

Parent Handbook



Before & After School



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' before and after school 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.

All RisingOaks before, after school and camp programs are licensed on an annual basis by the Ministry of Education's Licensing and Compliance Branch. A summary of our licensing visit can be found on the parent bulletin board at each centre.

The information in this booklet is to provide you with a better understanding of RisingOaks. If you have any questions, please ask the centre supervisor. They will be more than happy to assist you.

Thank you for choosing RisingOaks Early Learning!

Diversity + Equity + Inclusion = Belonging

At RisingOaks Early Learning, we uphold and maintain a community where families, children, educators and staff feel safe, respected, empowered, and a sense of belonging. With this sense of belonging, everyone can learn, grow, challenge themselves, and bring their perspective.

We respect the many different perspectives and lived experiences within our community. RisingOaks commits to being accountable to our community through reflective practice. Collectively, we strive to continuously challenge the status quo and enhance inclusivity and allyship within our community.

We commit to annually reviewing our diversity-equity-inclusion and belonging (DEIB) policies for areas for improvement, to active listening with each other, and to finding ways to gather the voices and lived DEIB experiences within our organization.

See <https://risingoaks.ca/dei-belonging> for more details.

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 <https://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

RisingOaks Early Learning is operating under the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) program. Families will benefit from reduced fees for eligible children).

“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.

For more details, visit: <https://risingoaks.ca/cwelcc-10-day>



OneList: Central Registry and Waitlist

RisingOaks uses OneList Waterloo Region as it's central registry and waitlist. Search under the licensed child care section https://regionofwaterloo.onehsn.com/ux_2_0/Landing/IndexMultiTenant
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 or you accept a space elsewhere, please login to OneList to update your waitlist requests. Periodically, you will receive automatic emails from the OneList system to reconfirm your care needs. It is important to respond to them in a timely manner or risk your application being removed.
- Checking your status. Contacting the centre to check on the status of your waitlist application.

4. Learn more about our program and respond to space offers

- Parents on the wait list can view a virtual tour on our website, review this parent handbook and monitor our social media channels to learn more about RisingOaks' programs.
- If a space is offered to you, you will have a short window of opportunity to accept the space. Even if your care needs have changed and you no longer require a space, please respond in a timely manner.



Enrolment Process

You will be contacted if a spaces becomes available for your child. Once you verbally accept a space, a digital offer of admission will be sent to you via the Digibot Parent Portal.

- Families will log in to complete various documents, consent items and populate their child's file.
- This includes, but is not limited to: immunization records, medical information, various policy sign offs, image release and more.
 - » This information is mandatory under the Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA).
- Failure to maintain your child's file, including immunizations could result in mandatory suspension from the program.
- Parents must inform the centre supervisor if there is a court order or custody agreement involving your child. It is essential that we have a current copy of the court order or agreement on file to best support the child, and the family.
- Before / after school programs are available to parents on a full or part-time basis (minimum 2 days per week) with a set recurring schedule.
- Requests to add additional days for part-time children must be made in writing to the supervisor. Such requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis and only if space allows within our licensed capacity and staff resources.

Base Fees

- Fees, including more details on our fee schedule and Payment Policies, are available at: <https://risingoaks.ca/child-care-fees>
- Base fees are defined as your daily child care fees or weekly fees for camps. Note that a customer deposit, equal to 10 days of fees per child will be charged and will be applied to your base fees in your last month of care.
- Fees are charged on all scheduled days, including statutory/ public holidays and professional learning days.
- Fees will not be charged on the non-statutory closure days during the Winter Break.
- PA Days, Winter Break, March Break and Summer Camps are offered on an opt-in basis. Only those who register will be charged.

- Monthly fees are divided into 2 equal payments, with 50% debited from your bank account on the 1st and the remainder on the 15th of each month. (details in payment policies)
- Full or partial subsidies are available through the Region of Waterloo. See [Help Paying for Childcare](#) - Region of Waterloo for more details.
- RisingOaks does not issue credits or reduce fees due to sick days, vacation days, or for closures due to weather, mechanical or electrical failure, or other building closures outside of our control (e.g., school strikes).
- Refunds will be provided for customer deposits, overpayment of fees, or billing errors at the sole discretion of RisingOaks.
- Changes to fees and/or payment policies are approved by the board of directors and communicated to parents 45 days before it takes effect.

Non-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
 - » Security Fob Deposit, \$25 per fob. Refundable once fob is returned.
 - » A \$10 reprogramming charge is applied for lost fobs.
 - » Security fees are waived for families in receipt of fee subsidy.
 - » Camp cancellation fees, if applicable.

Methods of Payment

All payments are processed using Pre-authorized Debit (PAD) via the Digibot Parent Portal, with the exception of summer camp fees, which are payable via credit card.

In exceptional circumstances, and at the sole discretion of RisingOaks, e-transfer or post-dated cheques may be approved.

PA Days, March & Winter Break, Summer Camp

Families are required to register in the Parent Portal if you wish for your child to attend a PA Day, Winter Break or March Break camps. Should plans change, you must submit a cancellation request via email to the supervisor with a minimum of 10 business days' notice. Failure to do so, will result in your account being charged for these dates. RisingOaks will provide reminders about the deadline. See <https://www.risingoaks.ca/pa-days> for more details.

Summer Camp is offered on a weekly basis and operates on a separate payment system with a weekly fee. Payment in full, or a deposit, is required at the time of registration. Summer Camp also has its own camp cancellation terms and conditions. For camp registration information and full-details on camp payments, visit <http://www.RisingOaks.ca/summer-camp>.



Maintaining Child Care Spaces During the Summer Months

Parents who have a child(ren) currently in a before and after school program as of June 1st of the calendar year have the following options with respect to care during the months of July and August:

- Summer Camp: children who have completed JK up to Grade 2 may register to attend RisingOaks' Summer Camp offered during the months of July and August. A weekly charge is applicable regardless of any time off during that week. Camp Registration is open to RisingOaks families for a 2-week pre-registration period in mid-February. Registration will open to the public on or around March 1.
 - » See <https://risingoaks.ca/summer-camp> for registration, cancellation and others details.
- Take the Summer Off: If you choose not to enrol your child(ren) in the Summer Camp program, you have the option to pre-enrol your child(ren) in the Before School and/or After School programs for the following September. If you do so by June 1, your customer deposit will be retained.
 - » A Confirmation of Child Care Space(s) will be issued by RisingOaks to guarantee your space for September.
 - » If you pre-enrol for September and later decide that your children will not be returning, the standard notice of 10 business days is required to withdraw from the program. Program fees are charged during the notice period.

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 Early Learning 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. Per Public Health, all children with vomiting or diarrhea must stay home for at least 48 hours, even after just one bout, regardless of outbreak status, unless the symptoms are related to a known cause or condition. This change helps prevent the spread of illness and keeps our community safe. 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 must notify the centre of any absences or expected late arrivals via the Digibot Parent Portal. You can log absences and late arrivals in advance or on the day of.

The 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 multi-step process to follow-up and confirm the whereabouts of the child.

This may include 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>.

This policy is a Ministry requirement aimed at ensuring the safety of each child. Your collaboration is needed to reduce the number of notifications you receive, and also the time and attention required of educators on this process. We thank you in advance for your cooperation and support.

Child Belongings

All items brought into the centre (e.g., clothing, back pack, water bottles etc.) must be clearly labeled with their name or initials. RisingOaks is not responsible for loss, theft or damage of personal belongings at the centre or while on a field trip. If you are not able to locate your child's belongings, please check the centre/school's Lost and Found or speak to your child's educator. RisingOaks runs a year-round fundraiser with Mabel's Labels where a portion of the proceeds go towards RisingOaks. These personalized labels are durable and dishwasher safe. To learn more visit:

<https://www.risingoaks.ca/donate>

Children require appropriate footwear for the activities and weather conditions. Please note that while flip-flops and sandals are allowed inside and while on the playground, children must wear sandals with a back strap, running shoes or boots when on the playground climber and on field trips.

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:

<https://www.risingoaks.ca/safety-first>





Nutrition

In our before and after school programs, a morning and afternoon snack prepared daily by our in-house cook. For PA Days and Camps, a bagged lunch is 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 in the Digibot Parent Portal and on our website at www.RisingOaks.ca/weekly-menu. They are also 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 Early Learning 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.
 - i. *Used only as a last resort and until the risk of harm is no longer imminent.*
- 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.
- 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 social media.



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.

Reporting Parent Issues and Concerns

- Issues or 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, stafng, 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; childcare_ontario@ontario.ca
 - » College of Early Childhood Educators 1 888 961-8558; discipline@college-ece.ca
 - » Family and Children's Services 519-576-0540

View the full policy at:

<https://risingoaks.ca/parent-issues-concerns>

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 <https://www.ontario.ca/page/report-child-abuse-and-neglect>

Image Release

Upon enrolment you will be asked to review and sign an Image Release through the Digibot Parent Portal . 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.

Hours of Operation & Closures

Monday to Friday. Most centres open at 6:30 a.m. and close at 6:00 p.m.; hours do vary by centre.

Closure Dates:

- Labour Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Region-wide Professional Learning Day (October)
- Winter Break (e.g., Christmas Day to New Year's Day)
- Family Day
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday (Professional Learning Day)
- Victoria Day
- Canada Day (if on the weekend, RisingOaks will close on Monday)
- Civic Holiday


As per our Payment Policy, fees are owing on all care days and statutory/public holidays and professional learning days, with the exception of the non-statutory closure days during the Winter Break.

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: <https://risingoaks.ca/membership> to learn more.

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 RisingOaks Early Learning

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RisingOaks.ca

