

Code of Conduct

St. Andrews Child Care Inc./Rivercrest Early Learning & Child Care strives to provide a safe, caring learning environment for staff, children and families. This code of conduct sets out the expectations for respectful behaviours within our centre and is meant to assist in maintaining a safe, caring learning environment for all who participate in our program.

Our Mission Statement

To provide quality early childhood education and care; inclusive to all children, in a nurturing, family-centred, community-based environment where current strategies for child development are practiced.

Guiding Principles for Appropriate Behaviour

We follow these guiding principles:

Be Responsible

We are responsible for our actions and words. We treat others as we want to be treated. When we make a mistake, we make amends rather than excuses.

Be Respectful

We are respectful of ourselves and other people. We are respectful of the ideas and feelings of others. We are respectful of the environment, equipment and materials.

Be Safe

We work and play safely to help keep ourselves and others from getting hurt.

Be Supportive of Learning

We learn to the best of our abilities and support the learning of others.

In order to achieve the above, it is imperative that each and every individual who is associated with our centre abides by this Code of Conduct and conducts him/herself in a respectful manner.

The following people are expected to behave in a respectful manner and comply with this code of conduct:

- licensees,
- managers,
- all employees,
- children,
- parents, guardians, caregivers, and family members of children enrolled in our centre.

It also includes members of the Board of Directors and anyone else involved with our centre. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Therapists, professionals/para-professionals
- Practicum students
- Contractors/maintenance service providers
- School personnel
- Licensing coordinators and inspectors
- Couriers / Delivery drivers

Proactive Strategies

The Centre Employees will actively strive to create and maintain an environment that supports the health, safety and well-being of everyone associated with our centre by employing pro-active strategies and appropriate policies and procedures. This includes:

- Developing positive relationships, including making time to talk and listen
- Establishing clear, consistent, simple limits and stating limits in a positive way
- Providing explanations for limits, rules, procedures and policies
- Role-modeling and encouraging appropriate behaviour
- Working together in partnership to solve problems
- Having realistic and developmentally appropriate expectations for behaviour
- Ensuring our environment, our program and all materials used in our program meet the needs and interests of children and others associated with our program, and that they encourage appropriate behaviour and reduce the potential for inappropriate behaviour
- Establishing consistent, yet flexible schedules and routines that help children gain trust, security and self control

Developmental Capabilities of Children

We recognize the varying developmental capabilities of children and understand that it is normal for children to display inappropriate behaviour at times for a variety of reasons. The developmental capabilities of each child will always be considered when determining both expectations for appropriate behaviour and consequences for inappropriate behaviour.

Appropriate Use of Technology

All children, parents, staff and all others involved in our centre must use e-mail, electronic devices and the Internet according to our policies. This protects people's privacy and the confidentiality of information.

Use of Email, Electronic Devices and the Internet

This policy is meant to ensure that people's privacy and the confidentiality of information about the Centre, children, parents/guardians/caregivers and staff is upheld. Everyone involved with the Centre must adhere to this policy. Failure to do so can result in consequences and disciplinary action.

Staff may use the internet when appropriate to access information needed to conduct Centre business and are responsible for using the Internet in a manner that is ethical and lawful. E-mail is to be used for business purposes only. Staff, children and all others using the Centre's computers and electronic devices must respect and protect the privacy of others and must respect and protect the integrity of all electronic resources. All intellectual property (ideas, creations and copyrights) of others must be respected and protected. All communication must be in a respectful manner and the use, or discovery of the use of any threatening or inappropriate material, must be reported.

Inappropriate use includes, but is not limited to:

- Intentionally accessing, transmitting, copying or creating material that violates the confidentiality of children, parents/guardians/caregivers, staff, or the Centre itself
- Intentionally accessing, transmitting copying or creating material that violates the Centre's Code of Conduct which includes messages that are pornographic, threatening, rude, harassing, bullying, or discriminating
- Intentionally accessing, transmitting, copying or creating material that is illegal, such as obscenity, stolen material or illegal copies of copyrighted works
- Using the Centre's technological resources for personal use without permission or for personal gain.

Staff may not use personal cell phones and other personal electronic devices when they are caring for and supervising children. Anyone who may need to contact a staff person during the staff person's regularly scheduled working hours must contact the Centre's direct line. Personal cell phones must remain in staff lockers when working with the children.

If, for safety purposes, it is necessary for staff to take a personal cell phone during the course of outings with children, it must be used only for emergency contact with the Centre or the children's parents/guardian/caregivers.

Information about staff, children, parents/guardians/caregivers and the Centre (including photos or videos) must not be posted on a staff person's personal web space, any social networking site (e.g. blogs, Facebook, Myspace, Twitter), any public networking or file sharing site (e.g. Photobucket, Flickr, YouTube) or any other type of internet website.

Staff must not accept children (children/students under the age of 18) as "friends" or "buddies" when using social networking sites such as Facebook or MSN.

Authorized employees of the facility have the right to monitor the use of information technology resources and to examine, use and disclose any data found. They may use this information in disciplinary actions, and release to the police if it is criminal in nature.

Unacceptable Behaviours

The following behaviours by children, staff, parents and all others involved in our centre are unacceptable and will not be tolerated:

- All forms of bullying (physical, verbal, emotional, social or cyber-bullying including comments, actions or visual displays that are intentional, hurtful and repetitive. (examples of inappropriate conduct is *hitting, pushing, name-calling, mocking, excluding someone, spreading rumours or gossip either in person or by using social networking internet sites*)
- Harassment, including behaviour that degrades, demeans, humiliates or embarrasses someone that a reasonable person would know is unwelcome (examples of inappropriate conduct is *name-calling, offensive jokes, yelling, etc.*)
- All forms of abuse (sexual, physical, or psychological) including verbally, in writing or otherwise
- Discrimination against any person or group because of their race, colour, ancestry, nationality, place of origin, ethnic background, religion, age, sex, gender-determined characteristics, sexual orientation, marital or family status, source of income, political belief, and physical or mental disability
- Actions that put another person at risk of harm including violent physical acts (with or without a weapon) and threatening someone
- The inappropriate use of technology, including e-mail, the internet and other technology, in keeping with the centre's policy on the use of technology.

Consequences for Inappropriate Behaviour

Individuals found breaching the Code of Conduct or for displaying any form of inappropriate behaviour as outlined in this Code of Conduct will be subject to disciplinary action. The disciplinary action and resulting consequences will depend on the severity, the nature, the circumstances, and the frequency surrounding the inappropriate behaviour. The centre recognizes the importance of ensuring any consequences are pre-planned, fair, consistent and, in the case of children, based on the level of a child's development. We also recognize that consequences should be an opportunity to learn, not only one of discipline. In keeping with this, we will ensure, whenever practicable, that any resulting consequences are based on discussion and a cooperative approach and that they provide opportunities for the person to change his/her behaviour.

We will consistently respond to inappropriate behaviour by children, parents, staff and all others involved in our centre by:

- reminding people of expectations, limits, rules, policies and procedures
- using a respectful approach to explain why a behaviour is inappropriate and what behaviour is expected
- talking only about the behaviour, not labelling the person
- responding sympathetically and acknowledging feelings
- establishing natural, logical consequences

Depending on the severity and frequency of the behaviour, we will consider further steps such as:

- using behavioural analysis to learn what may be contributing to a child's inappropriate behaviour and how to help reduce or eliminate the behaviour
- having a formal or informal meeting to discuss concerns and to develop an action plan to encourage appropriate behaviour in the future
- developing a written contract with an adult or older child that outlines specific expectations and consequences
- giving a written warning that outlines specific concerns and consequences if the behaviour continues
- accessing outside resources for help, such as:
 - a behaviour specialist or other professionals to help staff understand and reduce a child's inappropriate behaviour
 - child and family services to access parenting supports
 - mediation services to resolve conflicts between adults
 - the Manitoba Human Rights Commission for information and advice to resolve an issue informally or to make a formal complaint if the behaviour involves discrimination or harassment
 - the police to assist with threatening behaviour

In extreme cases, we will take additional steps such as:

- suspending or dismissing a staff member
- suspending or withdrawing child care services because of a child's or family member's inappropriate behaviour
- in the case of a visitor not allowing the person to return to the centre
- contacting the police and/or child and family services (CFS), if the behaviour is illegal such as abuse, assault or threatening another person
-