

Parent Handbook



Before & After school



RisingOaks
Early Learning Ontario

This information is available in alternate formats and/or with communication supports, upon request. Contact marketing@RisingOaks.ca for assistance.

Welcome to RisingOaks' Before & After School Program

RisingOaks' school-age programs are for students in JK to age 12. Children will engage in learning, create adventures and nurture personal relationships.

Students will explore in the six primary areas of learning: creativity/innovation, language, health & physical activity, numeracy, personal & social development, and science. There will also be opportunity for project work based on the children's interest.

Families may choose before school, after school or both and may enroll their child for 2, 3, 4 or 5 days per week on a set recurring schedule. Those with a variable work schedule may be eligible for a flex care schedule.

Program Statement

Our educators aim to achieve 9 program goals to support learning and development.

1. To promote the health, safety and well-being of children, ensuring individual needs are met, within RisingOaks' program.
2. To promote good nutrition and healthy eating habits for children.
3. To foster engagement and the development of positive, responsive relationships between children, families and educators.
4. To actively engage with community partners to enhance RisingOaks' program.
5. To give children a voice for self-expression, exchange of ideas and positive communication among their peers and educators.
6. To support the development of children's self-awareness, self-confidence, self-regulation and self-esteem.
7. To foster children's exploration, play and inquiry through a variety of child-initiated, educator-supported activities; including a mix of indoor, outdoor, active and quiet activities.
8. To create positive learning environments that support children in their learning and development based on their individual needs.
9. To enhance the quality of RisingOaks' program by supporting each employee in professional development and through on-going coaching and mentoring.

Families are encouraged to view the full Program Statement on RisingOaks' website www.RisingOaks.ca/program-statement. The online version of The Program Statement provides an overview of the following: Four Foundations, Pedagogical Approaches, Our Approaches to Achieve stated goals - including what you might see in our program and what we do behind the scenes. Alternatively, you can request a paper copy from the supervisor.

Canada-Wide Early Learning & Child Care System

In 2022, Ontario signed the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (CWELCC) with the Government of Canada. Significant new federal investments through this agreement will support: fee reductions, increasing the number of licensed child care spaces, addressing barriers to providing inclusive child care, and supporting the early childhood workforce.

Funding under the CWELCC Agreement will be used to build and leverage the success of Ontario's existing early learning and child care system by increasing quality, accessibility, affordability and inclusivity in early learning and child care, towards achieving the objectives of:

- a. Providing a 25% fee reduction (for eligible children) retroactive to April 1, 2022 building to a 50% reduction in average parent costs for licensed early learning and child care and reaching an average parent fee of \$10 a day by 2025-26 for licensed child care spaces;
- b. Creating 86,000 new high-quality, affordable licensed child care spaces (relative to 2019 levels), predominantly through not-for-profit licensed child care;
- c. Addressing barriers to provide inclusive child care; and
- d. Valuing the early childhood workforce and providing them with training and development opportunities.

“Eligible Children” means any Child under six years old; and up until June 30 in a calendar year, any Child who (a) turns six years old between January 1 and June 30 in that calendar year, and (b) is enrolled in a licensed infant, toddler, preschool or kindergarten group, a licensed family age group, or home child care, as defined in the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014.

RisingOaks Early Learning has been approved and is operating under the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) program.

OneList: Central Registry and Waitlist

RisingOaks uses OneList Waterloo Region as it's central registry and waitlist. Search under the licensed child care section www.regionofwaterloo.onehsn.com. Here is a brief overview of the process:

1. Register for OneList

- Search for the centre in your child's school.
- Place your child on the list for that centre.

2. Contact from centre(s)

- Acknowledgment email from RisingOaks
- Clarify care needs
- Book a tour of the centre

3. Waitlist Management

- As your care needs change, please login to OneList to update your waitlist requests.
- Checking your status. Contact the centre to check on the status of your waitlist application.

4. Respond to space offers

- From time to time, the centre supervisor may email you to confirm if you are still looking for space. Please respond in a timely manner.
- Once a space is offered to you, you will be given a deadline to return your Application for Enrolment, customer deposit (50% of first month's fees) and other paperwork.

For more details, [click here to read our Waitlist Policy](#).

Enrolment Process

Once we receive your application via OneList, you will receive an email with the Registration Package of forms to complete. We require two-weeks (10 business days) from the date your forms package is received in order to process your child's registration and ensure all requirements are in place to meet Ministry guidelines.

Base Fees

- Base fees include a non-refundable registration fee per child upon first enrolment and daily child care fees. Note that a customer deposit may be charged and will be applied to your base fees in your last month of care.
- Programs are available to parents on a full/part-time basis (minimum 2 days per week) with a set recurring schedule.
- Fees are calculated on a daily basis and are charged based on scheduled days of care.
- RisingOaks does not issue credits or reduce fees due to sick days, vacation days, or any unexpected centre closures.
- Fees are not charged on planned closure days as listed in the last page of this document.
- Full or partial subsidies are available through the Region of Waterloo. Contact 519-575-4400
- Rates are determined annually and available at:
<https://www.risingoaks.ca/child-care-fees>

Base Fees

- Non-Base Fees include those which are discretionary for optional programming or fees that only apply in certain circumstances.
- **At the current time, the following non-base fees may apply:**
 - NSF/Bank Services Charge, \$30 per returned payment
 - Camp cancellation fees, if applicable.

Methods of Payment

Pre-authorized Debit (PAD) is the primary method of payment. On a case-by-case basis, post-dated cheques or e-transfer may be approved.

PA Days, March & Winter Break

Opt-Out: Families are required to opt-out in writing if not attending a PA Day, March or Winter Break camp. You must opt-out with a minimum of 10 business days. Failure to do so, will result in your account being charged for these dates. RisingOaks will provide reminders about the deadline.

Opt-In: If your child does not regularly attend on Fridays or attends another school, you may wish to opt-in for a full-day of care with RisingOaks.

Opt-Out and Opt-In forms can be found on our website:

<https://www.risingoaks.ca/pa-days>

Program & Schedule Changes

Should you require a change in schedule for your child care needs, please submit your request in writing to your centre supervisor providing notice of at least 10 business days. A schedule change is intended to change the number of days of care on an ongoing basis or to change the specific days of the week within your schedule – again on an ongoing basis. There is no reduction in fees due to missed days or vacation.

Withdrawal of Program or Days

We require a notice of 10 business days to withdraw from the program, including families who have pre-enrolled but have not yet started. Fees are owing for the duration of the notice period. Customer deposits will be credited to the account and any necessary adjustments (i.e., outstanding balances or additional credits) will be made.

Health & Safety

RisingOaks has a purpose and obligation to ensure the safety and well-being of the children in its care. We have policies and procedures to ensure your child's health and safety in order to create a positive learning environment. These include:

- Secured entrance
- Serious Occurrences
- Staff Records Checks
- Staff to child ratios set out in the Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA)
- Positive Guidance Techniques
- Prohibited Practices

It is recommended that you keep your child home when they are showing signs of illness. There will be no reduction in fees due to illness. If a child has been suspended from school, they may not attend RisingOaks' program until the suspension is complete. There will be no reduction in fees due to suspension.

Accessibility

RisingOaks is committed to ensuring that its services are provided in an accessible manner. Our educators work closely with special needs resource partners to ensure that the needs of all children are met.

Administration of Medication

RisingOaks' educators are able to administer both prescription and non-prescription medication. It is preferable however that children receive all medication at home, if at all possible. If your child requires medication by injection (e.g., insulin), please speak to the centre supervisor as additional terms, conditions and training on your child's Individual Care Plan is required. Medication must be submitted directly to an educator for safe keeping and cannot be stored in your child's backpack.

Safe Arrival & Departure Policy

RisingOaks Early Learning strives to ensure the safe arrival and departure of the children in its care.

Parents or guardians are encouraged to maintain up-to-date contact information and to notify the centre of any absences via the [Digibot Parent Portal](#).

This policy outlines the next steps for staff to follow if a child has not arrived as expected and/or if they have not been picked up. When a child does not arrive or depart as expected, and no absence has been reported in Digibot, the educators will initiate a 3-step process to follow-up and confirm the whereabouts of the child.

This includes electronic notifications to parents/guardians, follow up phone calls to parents and emergency contacts and possible elevation to our sr. leadership team and/or local authorities.

Full details of this policy and its procedures can be found on our website at: <https://risingoaks.ca/safe-arrival-departure>

Emergency Management

In adverse weather conditions, parents are advised to listen to local radio stations and monitor RisingOaks' website or Facebook page for notices of an unexpected centre closure. RisingOaks' educators are trained in emergency preparedness and response in relation to fire, tornado and lock down procedures. Should an emergency situation arise that requires the children and staff to vacate the building for a longer period of time, it may be necessary for the group to move to the designated emergency shelter. RisingOaks will make every effort to provide timely communication with parents via phone and/or email.

Injury & Incident Reporting

When minor incidents (e.g., scrapes, bumps, behavioural concerns) do occur, the educators will reassure the child, provide first aid if needed and complete an Incident Report or a Notice of Inappropriate Behaviour (NIB) form. These reports explain the incident in detail. You will be asked to review it upon pick up and to sign the Report acknowledging its receipt. A copy will be provided or emailed to you. If medical attention is required, the educators will consult with you and/or call for emergency services as needed.

Late Pick-up Policy

Families with children picked up after the centres closing time are tracked and can expect the following:

- **First Late:** A call or email from the supervisor reminding them of the service hours.
- **Second Late:** A formal warning letter from the supervisor.
- **Third Late:** A third late may result in termination of care.

*Should a child be left in care more than an hour after the program closes, with no communication from the parent or the emergency contacts listed, Family and Children Services will be notified by the educator.

Off-Site Excursions

As part of RisingOaks' program, educators occasionally include activities off premise. Parents/guardians are required to sign permission forms after reviewing the information sheet that contains details regarding the transportation, activities, risks and safety management strategies. To learn more about **Safety First!** – a risk management guide for off-site activities, visit www.RisingOaks.ca/safety-first.

Nutrition

In our before and after school programs, RisingOaks serves a morning and afternoon snack prepared daily by our in-house cook. For PA Days and Camps, a bagged lunch may be required – please check communication from the centre on these programs. All food and drink sent from home must be clearly labeled with the child's name and adhere to [Food Guidelines](#) and/or [Bagged Lunch Policy](#).

Weekly menus are developed in consultation with Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating and reviewed by a Registered Dietician. Menus are available on our website at www.RisingOaks.ca/weekly-menu and posted in the child care centre to assist parents in planning meals at home.

Due to severe allergies, all RisingOaks locations are designated as Allergy Safe. Educators, in partnership with parents, do their utmost to ensure children with allergies are kept safe. Allergy lists are posted in the food preparation areas and serving areas. If your child is on an approved Food Agreement, or on bagged lunch days, please provide lunch as per RisingOaks' Bagged Lunch Policy any food sent from home must be nut free and not have a "may contain nuts" warning. RisingOaks reserves the right to limit other foods from home due to severe anaphylactic risks of children enrolled.

Prohibited Practices

RisingOaks believes in building positive relationships with children including the use of positive guidance techniques. RisingOaks does not condone the following prohibited practices as outlined under the Child Care and Early Years Act:

- a. Corporal punishment of a child;
- b. Physical restraint of a child, such as confining a child to a high chair, stroller or other device for the purpose of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless used to prevent the child from harming himself or someone else.
- c. Locking the exits of the centre for the purpose of confining a child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies;
- d. Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or derogatory language directed at a child or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
- e. Depriving a child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
- f. Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

RisingOaks—via the supervisory team—regularly monitors its programs and observes RECEs and other staff. Any use of these practices is investigated and may result in progressive discipline, up to and including termination. If you observe such practices, please immediately report them to the centre supervisor.

Supervision of Students and Volunteers

RisingOaks has a purpose and obligation to ensure the safety and well being of its vulnerable clients as well as the security of its operations. As such RisingOaks outlines its requirements for records checks, orientation and supervision of students and volunteers.

A clear police Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC) is required for students and volunteers, including those serving on RisingOaks' Board of Directors, who are 18 years and older.

An Offence Declaration is required for all students and volunteers who are 13 years and older upon the start of their placement or volunteer commitment.

Direct unsupervised access to the children (that is: when an adult is alone with a child other than their own) is not permitted for persons who are not employees of RisingOaks. Only employees will have direct unsupervised access to the children in RisingOaks' care.

No child will be supervised by a person under 18 years of age and placement students and volunteers are not counted in staffing ratios to meet minimum requirements of the Child Care & Early Years Act (CCEYA).

Students and volunteers receive an orientation to - and are required to adhere to - RisingOaks’ program philosophy, policies, procedures and practices.

Students and volunteers are supervised by a registered ECE (RECE) at all times when providing care and guidance to the children. Failure to adequately supervise a student or volunteer may be deemed to be professional misconduct under the Early Childhood Educators Act (2007) and be reported to the College of ECEs.

Communication

We value the partnership we build with the whole family and encourage open communication. Please reach out to us if you have any questions or concerns.

You will receive a personalized learning story at least once per month. Be sure to read our monthly e-news which includes important dates and learning that takes place in our programs. You may also wish to follow us on: facebook.com/RisingOaks.ca

Parent Issues & Concerns Policy

- RisingOaks strives to provide a transparent process for parents/guardians, the educators and management to use when parents/guardians bring forward issues/concerns.
- In support of RisingOaks’ Vision, Mission and Program Statement, all parties will foster positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians and child care staff. This includes fostering the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children.
- RisingOaks staff will be available to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction.

Reporting Parent Issues and Concerns

- Issues/concerns from parents/guardians may be brought forward verbally or in writing. Parents are encouraged to take advantage of the following channels to communicate your suggestions, concerns and/or seek clarification about RisingOaks’ policies, procedures and practices as the need arises:

Type	Examples	Speak to
Program-related	absences, program activities, food arrangements, etc.	RECEs
Operational	fees, schedule changes, hours of operation, staffing, waiting list, etc.	Centre Supervisor
Staff/Volunteer/Student Conduct	Any conduct concerns that may affect health, safety or wellbeing of a child.	Centre Supervisor

- Parents may also make a submission to our suggestion box at the centre entrance or online.
- Parents, at their discretion, may seek clarification from, or voice concerns to, the CEO at lprospero@RisingOaks.ca or by calling 519-894-0581, ext. 102
- All issues and concerns will be taken seriously and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties and as quickly as possible.

Responding to Parent Issues and Concerns

- Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially to the extent possible. Information may be shared with the centre supervisor and/or sr. leadership to assist in a resolution. Every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff, students and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons.
- An initial acknowledgement or response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within two business days with a follow up conducted within 10 business days.
- The centre supervisor, together with sr. leadership – where applicable, will determine if a full internal investigation is warranted.
- A parent/guardian who is not satisfied with resolution of their issue or concerns has the right to escalate their concern to any of the following:
 - The Board Chair by emailing: boardchair@RisingOaks.ca
 - Ministry of Education: 1-877-510-5333; information.met@ontario.ca
 - College of Early Childhood Educators 1 888 961-8558; discipline@college-ece.ca
 - Family and Children’s Services 519-576-0540

Respectful Conduct

- RisingOaks maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated from any party.
- If at any point a parent/guardian, staff or management feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the supervisor and/or CEO.

Public Duty to Report Suspected Child Abuse

- Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, is required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.
- If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact Family and Children’s Services directly.
- Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to Family and Children’s Services as per the “Duty to Report” requirement under the Child and Family Services Act. For more information, visit <http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaid/reportingabuse/index.aspx>

Hours of Operation

Monday to Friday during the school year from 6:30 am until the arrival bell, and from the dismissal bell until 6 pm. (note: Oak Creek and St. Nicholas' start time is 7:00 am)

Closure Dates

Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day to New Year's Day, Family Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday (Professional Development Day), Victoria Day, Canada Day (if on the weekend, we will close on the following Monday), Civic Holiday, Labour Day

Image Release

Upon enrolment you will be asked to review and sign an Image Release. This outlines your options regarding consent for RisingOaks to use such images internally within the program or externally for marketing, including photos we share on Facebook about the children's activities. You may change your consent at any time.

Membership

Membership is open to any individual, 18 years of age and older, who has a child in his or her care and custody who is enrolled in at least one (1) of RisingOaks' programs for which recurring monthly fees are paid to RisingOaks, and who is interested in furthering RisingOaks' Mission and Vision.

Visit: www.risingoaks.com/membership



Find us on
Facebook

facebook.com/RisingOaks.ca

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519-894-0581, ext. 108

RisingOaks.ca