant policies will be shared with families through our Lillio app.