

CHAPTER FOUR: PROGRAMMING

Policy: INCLUSION POLICY

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| Approved Date: Dec 1/23 Revision Date: Revision Date: | Policy Number: 04 25 Reviewed/Approved: Karen Eilersen RECE Signature: |
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Discovery Child Care is committed to fostering an inclusive environment as best as possible where all children, regardless of abilities or differences, have the opportunity to participate and thrive. Our inclusion policy is designed to ensure that educators, families, and the public are aware of the systems used to support inclusion. This policy is designed to ensure children are fully integrated into our program and receive the support and accommodations as best as possible to enhance their overall experience. (Please see policy 04 20 Accommodating Children with Disabilities)

Discovery Child Care is committed to complying with all relevant laws and regulations, including the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014. We recognize that each child is unique, and we are committed to developing individualized support plans for children with special needs in collaboration with their families. (Please see Policy 04 08 Individual Support Plans) These plans will outline specific accommodations, modifications, and support strategies tailored to the child's needs, ensuring their full participation in all activities. Discovery Child Care is committed to continuous improvement in our inclusive practices. We will regularly review and update our policies and procedures to better meet the evolving needs of the children in our program.

Discovery Child Care believes that each child has the right to experience a supportive and enriching child care environment. Through our commitment to inclusion, we aim to create a space where every child can learn, play, and grow together.

Definition of Inclusion:

Inclusion is the active engagement of all children, including those with special needs, in a safe, nurturing, and stimulating child care environment. Our program embraces diversity and values each child's unique qualities, recognizing that every child has the right to feel included, respected, and valued.

Definitions of Behaviours that may Require an ISP (Individual Support Plan):

Ask per Policy 04 08 Individual Support Plans

- Refusing to comply with the routines of the day and needing prolonged 1:1 care (more than 15 minutes)
- Extreme aggressive behaviour that requires the child to be separated from the group due to safety concerns
- Material or environmental destruction
- Aggressive behaviour or dangerous behaviour that impacts the safety and mental well-being of themselves, other children, or educators,
- Flight risk behaviour (climbing fences, leaving the classroom, opening doors etc.)
- Refusing to wear appropriate outdoor clothing or undressing while outside.

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Definition of Instances Where a Child May Require an Individualized Medical Plan:

Ask to see a copy of policy 11 20 Individualized Plans for Children with Medical Needs.

- Emergency medication is required to be administered at the centre
- Seizures
- Feeding tubes
- Accommodations required due to physical limitations
- Or other as deemed necessary

There may be instances where a child's medical needs cannot be safely met in our setting due to staff scope of practice or CCEYA ratios. This will be determined at the intake meeting or as needed after enrollment.

Overview of Inclusion Protocol for Families, Educators, and Management

Below is an overview of the protocol followed by all families, educators, and management to ensure we are actively working to provide an environment that supports inclusion as best as possible within our regulated ratios and funding parameters.

What to expect:

Before Registration:

1. Tour of Discovery with child and family with intake application.
2. The family to complete the ERIK screening tool in consultation with the Pedagogical Leader or Director
3. The family must provide transparent information regarding the child's development and a thorough review of the child's previous care experience.
4. A stay-and-play will be offered to the family if based on the above intake process, the pedagogical leader/supervisor deems it necessary to observe the child in our setting to ensure Discovery can meet the child's needs.

Within 2 weeks of Attendance:

1. Staff will complete an ERIK and provide this to the Pedagogical Leader or Director.
2. Any concerns must be communicated from the educators to the pedagogical leader or director. In the event it is determined necessary, a behaviour tracker will be used by the educators to provide objective, concrete behaviour data that is documented daily. Families must be informed by the pedagogical leader or director that a behaviour tracker is being used and this information will be provided to the family via email at the end of each week, with a copy placed in the child's file.
3. Should an Individual support plan (ISP) be necessary, the family is to work collaboratively with the educators, and pedagogical leader to complete and implement all necessary individualized strategies.

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Throughout enrollment:

1. Educators will engage in daily conversations about your child's development and participation in the program. In the event there is a concern that may require intervention or an ISP, the Pedagogical Leader will follow up with the parent/guardian via email outlining the concerns and required next steps. It is the responsibility of the classroom educators to bring the concerns to the attention of the Pedagogical Leader immediately.
2. ERIKS will be completed by classroom educators at all age milestones or if it is determined if a referral is required. These will be kept in the child's file.
3. Should any persistent concerns arise, educators will begin tracking this behaviour immediately and this will be documented as per the "Behaviour Tracker" and will be shared with families and kept in the child's file. After 1 week of tracking this behaviour, a family meeting will be required to determine strategies and next steps.
4. At any time, it may be determined that an Individualized Support Plan (ISP) may be required. The educators, family, and pedagogical leader will complete the ISP and will be reviewed at one month weeks and six months of implementation or as needed. The educators, pedagogical leader, and family will work together to find a plan to decrease the intensity, severity, or frequency of behaviour. If the child is unresponsive to these strategies to achieve these goals, discontinuation of care may be required as outlined below. This would be considered when there are no clear solutions from the Discovery team and other early learning professionals such as Resource Consultants, Occupational Therapists etc.
5. If there are any wait times for public services, it may be required that a family seek out private services for professional support. If this is not possible, discontinuation of care may be the only option.
6. Upon completion of the referral, the team at Discovery will work collaboratively with all early learning professionals to find solutions to individual concerns. If the early learning professionals have exhausted all options and there is no decrease in frequency or intensity of behaviour; discontinuation of care may be the only option. Management will inform the family of this decision as soon as it is determined as the only option forward.

Discontinuation of Care

The Procedures for Terminating a Child's Enrollment are as follows:

We realize that occurrences and disputes will occur among children and it is not our intent to exclude children as a result of normal developmental incidents that assist them in acquiring problem-solving skills. However, as individual needs vary in terms of environment and program, some children may not benefit from the program offered in this centre. We will make every effort to meet the needs of your child, which may require the assistance of an outside agency,

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the development of an ISP or other strategies. If the behaviours still occur and it is still deemed that we are unable to meet the needs of you or your child, then services will be withdrawn, with approval from the Director of Child Care, giving 2 weeks written via email notice (10 business days).

In extreme cases (as determined by the Supervisor with approval from the Director of Child Care) of violent or threatening behaviour by either a child or a parent/guardian where the safety of other children and/or Discovery Child Care staff are at risk, then immediate withdrawal will result, with no notice.

Given that Discovery Child Care Centre is a group care model, inclusion must be considered within the regulated ratios, funding parameters, and pre-existing dynamics of the group. A child's individual needs must be able to be accommodated within our regulated ratios and funding parameters and not require 1:1 teacher-child ratio to be successful in the program. Our regulated ratios are:

Toddler 1:5 Preschool 1:8 Kindergarten 1:13

Below are the situations where discontinuation of services may be the only option. Discovery Child Care has the right to discontinue services immediately at any point based on the professional judgement of the Director of Child Care, for any of the instances outlined below, or for other extenuating unforeseen circumstances.

- If the family is unwilling to work collaboratively with the child care centre to support the individual needs of the child. This includes but is not limited to:
 - refusal to complete an ERIK,
 - refusal to complete an ISP,
 - providing dishonest information about a child's previous care experiences,
 - refusal to work collaboratively with other early learning professionals such as a Resource Consultant, Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language pathologist, etc.
- The child is refusing to comply with the routines of the day and needs prolonged 1:1 care (more than 15 minutes)
- Extreme aggressive behaviour that requires the child to be separated from the group due to safety concerns (throwing furniture, physical violence, attempts to break windows etc.)
- Material or environmental destruction
- Aggressive behaviour or dangerous behaviour that impacts the safety and mental well-being of themselves, other children, or educators,
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- The child's needs cannot be met within the scope of practice of the classroom teachers and/or classroom ratios.
- All options for individual support have been exhausted by the team at Discovery Child Care Centre and there has been no decrease in the number, intensity, or frequency of aggressive or dangerous incidents.