

# Manning Regional Child Care Association Policy Manual

## 1. Philosophy & Program Policy

### Purpose

To ensure children are cared for in a safe, stimulating, and nurturing environment that respects their individuality and supports holistic development.

### Process for Staff

- Implement Flight: Alberta's Early Learning and Care Framework in daily practice.
- Provide open-ended play, exploration, and reflection through Learning Stories.
- Maintain predictable routines while allowing flexibility for individual needs.
- Model respect and inclusion in all interactions with children and family

## **2. Community and School Partnerships & Engagement Policy**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the Manning Regional Child Care Association's (MRCCA) commitment to building and maintaining strong, collaborative relationships with schools, community organizations, and local municipalities. These partnerships strengthen the services available to families, avoid duplication, and ensure children and families receive holistic support.

### **Policy Statement**

MRCCA values community and school partnerships as essential to the success of children, families, and the community at large. Through open communication and collaboration, MRCCA will continue to play a leadership role in fostering strong community connections and working together to provide effective, coordinated programs and services.

### **Procedures**

#### **1. Partnership with Schools**

- MRCCA will maintain open communication and a strong working relationship with Manning Aurora Composite School (MAC) and Rosary School.
- Flexibility will be demonstrated to accommodate school schedules and collaborate to meet the needs of students and families.
- The Out of School Care program, which shares space with Manning Rosary School, will continue to operate in close partnership with the school.
- MAC School will remain an active partner, with ongoing communication between programs and school staff.

#### **2. Partnership with Community Agencies**

- MRCCA will collaborate with agencies and organizations in the community to provide services without duplication, including:
  - Family and Community Support Services (FCSS)
  - Family Resource Network
  - Manning & Area Early Childhood Parent Council
- MRCCA programs will also partner with Manning FCSS, Community Health, Respite Referral Services, Manning Youth Centre, and Peace 10 School Division as needed.

#### **3. Municipal Partnerships**

- MRCCA will maintain a positive working relationship with the Town of Manning and the County of Northern Lights, recognizing their importance in supporting local child care initiatives.

#### 4. Shared Facilities and Resources

- MRCCA shares facilities with the Manning Toy Lending Library, and resources will continue to be shared across programs for the benefit of families.

#### 5. Staff and Parent Awareness of Resources

- Staff will remain informed about available community resources and how to access them.
- Information about relevant community supports will be shared with parents when appropriate to meet family needs.

#### 6. Community Stakeholder Engagement

- All community stakeholders involved in the Manning Early Learning & Child Care Centre – The Learning Tree will receive an information package, which includes:
  - Background information
  - Board structure (Chair and members)
  - Goals and mission statement
  - Commitment to cultural awareness and diversity in programming
- MRCCA will continue to maintain a strong working relationship with the Family Resource Network and refer families regularly when additional supports are needed.

#### Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure partnerships remain strong, effective, and responsive to the evolving needs of children, families, and the community.

### **3. Manning Early Learning & Child Care Enrichment Program**

#### **Field Trips and Activities Policy**

##### **Purpose**

Manning Early Learning & Child Care is committed to providing enriching and engaging experiences that enhance children’s learning, promote social interaction, and create lasting memories. This policy outlines the programs offered, participation requirements, and safety expectations for field trips and enrichment activities.

##### **Programs Offered**

###### **1. Field Trips**

- Monthly outings such as visits to the Snack Shack for ice cream or freezies on hot summer days.
- Outdoor water play in the playground during summer months.
- Bug spray will be provided by the program.

###### **2. “Read With Me” Book Program**

- Children are encouraged to read 20 books with an adult.
- Upon completion, each child receives a free book of their choice.

###### **3. Parent Resource Centre**

- Access to books, puzzles, and games available for parents and children.

###### **4. “Crunch Mondays”**

- Two healthy snacks are provided.

##### **Enrollment and Opt-Out Options**

- Parents may **enroll** their child in the Field Trip and Activities Program at any time during the year.
- **Opt-out requests** will only be accepted at the end of each program year, effective **April 1**.

##### **Participation Fee**

- A fee of **\$10 per month** is required to participate in the Field Trips and Activities Program.
- This contribution helps cover program expenses and ensures the continuation of these offerings.

## **Guidelines for Participation**

### **1. Eligibility**

- All enrolled children are eligible to take part in activities.

### **2. Parental Consent**

- Parental/guardian consent is required for all field trips.
- Consent forms will be distributed and must be submitted prior to participation.

### **3. Behavior Expectations**

- Children are expected to follow staff directions during activities.
- Respectful, safe behavior is required at all times.

## **Safety Measures**

### **1. Supervision**

- All activities will be supervised by trained staff to ensure children's safety and well-being.

### **2. Staff-to-Child Ratios**

- The program will maintain at least the minimum staff-to-child ratios required under Alberta Child Care Licensing Regulations.
- Additional staff or volunteers may be assigned to provide closer supervision during higher-risk activities (e.g., water play).

### **3. Transportation**

- Field trips will not require transportation.

### **4. First Aid**

- Basic first aid supplies will be available at all times.
- At least one staff member with current First Aid/CPR certification will be present.
- In the event of an emergency, parents/guardians will be contacted immediately.

## **Program Review and Feedback**

- Parent feedback is encouraged and valued.
- Regular reviews will be conducted to assess program satisfaction and identify opportunities for improvement.

## **4. Inclusion and Diversity Policy**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all children, families, and staff at Manning Early Learning & Child Care are welcomed, respected, and supported in an inclusive and culturally responsive environment.

### **Policy Statement**

Manning Early Learning & Child Care is committed to creating a socially inclusive program that values diversity in all forms, including culture, language, ability, identity, and background. Every child will have equitable opportunities to participate, learn, and grow in a safe, supportive, and respectful environment.

### **Procedures**

#### **1. Social Inclusion**

- All children, regardless of age, ability, or background, are encouraged and supported to participate fully in the program.
- Staff model inclusive practices that promote acceptance and belonging for every child.

#### **2. Individual Needs**

- Special needs will be considered and accommodated wherever possible.
- Families are invited to share information about their child's unique needs so that staff can adapt programming appropriately.

#### **3. Cultural Awareness**

- Program planning will include activities, books, images, and materials that reflect a variety of cultural traditions and everyday experiences.
- Families are encouraged to share their cultural practices and resources to enrich the program.

#### **4. Learning About Diversity**

- Children will be supported in developing awareness of their own identities and respect for the identities of others.
- Staff will promote values of social responsibility, fairness, and care for self, others, and the environment.

#### **5. Respectful Environment**

- A culturally sensitive and socially inclusive environment will be maintained at all times.
- Discrimination, exclusion, or bias in any form will not be tolerated.

## 5. Manning Early Learning & Child Care

### Nutrition Program Policy

#### Purpose

The Nutrition Program is an optional initiative designed to provide high-quality meals that support children’s nutritional well-being and foster healthy eating habits. The program operates on a **cost-recovery basis** in response to parent demand and feedback.

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#### Program Features

- **Hot Lunch:** One hot lunch provided daily at noon.
  - **Special Occasion Treats:** Cookie decorating or special treats for occasions such as Valentine’s Day, Easter, Halloween, and Christmas.
  - **Farm to Table:** Integration of locally grown produce in partnership with the community garden. Children participate in growing fruits and vegetables, which are incorporated into “Friday Treats.”
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#### Enrollment and Opt-Out Options

- Parents may **enroll** their child in the Nutrition Program at any time during the year.
  - **Opt-out requests** will only be accepted at the end of each program year, effective **April 1**.
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#### Cost Management

- The program will be operated to cover all **staffing and food expenses**.
  - Staffing costs are fixed and non-negotiable.
  - Food costs will be reviewed regularly to maintain meal quality while managing expenses efficiently.
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#### Annual Budgeting

- An **annual budget forecast** will be prepared to ensure sustainability and accuracy in cost projections.
- Program fees will be determined based on anticipated staffing and food costs for the upcoming year.

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## Commitment to Quality

- All meals will be **balanced and nutritious**, provided in alignment with established child health and nutrition guidelines.
  - The program emphasizes variety, healthy choices, and positive eating experiences.
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## Food Safety and Allergy Considerations

- All food preparation and handling will follow **safe food handling practices** as required by health regulations.
  - Parents/guardians must **disclose any allergies or dietary restrictions** upon enrollment.
  - Staff will make every reasonable effort to **accommodate food allergies**; however, parents are advised that the program operates in a shared environment where cross-contamination risks may exist.
  - In cases of severe allergies, an **Individual Care Plan** may be required to ensure the child's safety with Parents providing all food.
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## Parental Communication

- Parents will receive **regular updates** on program costs, meal options, and any policy adjustments.
- Feedback from parents will be encouraged to support program improvement and sustainability.

## **6. Family Code of Conduct Policy**

### **Policy Statement**

The Manning Regional Child Care Association (MRCCA) is committed to fostering a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for all children, families, and staff. MRCCA values collaborative and positive partnerships with families. To maintain this standard, families are expected to follow the Code of Conduct outlined in this policy.

### **Purpose**

This policy establishes clear expectations for family behaviour and interactions within all our Programs; Manning Early Learning & Child Care Centre (Day Care & Preschool), Manning Out of School Care & Manning Family Day Home. It ensures that children, staff, and families are treated with dignity and respect, and that the Centre operates in a safe, welcoming environment.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all parents, guardians, and family members who are involved with our Programs, whether on-site, during events, or in communications with staff.

### **Policy Expectations**

#### **1. Respectful Communication**

- Families are expected to speak to staff, children, and other families in a polite and respectful manner.
- Concerns must be addressed through constructive discussion with staff or management, in accordance with the Complaint Resolution process.
- Aggressive, threatening, or disrespectful language or behaviour will not be tolerated.

#### **2. Cooperation with Program Policies**

- Families must follow all MRCCA policies, procedures, and agreements.
- Families are expected to support their child in following Program guidelines and routines.

#### **3. Child and Staff Safety**

- Any behaviour that compromises the safety, well-being, or dignity of staff, children, or families is strictly prohibited.
- The Centre reserves the right to terminate care immediately if conduct places the safety or well-being of others at risk.

#### 4. Positive Partnership

- Families are expected to work with staff as partners in supporting their child's learning and development.
- Families should share relevant information that assists the Programs in providing the best care for their child.

#### Procedures

When a breach of the Family Code of Conduct occurs, the following steps will be taken:

##### 1. Verbal Reminder

- Staff or management will address the concern directly with the parent/guardian, identifying the issue and reminding them of the Code of Conduct.

##### 2. Written Warning

- If the behaviour continues or is more serious, management will issue a written notice outlining the specific concerns, required changes, and potential consequences if the behaviour persists.

##### 3. Final Review and Termination of Care

- If the issue is unresolved, or if there is repeated or serious misconduct, the Program may terminate care in accordance with the Termination of Care Policy.
- The Centre reserves the right to bypass steps and terminate care immediately if the behaviour poses a threat to the safety or well-being of staff, children, or families.

#### Compliance

Failure to comply with this policy may result in a review of the family's continued participation in the Program, up to and including termination of care.

## 7. Complaint Resolution Process Policy

### Policy Statement

The Manning Regional Child Care Association (MRCCA) values open communication and is committed to addressing concerns from families, staff, and community members in a respectful, timely, and transparent manner. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly and consistently, while supporting positive relationships and maintaining compliance with the *Early Learning and Child Care Act* and Regulation.

### Purpose

This policy establishes a clear process for addressing complaints related to all of MRCCA's Programs; Manning Early Learning & Child Care Centre (Day Care & Preschool), Manning Out of School Care & Manning Family Day Home, services, staff, or operations. It ensures that all concerns are heard, documented, and resolved in a manner that promotes accountability, fairness, and continuous improvement.

### Scope

This policy applies to all parents, guardians, staff, and community members who raise a concern or complaint related to the Programs.

### Guiding Principles

- **Respect:** All concerns will be handled respectfully, without fear of retaliation.
- **Transparency:** Families will be informed of the process, timelines, and outcomes.
- **Fairness:** Complaints will be addressed objectively and impartially.
- **Confidentiality:** Information will be shared only with those directly involved in addressing the complaint.
- **Compliance:** Complaints regarding licensing requirements will be addressed in accordance with Alberta regulations.

### Procedure

#### 1. Step One: Informal Resolution

- Parents/guardians are encouraged to first discuss concerns directly with the staff member involved.
- Staff are expected to listen respectfully, clarify concerns, and work toward a solution.

#### 2. Step Two: Escalation to Management

- If the concern is not resolved, it should be brought to a Management Team member in writing or verbally.

- Management will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within **two business days** and schedule a meeting with the parent/guardian if needed.
- Management will investigate the concern by reviewing documentation, consulting with staff, and gathering relevant information.

### 3. Step Three: Written Response

- Management will provide a written response within **ten business days**, outlining the findings, decisions, and any actions taken.
- If additional time is required due to the nature of the complaint, families will be notified in writing.

### 4. Step Four: External Resolution

- If the complaint relates to licensing or if the parent/guardian is not satisfied with the resolution, they may contact **Alberta Child Care Licensing** directly.
- Contact information for Licensing is posted on the Centre's parent information board and available upon request.

## Documentation

- All complaints, discussions, investigations, and resolutions will be documented in writing and retained in the Program's records in accordance with Alberta regulations.
- Documentation will remain confidential and accessible only to authorized personnel.

## Compliance

Failure to follow this policy may result in further review by management or external regulatory authorities.

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## 8. Termination of Care Policy

### Purpose

The Manning Regional Child Care Association (MRCCA) strives to provide a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for all children, families, and staff in all our Programs; Manning Early Learning and Child Care Centre (Day Care & Preschool), Manning Out of School Care and Manning Family Day Home. We recognize that a positive partnership between the Programs and families is essential to the success of our programs. This policy outlines the circumstances under which care may be terminated and the procedures that will be followed.

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### Policy Statement

MRCCA reserves the right to terminate care when the relationship between the family and the Program is no longer positive, respectful, or in the best interests of the child, staff, or other families. Termination of care will be considered only after all reasonable efforts have been made to resolve concerns.

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### Grounds for Termination

Care may be terminated for any of the following reasons:

#### 1. Failure to Follow Policies

- Persistent disregard for the Program's policies or procedures.

#### 2. Disruptive or Disrespectful Behavior

- Behavior by a parent/guardian that is confrontational, abusive, threatening, or consistently negative toward staff, children, or other families.

#### 3. Undermining Program Integrity

- Repeated actions that discredit or disrupt the Program's operations, including unfounded or excessive complaints to external agencies.

#### 4. Non-Payment of Fees

- Failure to pay fees according to the Program's payment policies.

#### 5. Health, Safety, or Legal Concerns

- Any situation where continued care may compromise the health, safety, or well-being of children, staff, or the Program as a whole.
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## Procedure

### 1. Documentation

- Concerns will be documented and shared with the family in writing.

### 2. Meeting

- A meeting may be offered to discuss the issue and explore solutions.

### 3. Notice of Termination

- If the issue cannot be resolved, the Program will provide written notice of termination. Standard notice will be two (2) weeks; however, immediate termination may occur in cases involving:
  - Threatening or abusive behavior,
  - Health or safety risks, or
  - Serious violation of policy.

### 4. Final Account

- Any outstanding fees must be paid before the child's final day of care.
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## Appeal

Families who disagree with the decision may submit a written appeal to the Board of Directors within five (5) business days of receiving notice. The Board will review and provide a written response within ten (10) business days.

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## Effective Date

This policy is effective upon approval by the Board of Directors and will be included in the Family Handbook and MRCCA Policy Manual.

## **9. Manning Preschool**

### **Policy: Enrollment and Waitlist**

Policy Number: MP-ENR-001

Effective Date: September 1, 2025

Approved By: Manning Regional Child Care Board of Directors

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#### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear, consistent, and equitable guidelines for determining enrollment and maintaining a waitlist at Manning Preschool.

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#### **2. Policy Statement**

Enrollment at Manning Preschool is determined by the child's birthdate and readiness for group learning. All children must be fully potty trained prior to attending. Priority for placement in available class spaces will be granted to children who meet these requirements. The waitlist will also be managed according to birthdate in order to maintain fairness and transparency.

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#### **3. Procedures**

##### **3.1 Enrollment**

- Children must meet the minimum age requirement for their program year, as determined by their birthdate.
- All children must be fully potty trained prior to enrollment.
- Enrollment offers will be extended in order of birthdate, with older eligible children receiving priority until all class spaces are filled.

##### **3.2 Waitlist**

- When class capacity has been reached, additional applicants will be placed on a waitlist.
  - The waitlist will be organized strictly by birthdate, with older children placed ahead of younger children.
  - Families on the waitlist will be contacted in order of birthdate as spaces become available.
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#### **4. Responsibilities**

- The Preschool Teacher is responsible for maintaining accurate enrollment and waitlist records.
  - The MRCCA Board is responsible for reviewing this policy annually and making revisions as required.
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#### **5. Review and Approval**

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure alignment with licensing requirements and community needs. Revisions must be approved by the Manning Preschool Board of Directors.

## **Manning Early Learning & Child Care – The Learning Tree**

### **10. Waitlist Policy**

#### **1. Eligibility to Apply**

- Parents or legal guardians must complete a Waitlist Application Form and provide all required information accurately.
  - A child will be added to the waitlist once documentation is complete.
  - Unborn children may be placed on the waitlist if the application is submitted during pregnancy.
  - Parents are encouraged to select the earliest start date they are realistically able to begin care.
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#### **2. Placement on the Waitlist**

Children are placed on the waitlist according to the following factors:

1. Date a completed application is received (electronic or hard copy).
  2. Requested start date (month).
  3. Child's age group at anticipated start.
  4. Number of days per week requested (priority to full-time, then part-time in order of 4 days, 3 days, 2 days).
  5. Whether the application is for siblings.
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#### **3. Priority Considerations**

Priority placement on the waitlist is given in the following order:

1. Staff children – children of current Learning Tree employees.
  2. Siblings – siblings of currently enrolled children.
  3. Full-time enrollment – children requiring 5-day per week care.
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#### **4. Space Offers**

- When a space becomes available, it will be offered to the next eligible family on the waitlist.
- If a family's requested start date is in the future, they may choose to:
  - Accept the space early.
  - Decline and retain their place on the list if the offer falls within 30 days before or after their requested start date.

- Decline and move to the bottom of the list if the offer falls outside of the 30-day window.
  - If a space is unavailable for the requested month, the application will automatically roll to the following month's list while keeping its original application date.
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#### 5. Maintaining the Waitlist

- Families on the waitlist will be contacted periodically by email.
  - If a response is not received within 14 days, the child may be removed from the waitlist.
  - If the parent later confirms interest, the application may be reinstated, but the application date will reset to the date of confirmation.
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#### 6. Parent Inquiries

- Parents may request their child's position on the waitlist by contacting the Site Supervisor.
  - Inquiries will be responded to within 24 hours (or the next business day).
  - Parents will be advised that their child's position may change if:
    - Other families withdraw,
    - Start dates shift, or
    - Priority placements (staff, siblings, full-time care) are added.
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#### 7. Space Availability & Notice

- Spaces become available when a child graduates to school or a family terminates care.
  - Families are required to give one full month's notice before leaving.
  - Parents will typically receive at least one month's notice of an available space, although more notice may be possible.
  - Families with preschoolers entering kindergarten in September must notify the Centre by the last working day in April.
  - Waitlist families seeking care between July and September will begin receiving offers in mid-May, once kindergarten transitions are confirmed.
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