



Parent Handbook

Our Locations		
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Welcome To Pluto!

Introduction

Welcome to Pluto Day Care! We are honoured that you have chosen us to be part of your child's early learning journey. As a multi-site licensed child care provider, we offer high-quality early learning programs for children from birth to 6 years of age.

We proudly operate three licensed child care centres in the Kitchener-Waterloo area:

Activa:	Licensed Capacity: 75 children	Location: 192 Activa Avenue, Kitchener, ON, N2E 4K5
Weber St:	Licensed Capacity: 80 children	Location: 1418 Weber Street East, Kitchener, ON, N2A 1C4
King Street:	Licensed Capacity: 121 children	Location: 435 King St North, Unit 3, Waterloo, ON, N2J 2Z5

Each centre is led by a Centre Supervisor, supported by an Assistant Supervisor. Our teaching teams include Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) and other qualified early childhood professionals who work collaboratively to provide high-quality care and education. Supervisors are not assigned to a specific classroom and are therefore considered supernumerary staff.

This handbook has been designed to help families understand our programs, policies, and procedures, and to answer many of the common questions about Pluto Day Care.

All locations are open Monday to Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Please note that Pluto Day Care is closed on statutory and civic holidays, Regional Professional Development Days, during emergency closures when necessary, and for approximately one week during the Christmas holiday season. Families will receive advance notice of all scheduled closures.

Our Story

Pluto Day Care has proudly served families in the Kitchener-Waterloo community since 1981. Since 2004, Pluto has been owned and operated by Nicky and Steve Wedge, who brought with them several years of experience owning and operating child care centres in England.

Nicky is a fully qualified NNEB Nursery Nurse (the United Kingdom equivalent of a Registered Early Childhood Educator in Canada) and has worked in the child care field since 1988, bringing extensive experience from both the public and private sectors. Together, Nicky and Steve are committed to providing high-quality early learning experiences in safe, nurturing, and welcoming environments where children can grow, learn, and thrive.

Today, Pluto provides high-quality early learning and child care for families throughout Kitchener-Waterloo through full-time programs for children from birth to 6 years of age. Guided by Ontario's *How Does Learning Happen?* framework, our child-led, play-based programs foster curiosity, creativity, early literacy, numeracy, independence, and a lifelong love of learning. As a participant in the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) system, we are proud to make high-quality child care more accessible and affordable for families.

As a locally owned and family-operated organization, we believe strong relationships are at the heart of exceptional child care. Nicky and Steve have been married for over 35 years and have two daughters, Lucy and Rebecca. As they have gradually taken significant steps toward retirement, Rebecca has assumed the role of General Manager and now leads the day-to-day operations of Pluto Day Care. While Nicky and Steve remain actively involved as owners, Rebecca continues Pluto's long-standing commitment to providing exceptional care, supporting families, and maintaining the high standards that have guided the organization for more than four decades.

For over four decades, Pluto Day Care has remained committed to providing children with exceptional early learning experiences and families with trusted, high-quality child care.

*Pluto Day Care is owned and operated by **706785 Ontario Inc.**, the licensed operator of all Pluto Day Care locations.*

Our Educational Philosophy

Every child deserves the opportunity to learn in an environment that is safe, engaging, inclusive, and responsive to their individual strengths and interests. Our educational philosophy is guided by Ontario's *How Does Learning Happen?* framework and reflects our commitment to fostering meaningful relationships, responsive programming, and a lifelong love of learning.

Program Statement

At Pluto Day Care, we are committed to providing a safe, caring, and stimulating environment where children can grow, learn, and thrive.

Our programs are built around four interconnected foundations that support every aspect of a child's growth and development. These foundations recognize that children learn best through play, exploration, meaningful relationships, and responsive environments.

Aims and Objectives

- We enrich and support the health, safety, nutrition, and well-being of the children
- We value meaningful, respectful, and responsive interactions between staff, children and families
- We encourage positive relationships and help children develop strong communication and social skills through respectful interactions.
- We nurture children's natural interests of play, inquiry and exploration
- We support children's emerging interests and help bring them to life through meaningful learning experiences.
- We provide purposeful and meaningful learning environments that support each child's growth and development.
- We are mindful of the individual needs of each child, including opportunities for active play, quiet time, rest, and both indoor and outdoor learning throughout the day.
- We actively engage with parents in their child's development and evaluation of the program
- We collaborate with community partners, where authorized, to provide additional support for children, families, and educators.
- We support our educators through ongoing professional learning and continuous growth.
- We foster genuine, authentic, secure, and respectful relationships through open communication and an open-door policy.

The Four Foundations of Learning

Pluto Day Care's programs are guided by Ontario's *How Does Learning Happen?* framework, which recognizes that children learn best through play, exploration, meaningful relationships, and responsive environments. The framework is built around four interconnected foundations that support every aspect of a child's growth and development.

Belonging

Children thrive when they feel safe, accepted, and connected. We foster positive relationships with children, families, and educators to create a strong sense of community and belonging.

Well-Being

Children develop best when they are healthy, confident, and supported. We promote physical health, emotional well-being, self-regulation, resilience, and independence through caring relationships and engaging daily experiences.

Engagement

Children are naturally curious and learn best through active exploration. We create rich, play-based learning environments that encourage children to investigate, problem-solve, ask questions, and discover the world around them.

Expression

Every child communicates and expresses themselves in unique ways. We encourage children to share their ideas, thoughts, creativity, and emotions through conversation, art, music, dramatic play, movement, and other meaningful experiences.

Responsive Planning

Our educators continuously observe, document, and reflect on children's learning to plan meaningful experiences that respond to each child's strengths, interests, developmental needs, and emerging curiosities. Through ongoing observation and thoughtful planning, we create engaging opportunities that support every child's individual growth and development.

Principles of Early Childhood Education

At Pluto Day Care, we believe that every child is competent, capable, curious, and rich in potential.

At Pluto Day Care, we also believe:

- Every child is a unique individual.
- All children have skills and abilities that need to be brought out and built upon.
- What they can do (not what they cannot do) should be the starting point in their education.
- Children have the right to develop physically, socially, emotionally, and intellectually.
- All children pass through the same developmental processes, even if not at the same pace.
- Children learn through firsthand experience, using their five senses to develop an understanding of the world.
- Learning is holistic for young children and does not come under subject headings.
- Children need opportunity and space to explore their environment.

Play is central to children's learning. Through play, exploration, and meaningful relationships, children develop the confidence, knowledge, and skills needed to understand the world around them.

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee, the Anishinaabe, and the Neutral peoples. This land is steeped in rich history, having been a site of meeting and exchange for Indigenous nations for thousands of years.

We recognize the enduring presence and contributions of Indigenous peoples in the Region of Waterloo and across Turtle Island. We are grateful for the opportunity to live, work, and learn on this land, and we commit to working in solidarity with Indigenous communities to respect their rights, history, and cultures.

We also acknowledge the painful history of colonization and its continued impact on Indigenous peoples. We strive to foster understanding, healing, and reconciliation through respectful relationships, dialogue, and actions that honour Indigenous sovereignty and cultural traditions.

We invite everyone to reflect on their relationship with the land and consider how we can all contribute to a future of justice, equity, and respect for Indigenous communities.

Your Child's Experience

Every child deserves to feel safe, supported, and excited to learn each day. The following information outlines what families can expect as part of their child's experience at Pluto Day Care.

Our Learning Environments

At Pluto Day Care, we strive to provide safe, welcoming, and engaging environments where children feel comfortable exploring, learning, and growing. Our classrooms are thoughtfully designed to provide safe, engaging, and developmentally appropriate learning environments for every age group. Children are grouped by age to ensure they receive programming, materials, and experiences that are appropriate for their developmental needs.

Our outdoor learning environments are designed to encourage active play, exploration, and discovery. Children enjoy spacious playgrounds featuring grassy areas, hard-surfaced play spaces, ride-on toys, tricycles, wagons, climbing equipment, and open areas for group games and physical activity. Outdoor play is an important part of our daily program and supports children's physical, social, and emotional development.

All of our centres also offer convenient on-site parking to help make drop-off and pick-up as safe and efficient as possible.

Daily Program & Activities

Our daily program offers a variety of engaging, play-based experiences that support children's social, emotional, cognitive, language, and physical development. Each classroom plans activities based on the children's age, developmental stage, interests, and individual needs. Children enjoy both indoor and outdoor learning experiences each day, weather permitting, in accordance with the *Child Care and Early Years Act* and our outdoor play policy. Through meaningful play, exploration, and discovery, we foster curiosity, creativity, confidence, and a lifelong love of learning.

While daily routines vary to meet the developmental needs of each age group, every classroom provides a consistent balance of active play, learning experiences, meals, rest or quiet time, outdoor play, and opportunities for individual and group exploration.

Families receive regular updates about their child's experiences through weekly centre emails, classroom documentation, Daily Learning Experience displays, and daily communication with educators. Infant families receive detailed information about feeding, diapering, sleep, and daily routines. Toddler and Preschool families can view daily meal and sleep information, classroom learning documentation, and Daily Learning Experience pages posted within each classroom. Educators are always happy to discuss your child's day at drop-off or pick-up and answer any questions you may have.

Settling In

Starting child care is an exciting milestone, and we understand that every child adjusts at their own pace. Our educators work closely with families to help make the transition to Pluto Day Care as smooth and positive as possible.

During your child's first days and weeks, our educators focus on building trusting relationships, learning about your child's routines, interests, and comfort strategies, and providing the support they need to feel safe and confident.

We encourage parents/guardians to share any information that will help support their child's transition, and we value open communication throughout this process. Parents/guardians are always welcome to speak with their child's educator or the Centre Supervisor if they have questions or would like an update.

Trial Period

The first four (4) weeks of enrollment are considered a trial period. During this time, our educators will work closely with the child and family to support a positive transition and determine whether Pluto Day Care can safely and appropriately meet the child's needs within the group care environment.

If concerns arise, we will communicate with the family and, where appropriate, discuss strategies or supports that may assist with the child's transition. Pluto Day Care reserves the right to discontinue care during the trial period if the placement is determined to be unsuitable or if the Centre cannot reasonably meet the child's needs while maintaining the safety and well-being of the child, other children, and staff.

Parent Partnership and Communication

At Pluto Day Care, we believe that a strong partnership between families and educators is essential to a child's success. By working together and maintaining open, respectful communication, we can provide the best possible care and learning experiences for every child.

We encourage parents and guardians to share information about their child's routines, interests, milestones, and any changes at home that may affect their experience at the centre. Families are welcome to speak with their child's educator or the Centre Supervisor at any time to discuss their child's development, ask questions, or address any concerns.

We are committed to maintaining open and ongoing communication through daily conversations, regular updates, and documentation of your child's learning and experiences. Family feedback, ideas, and suggestions are always welcome and help us continually strengthen our programs and services.

For the safety of the children and to minimize disruptions to classroom routines, visits to program rooms outside of normal drop-off, pick-up, or scheduled events should be arranged in advance with the Centre Supervisor.

Photography During Centre Events

Families are welcome to take photographs or videos of their own child during Centre events.

Out of respect for the privacy of other children, families, and staff, photographs or videos containing other children or staff members should not be shared publicly or posted on social media without their permission.

Students, Volunteers & Placement Educators

Pluto Day Care values the opportunity to support the education and professional development of future early childhood educators by welcoming students and volunteers into our programs.

Students and volunteers work under the direct supervision of Pluto Day Care employees at all times. In accordance with the Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA), they are never left alone with children and are never counted in staff-to-child ratios.

Field Trips and Off-Site Activities

From time to time, Pluto Day Care may participate in walks, community outings, or other off-site activities that enhance children's learning through real-world experiences.

Written parent/guardian authorization is required before a child may participate in any off-site activity. This authorization is obtained through a general consent form completed as part of the enrollment process or through activity-specific permission forms when required.

No child will leave the centre to participate in an off-site activity without the appropriate written consent from their parent/guardian.

Children's Belongings

To help ensure your child is comfortable and prepared for each day, please provide the following items when they begin attending Pluto Day Care. **Please ensure all clothing and personal belongings are clearly labelled with your child's name to help us quickly identify and return misplaced items.**

Pluto Day Care is not responsible for damage to clothing resulting from normal participation in art, sensory play, outdoor play, or other daily program activities.

Infants

- Ready-to-feed formula or breast milk in individual serving bottles (enough for the day; **no glass containers**)
- Diapering supplies
- Soother and/or comfort item (if used)
- At least one complete change of clothing
- Appropriate indoor and outdoor footwear.
- Appropriate outdoor clothing for the season

Toddlers & Preschoolers

- Diapers or training pants (if required)
- At least one complete change of clothing, including underwear
- Appropriate indoor and outdoor footwear
- Appropriate outdoor clothing for the season

Cloth Diapers

Pluto Day Care is pleased to support the use of cloth diapers. Families choosing to use cloth diapers must provide at least two (2) waterproof wet bags each day for the safe storage of soiled diapers and wipes. If two wet bags are not provided, disposable diapers must be supplied instead or your child cannot be left at care without the needed supplies.

Insufficient Supplies

Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring their child arrives each day with all required supplies appropriate for their age and individual needs.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Diapering supplies (where applicable)
- A complete change of clothing (multiple highly recommended especially while toilet training)
- Appropriate indoor footwear
- Weather-appropriate outdoor clothing and footwear
- Bottles, breast milk, or ready-to-feed formula (for infants), where applicable
- Any other items identified by the Centre as necessary for the child's daily care

Important: Pluto Day Care does not maintain a supply of diapering supplies, clothing, footwear, bottles, formula, or other personal care items. Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring their child has an adequate supply each day.

Children who arrive without the supplies necessary to safely participate in the program will not be admitted into care. Parents/guardians must either:

- Obtain the required supplies and return to the centre with their child before **9:30 a.m.**, or
- Take their child home and return on their next scheduled day with the required supplies.

For health, hygiene, and infection prevention reasons, personal items will **not** be borrowed or shared between children.

If a child's required supplies become depleted during the day, the parent/guardian may be contacted and asked to bring additional supplies to the centre.

Footwear Requirements

Children are expected to have **both indoor shoes and outdoor shoes** available at the centre each day. Indoor shoes help keep our classrooms clean and safe, while outdoor shoes support active outdoor play in all seasons.

For the safety of all children:

- **Flip-flops are not permitted** at any time, as they do not provide adequate support or protection during active play.
- **Crocs are permitted only when the heel strap is secured behind the foot ("Sport Mode")**. Crocs worn without the heel strap are considered unsafe and will not be permitted.
- Footwear should fit securely and allow children to safely run, climb, and participate in all daily activities.

Please ensure your child has weather-appropriate outdoor clothing each day. Depending on the season, this may include a sun hat, rain boots, splash pants, winter boots, snow pants, mittens, a warm coat, or other clothing appropriate for the weather.

Toys from Home

To help prevent items from becoming lost, damaged, or causing unnecessary distractions, personal toys and valuables should remain at home unless specifically requested by your child's educators for a special activity, classroom event, or transition support.

Pluto Day Care cannot accept responsibility for lost, damaged, or stolen personal toys or valuables brought to the Centre.

Lost & Found

While every effort is made to return misplaced belongings to their owner, Pluto Day Care cannot accept responsibility for lost, damaged, or misplaced personal items.

Lost items will be placed in the Centre's Lost & Found. Items remaining unclaimed for more than 30 days may be donated or otherwise disposed of at the Centre's discretion.

Health & Safety

The health, safety, and well-being of every child is our highest priority. The following policies help us provide a safe, healthy, and supportive environment for children, families, and staff.

Attendance & Drop-Off

To ensure children can fully participate in our daily program, all must arrive by 9:30 a.m. If your child will arrive after 9:30 a.m., parents/guardians must notify the centre in advance.

Examples of acceptable late arrivals include:

- Medical appointments
- Dental appointments
- Family emergencies
- Therapy appointments
- Vehicle emergencies

Approval of late arrivals is at the discretion of the Centre Supervisor or designate.

Examples of reasons that generally will not be approved:

- Oversleeping
- Running errands
- Non-essential appointments

Children arriving after 9:30 a.m. without prior notice may be refused admission for the day. Repeated late arrivals may result in written warnings and may affect continued enrollment.

These arrival and return times help minimize disruptions to classroom routines and educational programming while ensuring children have meaningful opportunities to participate in the daily program.

Appointments During the Day

To minimize disruptions to children's routines and programming:

- Children attending an appointment before arriving at the centre must arrive by 11:00 a.m., unless otherwise approved by the Centre Supervisor.
- Children leaving the centre for an appointment during the day must attend the program before their appointment and return no later than 2:00 p.m.

Parent Availability During the Day

Parents/guardians must remain reasonably available by telephone while their child is attending Pluto Day Care.

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to:

- Ensure all telephone numbers remain current.
- Notify the Centre immediately if contact information changes.
- Ensure emergency contacts are aware they may be contacted.
- Answer or return calls from the Centre as soon as possible.

If a child becomes ill, injured, or otherwise requires immediate pick-up, parents/guardians are expected to arrange for their child to be collected within 60 minutes, unless otherwise directed by the Centre Supervisor.

Parking Lot Safety

Children must always be supervised while entering or leaving the Centre.

Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring children remain beside them in the parking lot and are safely secured in their vehicle before leaving.

For everyone's safety:

- Never leave children unattended in a vehicle.
- Observe posted speed limits.
- Park only in designated parking spaces.
- Do not block fire routes or accessible parking spaces.

Maintaining Enrollment

To maintain active enrollment, children must physically attend the program at least once every eight consecutive weeks. Pluto Day Care does not permit families to indefinitely hold a space through fee payments alone. If a child has not physically attended the program for more than eight consecutive weeks, Pluto Day Care reserves the right to withdraw the child from the program and release the space to another family. Any fees paid to maintain the space during the period of non-attendance are non-refundable.

Serious Occurrences

Pluto Day Care is required by the **Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA)** to report certain incidents to the Ministry of Education as Serious Occurrences. Examples may include serious injuries or illnesses, allegations of abuse or neglect, missing or temporarily unsupervised children, emergency evacuations, unexpected program disruptions, or other incidents that may affect the health, safety, or well-being of children.

A Serious Occurrence does **not** necessarily mean that a child, staff member, or the centre has done anything wrong or that licensing requirements have not been met. Rather, it ensures that significant incidents are properly documented, investigated where necessary, and addressed appropriately.

In accordance with Ministry requirements, a Serious Occurrence Notification Form will be posted at the affected centre for a minimum of **10 business days** while protecting the privacy and confidentiality of the individuals involved.

Safe Arrival & Dismissal

Pluto Day Care follows the Safe Arrival and Dismissal requirements outlined under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014.

Arrival

Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that their child is safely signed into the care of an educator each day. Families are asked to notify the centre if their child will be absent or arriving later than usual.

If a child has not arrived as expected and the centre has not been notified of their absence, staff will attempt to contact the parent/guardian. Once the child's absence has been confirmed, it will be documented on the attendance record.

Dismissal

Children will only be released to:

- Their parent/guardian; or
- An individual authorized in writing by the parent/guardian

If an unfamiliar individual arrives to pick up a child, staff will request photo identification before releasing the child. Children will **never** be released from the centre without adult supervision unless otherwise authorized through our Underage Pick-Up Form, or by law.

Late Pick-Up

If a child has not been picked up by closing time, staff will make every reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian, authorized pick-up individuals, and emergency contacts.

If no authorized individual can be reached within a reasonable period of time after the centre has closed, Pluto Day Care is required to contact the local Children's Aid Society and follow their direction, in accordance with provincial requirements.

Please refer to the Fee Schedule for information regarding late pick-up fees.

Custody Arrangements

Unless otherwise prohibited by law, Pluto Day Care cannot refuse to release a child to a parent or legal guardian. Where custody arrangements, restraining orders, or court-ordered restrictions exist, parents/guardians must provide the Centre Supervisor with complete and current legal documentation.

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to immediately notify the Centre of any changes to legal custody arrangements. Without current legal documentation, Pluto Day Care cannot withhold a child from a legal parent or guardian.

Security

The safety and security of our children, families, and staff are a top priority at Pluto Day Care. Access to each centre is controlled through individualized electronic key fobs and/or PIN codes issued to parents/guardians. These credentials are unique to each family and can be immediately deactivated if necessary.

Children will only be released to their parent/guardian or to individuals who have been authorized in writing by the parent/guardian. Parents/guardians are responsible for providing the names of all authorized pick-up individuals. Staff may request government-issued photo identification from anyone they do not recognize before releasing a child into their care.

Parents/guardians are not to share their access credentials with anyone else in order for them to enter the building.

Smoke-Free Property

In accordance with Ontario legislation, smoking, vaping, and the use of cannabis are prohibited anywhere on Pluto Day Care property, including parking lots and outdoor play areas.

Emergency Management Procedures

Although emergencies are rare, Pluto Day Care maintains comprehensive emergency management procedures to protect the safety and well-being of children, families, and staff.

If an emergency requires the evacuation of the centre and it is not safe to return, children will be relocated to the designated Emergency Shelter identified at the main entrance of each location. Once children are safe, staff will begin contacting parents/guardians as soon as possible with information about the situation and where their child can be picked up.

If an emergency occurs but relocation to an Emergency Shelter is not required, families will be informed of the incident by the Centre Supervisor or, in their absence, the Assistant Supervisor as soon as reasonably possible.

Emergency Closures

Although Pluto Day Care makes every effort to remain open, there may be circumstances where the Centre must close unexpectedly or close early to protect the health and safety of children and staff.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Severe weather
- Extended power outages
- Loss of heat or air conditioning
- Water service interruptions
- Flooding or fire
- Building damage
- Public health emergencies
- Any situation that prevents the safe operation of the Centre

Whenever possible, families will be notified by email and/or telephone as early as possible.

If the Centre must close during the day, parents/guardians (or an authorized emergency contact) will be required to pick up their child as soon as reasonably possible.

As Pluto Day Care continues to incur operating expenses during emergency closures, regular child care fees remain payable unless otherwise required by law.

Illness Exclusion Policy (Based on guidelines from Public Health)

The health, safety, and well-being of all children, families, and staff are our highest priority. While Pluto Day Care closely follows guidance from Region of Waterloo Public Health and other applicable health authorities, every illness and situation is unique.

Pluto Day Care reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to exclude any child from care if they show signs or symptoms of an illness that may spread to others, if they are suspected of having a contagious illness, or if they are not well enough to safely participate in the normal daily program, including outdoor play. This decision may be made even if a healthcare provider has not yet confirmed a diagnosis or if the illness is not specifically listed in this policy or current Public Health guidance.

To help protect the health and safety of everyone in the centre, Pluto Day Care may require:

- A child to remain at home until they have been symptom-free for a specified period of time;
- A physician's note confirming the child is fit to return; and/or
- Compliance with any additional exclusion or return-to-care requirements established by Public Health or by the Centre Supervisor.

The Centre Supervisor's decision regarding whether a child is well enough to attend the program is final and is made in the best interest of protecting the health and safety of all children, families, and staff.

To help prevent the spread of illness, children **must** remain at home if they experience any of the following symptoms:

Fever

- 38°C (100.4°F) or higher.
- Exclusion applies on the day the fever occurs and the following day.
- The child may return after being fever-free for 24 hours without the use of medication.

Enteric (stomach or intestinal) illness (General Exclusion Period)

- Exclusion applies on the day symptoms occur and for a minimum of 2 days thereafter.
- The 48-hour exclusion period restarts with any new episode.
- The child must remain at home for 48 hours after the last episode without the use of medication.

Diarrhea

- Two or more episodes.

Vomiting

- Two or more episodes.

Vomiting & Diarrhea

- One episode of each.

Parent Communication Regarding Illness

Parents/guardians must provide specific symptoms when reporting illness-related absences (e.g., fever, vomiting, diarrhea, persistent cough, or poor sleep due to illness).

Please note:

- General statements such as *"sick"* or *"not feeling well"* may result in the standard exclusion period being applied until additional information is received.
- Children may not attend while symptoms are being masked by medication.
- Pluto Day Care reserves the right to refuse admission to any child who appears unwell.

Failure to follow these guidelines or providing inaccurate or misleading information regarding your child's illness may result in further action, up to and including withdrawal from our program.

Prescription Medication

Prescription medication may be administered only with written parent/guardian authorization and must be provided in its original pharmacy-labelled container that shows the child's name, medication, prescribing physician or nurse practitioner, dosage, and administration instructions.

Medication is administered by trained staff in accordance with applicable legislation and Public Health requirements. A second staff member verifies that the correct child, medication, dosage, time, and method of administration are correct before both staff members complete the Medication Administration Record.

Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring medications remain clearly labelled, unexpired, and up to date, and for notifying the Centre of any changes to their child's medication or treatment plan.

Medical Plans

Some children require an Individualized Medical Management Plan to support their health and safety while attending Pluto Day Care. Plans are developed collaboratively with parents/guardians based on recommendations from the child's physician or nurse practitioner. Common examples include, but are not limited to:

- Anaphylaxis (severe allergies)
- Seizure disorders
- Diabetes
- Other medical conditions requiring specialized care or emergency intervention

Parents/guardians must provide medical documentation outlining the child's diagnosis, symptoms, recommended treatment, emergency procedures, and any required medications.

Medical Management Plans are reviewed at least annually and updated whenever the child's medical condition, medication, treatment recommendations, or emergency procedures change.

Non-Prescription Medication

Pluto Day Care does not routinely administer non-prescription (over-the-counter) medications.

In limited circumstances, non-prescription medication may be administered as part of an approved Individualized Medical Plan based on the recommendations of the child's physician or nurse practitioner. Examples include:

- Fever-reducing medication (e.g., Tylenol®, Advil®) for children at risk of febrile seizures. A written recommendation from the child's physician or nurse practitioner and an approved Medical Management Plan are required.
- Allergy medication (e.g., Benadryl®) included as part of a child's current Anaphylaxis Plan. A separate physician's note is not required.

The Centre may request updated medical documentation whenever necessary to ensure the safe administration of medication

Emergency Medication

Children requiring emergency medication (such as an EpiPen®, asthma inhaler, seizure medication, or other prescribed emergency medication) must have a current, non-expired medication available at the Centre at all times.

Where applicable, an individualized Medical Management Plan or Anaphylaxis Plan will be developed in collaboration with the parent/guardian and must be kept current.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Providing all required emergency medications before their child's first day of attendance.
- Replacing medications before they expire.
- Notifying the Centre of any changes to their child's medical condition, treatment plan, or prescribed medication.

Children requiring emergency medication will not be permitted to attend the program until the required medication has been provided.

Illness Outbreaks & Modified Exclusion Requirements

Pluto Day Care follows the guidance and directives of Region of Waterloo Public Health and any other applicable public health authorities regarding illness outbreaks within the centre.

In the event of a declared outbreak, suspected outbreak, or increased incidence of illness within the program, Pluto Day Care reserves the right to implement additional health and safety measures to help prevent the spread of illness and protect the well-being of children and staff.

These measures may include, but are not limited to:

- Modifying exclusion periods for specific illnesses or symptoms;
- Requiring exclusion after a single episode of vomiting or diarrhea;
- Requiring medical clearance prior to a child's return to care;
- Enhanced screening and monitoring procedures;
- Temporary restrictions on attendance for symptomatic children;
- Additional cleaning, sanitization, and infection prevention measures; and
- Any other requirements directed by Public Health authorities.

Parents/guardians are required to promptly inform the centre of any symptoms, diagnoses, communicable illnesses, or outbreaks within their household that may affect the health and safety of the childcare environment.

Failure to comply with outbreak-related requirements may result in a child's exclusion from care until all applicable public health and centre requirements are met.

Pluto Day Care reserves the right to modify illness exclusion requirements and return-to-care criteria at any time in response to public health recommendations, outbreak conditions, or concerns regarding the health and safety of children and staff.

Meals & Nutrition

Pluto Day Care provides a nutritious lunch each day, along with a mid-morning snack, an afternoon snack, and beverages. All meals and snacks are freshly prepared on-site by our caring cooks and are thoughtfully planned to meet the nutritional needs of growing children in accordance with applicable nutritional guidelines. Current menus are posted at each centre for families to view.

We are committed to accommodating children's dietary requirements wherever reasonably possible. Individual dietary needs, allergies, and medical conditions will be reviewed with each family to determine the safest and most appropriate plan. All meat served at Pluto Day Care is Halal.

To help maintain a safe environment for all children and to support consistent meal service, **outside food is only permitted under the following circumstances:**

- Children with severe or multiple food allergies.
- Children with diagnosed medical conditions or special needs requiring a modified diet.
- Infants who are not yet developmentally ready to eat the meals provided by the centre.

Any request to bring food from home must be discussed with and approved by the Centre Supervisor before food is brought into the centre.

Food Safety Requirements

To reduce the risk of exposure to food allergens and to accommodate the dietary and cultural needs of children in our care, Pluto Day Care maintains the following food restrictions:

- Peanut-free
- Shellfish-free
- Honey-free
- Beef-free
- Pork and pork product-free
- Products purchased from donut shops are not permitted due to the risk of cross-contamination with peanut and tree nut products.

Where food is approved to be brought from home due to allergies or medical needs, parents/guardians must provide a complete ingredient list for each food item.

Child Behaviour & Safety

At Pluto Day Care, every child, family, and staff member has the right to learn and work in a safe, respectful, inclusive, and supportive environment. We are committed to using positive guidance, responsive interactions, and developmentally appropriate strategies to help children develop self-regulation, problem-solving skills, and positive relationships.

When a child is experiencing behavioural, emotional, developmental, or social challenges, we work collaboratively with families to understand their individual needs and develop appropriate support strategies. This may include observation, documentation, communication with families, implementation of behaviour support plans, and referrals to community agencies or outside professionals, where appropriate and with parent/guardian consent.

In some situations, a child's behaviour may pose a significant risk to their own safety, the safety of others, or the operation of the program. Where reasonable supports have been implemented and concerns remain, alternative arrangements or withdrawal of care may become necessary.

Examples of behaviours that may result in temporary suspension or withdrawal from the program, particularly when they are severe, persistent, or do not improve despite reasonable intervention efforts, include but are not limited to:

- Repeated biting resulting in injury to others.
- Repeated hitting, kicking, punching, or other aggressive physical behaviour.
- Throwing objects with the intent to cause harm or that create a significant safety risk.
- Bullying, intimidation, or targeted harassment of others.
- Persistent verbal aggression, threats, or abusive language.
- Repeated attempts to leave staff supervision or designated program areas.
- Deliberate damage to centre property or the property of others.
- Behaviour that places the child, other children, or staff at risk of serious injury.
- Persistent refusal to follow safety expectations despite consistent intervention and support.
- Behaviour that significantly disrupts the program and prevents staff from safely supervising the group.
- Behaviour requiring staffing levels or specialized supports beyond what Pluto Day Care can reasonably provide.

Every situation is assessed individually. Whenever possible, Pluto Day Care will work collaboratively with families and community partners to support a child's continued success within the program. However, the health, safety, and well-being of all children, families, and staff will remain the primary consideration in all decisions regarding continued enrollment.

Accessibility (AODA)

Pluto Day Care is committed to providing an accessible, inclusive, and welcoming environment for all children, families, employees, and visitors. We will make every reasonable effort to accommodate individuals with disabilities and remove barriers to participation wherever possible, in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

If you require accommodation or assistance while accessing our programs or services, please speak with the Centre Supervisor so we can work with you to meet your needs.

Insurance

Pluto Day Care maintains comprehensive commercial general liability insurance for all of our licensed locations.

Written parent/guardian authorization is obtained before children participate in any off-site walks, community outings, or field trips.

Parents are encouraged to ensure their child is covered under their family's personal health and accident insurance, where applicable.

Supporting Every Child

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

At Pluto Day Care, we are committed to creating a welcoming, respectful, and inclusive environment where every child, family, and staff member feels valued, supported, and has the opportunity to thrive. We celebrate the unique backgrounds, identities, abilities, cultures, languages, and experiences that make our community diverse and believe these differences strengthen our learning environment.

Our commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion is reflected in every aspect of our program through the following principles:

Truth & Reconciliation

We recognize the importance of Truth and Reconciliation and are committed to fostering respect for Indigenous peoples, histories, and cultures. We acknowledge the traditional territories on which we operate and strive to incorporate opportunities for children to learn about Indigenous perspectives in meaningful and age-appropriate ways.

Equity

We recognize that every child is unique and may require different levels of support to succeed. We are committed to providing equitable opportunities by responding to each child's individual strengths, needs, and circumstances. We continually seek current best practices through ongoing professional learning and collaboration with community partners.

Diversity

We celebrate the diversity of our children, families, staff, and community. Our environments, materials, programming, and celebrations reflect a wide range of cultures, languages, family structures, abilities, and lived experiences, helping every child feel seen, respected, and valued.

Participation

Every child has the right to actively participate in all aspects of our program. Our educators observe, document, and respond to children's interests while adapting activities, environments, and routines to encourage meaningful participation for every child.

Accessibility

We are committed to providing programs and environments that are accessible and inclusive for all children and families. Pluto Day Care complies with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and works to remove barriers wherever reasonably possible.

Supporting Children with Additional Needs

Every child develops at their own pace and has unique strengths, interests, and support needs. Our educators regularly observe children's learning and development to plan meaningful experiences and identify opportunities for additional support when appropriate.

If concerns arise regarding a child's development, educators will work collaboratively with families to share observations, discuss strategies, and determine appropriate next steps. With parent/guardian consent, Pluto Day Care may work alongside community agencies, resource consultants, and health professionals to develop individualized supports that promote each child's participation, learning, and well-being.

Supporting Our Staff

High-quality child care begins with a supported team. Pluto Day Care is committed to providing ongoing professional learning, fair employment practices, and a respectful, inclusive workplace. By investing in our educators, we strengthen the quality of care and learning experiences provided to every child.

Our Professional Commitment

Pluto Day Care is committed to upholding the principles of the Ontario Human Rights Code, which recognizes the dignity and worth of every individual and prohibits discrimination based on protected grounds, including age, ancestry, colour, race, citizenship, ethnic origin, place of origin, creed, disability, family status, marital status, gender identity, gender expression, sex, and sexual orientation.

Our Registered Early Childhood Educators also adhere to the College of Early Childhood Educators' Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, which promote respectful, inclusive, and equitable relationships with children, families, colleagues, and the community.

If a family has concerns regarding their child's care or experience, we encourage them to speak with their child's educator or the Centre Supervisor. Additional information can be found in the Parent Issues & Concerns section of this handbook (p. 20).

Positive Behaviour Guidance

At Pluto Day Care, our approach focuses on teaching and supporting appropriate behaviour rather than punishing inappropriate behaviour. We believe that every child is capable, competent, and deserving of respectful, positive guidance. Our educators support children in developing self-regulation, problem-solving skills, empathy, and positive relationships through caring, responsive, and developmentally appropriate interactions.

We use positive behaviour guidance strategies that encourage children to learn appropriate behaviours while supporting their emotional, social, and cognitive development. These strategies may include:

- Positive reinforcement and encouragement.
- Modelling respectful behaviour.
- Redirection to appropriate activities.
- Helping children identify and express their feelings.
- Supporting children in developing problem-solving and conflict-resolution skills.
- Creating predictable routines and environments that promote success.

When behavioural concerns arise, educators work collaboratively with families to understand each child's individual needs and develop appropriate strategies to support their success within the program.

Prohibited Practices

In accordance with the **Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA)**, Pluto Day Care strictly prohibits the use of any prohibited practices. Children will never be subjected to:

- Corporal punishment of any kind, including hitting, spanking, slapping, or pinching.
- Physical restraint for the purpose of discipline or in place of appropriate supervision, except where permitted by legislation to prevent immediate harm to the child or others.
- Locking exits or confining a child without adult supervision, except during an emergency.
- Harsh, degrading, humiliating, or threatening language or actions that undermine a child's self-esteem or dignity.
- Depriving a child of basic needs, including food, drink, shelter, clothing, sleep, toilet use, or bedding.
- Inflicting bodily harm, including forcing a child to eat or drink against their will.

Pluto Day Care is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and nurturing environment where every child is treated with dignity and care.

Parent Issues & Concerns

At Pluto Day Care, we value open, honest, and respectful communication with families. We encourage parents/guardians to take an active role in their child's early learning experience and to discuss any questions, concerns, or feedback with us as they arise.

We are committed to addressing all concerns in a fair, respectful, and timely manner. Our goal is to work collaboratively with families to resolve concerns as quickly as possible while maintaining positive relationships and the confidentiality of everyone involved.

How to Raise a Concern

Parents/guardians may raise concerns verbally or in writing with their child's educator, the Centre Supervisor, or another member of the management team.

- An acknowledgment of the concern will be provided within **two (2) business days**.
- A response will generally be provided within **10 business days**, unless additional time is required due to the complexity of the matter.
- Families will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

All concerns will be reviewed fairly, impartially, and respectfully.

Confidentiality

Every concern will be treated confidentially. Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis with individuals who require it to investigate or resolve the concern, or where disclosure is required by law, including the Ministry of Education, the College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement agencies, or a Children's Aid Society.

Respectful Communication

Pluto Day Care is committed to maintaining a respectful and professional environment for children, families, staff, students, volunteers, and visitors.

Harassment, discrimination, intimidation, threats, abusive language, or violence toward any member of our community will not be tolerated. If a conversation becomes disrespectful or threatening, staff or management may end the discussion and arrange another appropriate time or method of communication.

Parent Code of Conduct

Pluto Day Care is committed to maintaining a safe and respectful environment for children, families, employees, students, volunteers, and visitors.

We ask that all adults entering our Centres conduct themselves respectfully at all times.

The following behaviours are not acceptable:

- Harassment or discrimination
- Threatening behaviour
- Physical violence
- Swearing directed toward staff or families
- Intimidation
- Filming or recording staff without consent
- Damaging Centre property
- Entering the Centre while impaired by alcohol or drugs

Management reserves the right to end conversations, request an individual leave the premises, involve law enforcement when appropriate, and/or terminate enrolment where behaviour creates a risk to the safety or well-being of children, families, or staff.

Children's Records & Privacy

Pluto Day Care respects the privacy of every child and family. Children's records, personal information, observations, and documentation are kept confidential and are only accessed by staff who require the information to provide care or fulfill their legal responsibilities.

Personal information is collected, used, stored, and shared in accordance with applicable legislation. Information about one child or family will not be shared with another family without consent, unless required or permitted by law.

Parents/guardians may request access to their own child's records in accordance with applicable legislation and Pluto Day Care's policies. Photographs and documentation of children's learning are used only in accordance with the permissions provided during enrollment. Children's records are securely retained and disposed of in accordance with applicable legislation.

Duty to Report

Under the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017, every person in Ontario has a legal duty to report reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is or may be in need of protection.

If a parent/guardian has concerns about the safety or well-being of a child, they are encouraged to contact the local Children's Aid Society directly. Pluto Day Care employees also have an individual legal duty to report suspected child abuse or neglect. This duty cannot be delegated to another person.

Additional information is available through the local Children's Aid Society or the Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services.

Escalation of Concerns

If a parent/guardian is not satisfied with the outcome of a concern, they may request that it be reviewed by the Licensee by submitting their concern in writing to:

Steven Wedge, Licensee, Pluto Day Care
(Submitted through any Pluto Day Care location.)

Safeguarding Children

The safety and well-being of children is our highest priority.

All Pluto Day Care employees must provide a satisfactory Vulnerable Sector Check before beginning employment and are required to complete an annual Offence Declaration confirming they have not been convicted of any disqualifying offences since their Vulnerable Sector Check was issued.

In accordance with Ontario legislation and Ministry of Education requirements, Pluto Day Care will not employ any individual who has been convicted of any of the following offences:

- Section 151 – Sexual Interference
- Section 152 – Invitation to Sexual Touching
- Section 153 – Sexual Exploitation
- Section 153.1 – Sexual Exploitation of a Person with a Disability
- Section 160(1), (2), (3) – Bestiality
- Section 162 – Voyeurism
- Section 162.1 – Publication of an Intimate Image Without Consent
- Section 163.1 – Child Pornography
- Section 170 – Parent or Guardian Procuring Sexual Activity
- Section 171.1 – Making Sexually Explicit Material Available to a Child
- Section 172.1 – Luring a Child
- Section 172.2 – Agreement or Arrangement for a Sexual Offence Against a Child
- Section 215 – Duty of Persons to Provide Necessaries
- Section 229 – Murder
- Section 233 – Infanticide
- Section 271 – Sexual Assault
- Section 272 – Sexual Assault with a Weapon, Threats to a Third Party, or Causing Bodily Harm
- Section 273 – Aggravated Sexual Assault
- Section 281 – Abduction of a Person Under 14 Years of Age
- Section 286.1(1) – Obtaining Sexual Services for Consideration
- Section 286.1(2) – Obtaining Sexual Services for Consideration from a Person Under 18 Years of Age

Employees are required to immediately notify the Licensee if they are charged with or convicted of any offence that may affect their eligibility to work in licensed child care. Failure to meet these requirements may result in immediate termination of employment.

Reporting Licensing Concerns

If you have concerns regarding Pluto Day Care's compliance with the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 or Ontario Regulation 137/15, you may also contact:

Ministry of Education – Licensed Child Care Help Desk

Telephone: **1-877-510-5333**

Email: **childcare_ontario@ontario.ca**

Enrollment Information

Registration

To register your child at Pluto Day Care, families must submit a completed enrollment package and the applicable registration deposit. Details regarding deposits, fees, and payment requirements are outlined in the Fees section of this handbook (p. 24 & 25).

Families receiving additional child care fee subsidy through the Region of Waterloo (in addition to the CWELCC fee reduction) will be issued a unique door access code in place of key fobs and are therefore exempt from the key fob deposit.

All families are required to use their assigned key fob or access code each time they enter the centre. This allows staff to remain with the children and maintain required staff-to-child ratios.

To confirm and hold a subsidized child care space, written confirmation of Region of Waterloo fee subsidy must be provided to the centre at least two (2) weeks before the child's scheduled start date, or earlier if requested by the Centre Supervisor. Failure to provide the required confirmation within the requested timeframe may result in the child care space being released. The decision to continue holding a space without confirmed subsidy remains at the sole discretion of the Centre Supervisor.

Waitlist

Pluto Day Care uses the Region of Waterloo OneList to manage waitlists for all locations.

Families with a child currently enrolled at Pluto Day Care who are waiting for a sibling space are maintained on an internal waitlist. To receive priority for these opportunities, families must have a currently enrolled child within our program and also remain registered on the Region of Waterloo OneList.

When spaces become available, placement is based on several factors, including:

- Current enrollment at Pluto Day Care (where applicable)
- The child's age and the availability of an appropriate space
- The date the child was added to the Region of Waterloo OneList

To protect the privacy of all families, waitlist positions are only provided verbally to the family of the child concerned.

Withdrawal from Care

If you wish to withdraw your child from Pluto Day Care, the Centre Supervisor must receive written notice at least 30 calendar days before your child's final day of attendance.

To complete the withdrawal process, parents/guardians must also complete a Withdrawal Form, available from the centre office or on the Parent Resources page of our website. The completed form must be submitted to the Centre Supervisor for your child's file.

Failure to provide the required 30 calendar days' written notice will result in the forfeiture of the childcare deposit, in accordance with Pluto Day Care's Registration and Fee Policies.

Written notice of withdrawal is considered received only during the centre's regular business hours. Notices submitted after business hours, on weekends, statutory holidays, Professional Development Days, winter closure, or any other scheduled centre closure will be deemed received on the next business day.

Canada-Wide Early Learning & Child Care System (CWELCC)

Pluto Day Care participates in the **Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC)** system, which helps make licensed child care more affordable for families through provincial fee reductions.

Families do not need to apply separately for CWELCC, as Pluto Day Care is an enrolled participating provider. Child care fees are reduced in accordance with the funding and fee caps established by the Province of Ontario.

Fees are subject to change in accordance with provincial and Regional funding requirements.

Fees with CWELCC Reduction

Updated January 2025

In effect, January 2025 - August 2026



Base Fees

All base fees are due **on or before** the first of each month

Pre Schoolers - 2½ - 6 years

Full Time \$458.33

Toddlers - 18 months to 2½ years

Full Time \$478.50

Infants – 3 to 18 Months

Full Time \$478.50

Additional Fees (Non-Base Fees)

Additional fees are charged as needed and are due within 5 business days of notification

Deposit We have a \$250.00 deposit for children starting care. This consists of:

- \$175.00 deposit - this is refunded upon leaving given you provide us 30+ days notice
(not paid if subsidized)
- \$25.00 administration fee - this is refunded upon leaving given you provide us 30+ days notice
(not paid if subsidized)
- \$50.00 for 2 fobs to the centre (\$25 per fob) - refunded upon the return of the fob
(codes allocated instead of fobs if subsidized)

Late collection outside of daycare hours \$30.00 Per ¼ hour
(Minimum \$30.00, Charged at the start of each 15 minute period)

Late Payment Charge \$7.50 Per Day (Including weekends and holidays)

Returned Cheque \$35.00 Plus any late fees accrued

Additional / Lost fob replacement \$25.00 per fob

Accepted Payment Types

We accept cash, certified cheques or e-transfer payments. Please read the below carefully for cheque or e-transfers.

Certified Cheques:

- must be a certified cheque, no handwritten cheques allowed.
- must be made out to "Pluto Day Care Centres"

E-Transfers:

- Must be sent to paymentspluto@gmail.com
- E-Transfers are auto-deposited to our legal business name of 706785 Ontario Inc.
- In the message section, you **must** put the centre name & the full name of your child

Fees with CWELCC Reduction - Coming into Effect September 2026

Fees reflect the current Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) fee reduction.
Should provincial funding or CWELCC participation change, fees will be adjusted accordingly to meet provincial and Regional requirements.



Base Fees

Base fees are due on or before the 1st day of each month, **regardless of weekends, statutory holidays, winter closure, Professional Development Days, or any other scheduled centre closures.**

Age Group	Program	Monthly Fee
Infant	Under 18 Months	\$478.50
Toddler	18 Months–2½ Years	\$478.50
Preschool	2½–6 Years	\$458.33

Registration Deposit – \$250.00

The registration deposit consists of:

- **\$200.00 Childcare Deposit** – Applied toward the final month's base childcare fees provided one calendar month's written notice of withdrawal is received in accordance with our Withdrawal Policy
 - This deposit is not required for families receiving Region of Waterloo childcare fee subsidy
- **\$50.00 Key Fob Deposit** – Covers two (2) key fobs (\$25.00 each). This deposit is refunded when both key fobs are returned in good condition
 - Families receiving Region of Waterloo childcare fee subsidy will be issued a door access code in place of key fobs and are exempt from this deposit

Additional Fees (Non-Base Fees)

Additional fees, if applicable, are due within **five (5) business days** of notification. These fees apply to all families, including those receiving Region of Waterloo childcare fee subsidy.

Late Collection

All children and families must have exited the centre by **6:00 p.m.** Late fees are determined by the timestamp recorded by the centre's door access system.

- First minute after 6:00 p.m.: **\$25.00**
- Each additional minute thereafter: **\$2.00 per minute**

Late Payment Charge

A late payment charge of \$7.50 per day will be applied to overdue balances, including weekends, statutory holidays, winter closure, Professional Development Days, and any other scheduled Centre closures.

For the purpose of calculating late payment charges, each "day" is based on Pluto Day Care's business day, which ends at 6:00 p.m. Payments received after 6:00 p.m. are considered received on the following day.

Because payments cannot be verified or processed when the Centre is closed, payments submitted after 6:00 p.m. on a Friday, or at any time on a Saturday, Sunday, statutory holiday, Professional Development Day, winter closure, or other scheduled Centre closure, will be considered received on the next business day. As a result, late payment charges will continue to accrue for each intervening day until the payment can be received and processed by the Centre.

Lost, Additional, or Optional Key Fobs

\$25.00 per key fob

Accepted Payment Methods

We accept cash and e-transfer payments.

E-transfers must be sent to paymentspluto@gmail.com

Payments are auto-deposited to our legal business name: 706785 Ontario Inc.

The following information **must** be included in the e-transfer message: **Centre location and Child's First & Last Name**

This information is mandatory. Payments received without the required information cannot be automatically applied to your child's account. Any resulting late fees remain the responsibility of the account holder.

Enrollment Terms and Conditions

(Contract with Parents)

At Pluto, we believe in offering a high-quality service and maintaining Ontario Ministry of Education requirements.

To maintain our high standards, we must set the following conditions.

- Fees are due on or before the 1st day of each month, regardless of weekends, statutory holidays, winter closure, Professional Development Days, or any other scheduled centre closures. Example: February fees are due by February 1st.
 - For the purpose of calculating late payment charges, each "day" is based on Pluto Day Care's business day, which ends at 6:00 p.m. Payments received after 6:00 p.m. are considered received on the following day.
 - Because payments cannot be verified or processed when the Centre is closed, payments submitted after 6:00 p.m. on a Friday, or at any time on a Saturday, Sunday, statutory holiday, Professional Development Day, winter closure, or other scheduled Centre closure, will be considered received on the next business day. As a result, late payment charges will continue to accrue for each intervening day until the payment can be received and processed by the Centre.
- Absenteeism is not refundable (your child's place is reserved in any period of absence).
- Places are only reserved when the completed application forms and deposit have been received, or when confirmation is received from the subsidy office.
- You must follow the Illness Exclusion Policy listed on pages 14 & 16 of this document. **This is a Waterloo Region - Public Health requirement.**
- If a child experiences an illness or injury that requires them to be picked up from daycare, the parents will be contacted, and the child must be picked up within 60 minutes. **This is a Waterloo Region - Public Health requirement.**
- Pluto Day Care follows all applicable guidance issued by Region of Waterloo Public Health regarding communicable illnesses and exclusion requirements.
- Thirty (30) days' written notice is required to utilize your deposit. Failure to provide thirty (30) days' notice will result in the forfeiture of your deposit and any unused days of the prepaid month.
 - **Notice of withdrawal is considered effective only when received during the centre's regular business hours, Monday to Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.** Notices submitted after business hours, on weekends, on statutory holidays, during scheduled centre closures (including winter closure and Professional Development Days), or on any other day the centre is closed will be deemed received on the next business day.
- An unexplained absence of thirty (30) days without communication will be treated as abandonment and will result in termination from care. Separately, a child may not hold an active space for more than eight consecutive weeks without physically attending, even where fees continue to be paid. Any fees paid during a period of non-attendance are non-refundable.
- The management must be informed if anyone other than those listed on the anytime pick-up form will collect your child, and identification will be required in this case.
- Under no circumstances will an account be allowed to have a negative balance; if this occurs, care will be refused until the arrears are settled.
- Parents will read and sign the Parent Agreement & Terms of Enrollment every September as a refresh or if any changes have been made by Pluto.
- Parents are required to review and update their enrollment information, emergency contacts, and enrollment agreements annually or whenever information changes.

Termination of Enrollment

Pluto Day Care reserves the right to terminate services for reasons including but not limited to:

1. Non-payment of monthly fees (after 1 week).
2. Repeated late fee payments (2 or more).
3. Repeated late pick-ups (2 or more).
4. Failure to comply with the Parent Handbook, Enrollment Agreement, or Centre policies and procedures.
5. Failure to comply with illness exclusion policies or other health and safety requirements.
6. Providing false, misleading, or incomplete information at enrollment or during a child's attendance.
7. Failure to provide or maintain required emergency medication, emergency contact information, immunization records, or valid exemption documentation.
8. Failure to disclose significant medical, developmental, behavioural, or support needs that may impact the child's care or the safety of others.
9. Refusal to participate in recommended support planning or community services when reasonably required to support a child's successful participation in the program.
10. Behaviour by a child that cannot be safely supported despite reasonable interventions, as outlined in the **Behaviour & Safety** section of this handbook.
11. Chronic absenteeism without reasonable explanation or failure to physically attend the program for more than eight consecutive weeks.
12. Intoxication or impairment while on Pluto Day Care property.
13. Verbal abuse, harassment, discrimination, intimidation, threats, violence, sexual harassment, or other inappropriate conduct toward children, families, staff, volunteers, or visitors.
14. Any conduct that compromises the safety, security, well-being, or operation of the centre.
15. Any other circumstance where Pluto Day Care determines that continued enrollment is no longer in the best interests of the child, other children, families, staff, or the operation of the program.

Whenever reasonably possible, Pluto Day Care will communicate concerns with families and provide an opportunity to resolve them before terminating enrollment. However, Pluto Day Care reserves the right to immediately terminate care without notice where the health, safety, security, or well-being of children, families, staff, or the operation of the centre is at risk.

Final Information

Our Expectations of Families

To help us provide the safest and highest quality care possible, we ask every family to:

- Keep emergency contact information current.
- Notify us of changes to custody arrangements.
- Read Centre emails and important notices.
- Arrive on time for drop-off and pick-up.
- Pick up sick children within 60 minutes.
- Keep emergency medications current.
- Supply required clothing and diapering supplies.
- Label all belongings.
- Report contagious illnesses promptly.
- Treat children, families, and staff with kindness and respect.
- Pay child care fees on time.
- Follow Centre policies and procedures.

Working together allows us to provide the best possible experience for every child.

Thank You

Thank you for choosing Pluto Day Care.

We are honoured to be part of your child's early learning journey and truly appreciate the trust you place in us each day. Our team is committed to providing a safe, caring, and engaging environment where children can learn, grow, and thrive.

We look forward to partnering with your family and supporting your child throughout their time at Pluto Day Care.

If you have any questions, concerns, or feedback at any time, please don't hesitate to speak with your child's educator or Centre Supervisor. We are always happy to help.

Annual Updates

Parents/guardians are encouraged to review this handbook annually, or when updates are made. Additionally, parents/guardians must review and update their child's enrollment information, emergency contacts, medical information, permissions and enrollment agreements annually and whenever information changes.

Updates to this Handbook

Pluto Day Care reserves the right to amend this handbook, including its policies, procedures, fees, and other information, as necessary to comply with legislation, Ministry requirements, Public Health guidance, or operational needs. Families will be notified of significant changes in accordance with applicable legislation.

Pluto Day Care

www.plutodaycare.com