



## PARENT HANDBOOK

**CENTRE ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CENTRE PHONE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CENTRE HOURS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CENTRE DIRECTOR:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CENTRE EMAIL:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CENTRE EVACUATION SITE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**AREA MANAGER & CONTACT:** \_\_\_\_\_

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## WELCOME TO BRIGHTPATH



Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to BrightPath!

For many children, this will be their first time leaving the comfort and familiarity of their home to venture into a new and exciting world of discovery. Our goal at BrightPath is to ensure that each child feels comfortable and secure while they embark on this journey.

Our educators will work hand in hand with each of you to ensure the transition from home to Centre goes smoothly. We feel it is important to keep you updated daily on your child's activities and routines, as well as provide observations related to their development. Our educators, Centre Director and the rest of our BrightPath team are available as resources at any time.

Each year, BrightPath reviews and revises the guidelines and policies outlined in this handbook to ensure our childcare standards continue to meet or exceed the requirements set up by our licensing bodies. Should our policies change, we will provide you with reasonable notice of modifications that will impact you and your child.

Our team at BrightPath endeavours to achieve the highest quality care for your child. Please feel free to contact your Centre Director on any matter regarding your child or the Centre. If you would like further information about your Centre or BrightPath, please do not hesitate to contact our head office at 888.808.2252 or [info@brightpathkids.com](mailto:info@brightpathkids.com).

We look forward to sharing your child's early years with you and your family.

Sincerely,

*Mary Ann Curran*

Mary Ann Curran  
Chief Executive Officer  
BrightPath Early Learning Inc.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

“Our model of care will provide the best intellectual, social and physical child development, delivered by capable and nurturing personnel within the best environments”



### Develop the Mind

Your child will benefit from our age appropriate, professional and well thought out curriculums, designed to establish a strong skill base and love of learning. Our learning environment is play-based, which supports our children to discover new concepts, uncover hidden mysteries and imagine new possibilities, all while allowing them to learn at their own pace. Early learning enables children to develop the confidence to tackle problems, overcome obstacles and succeed. We understand the impact quality education can have on young children and are committed to fulfilling a high level of excellence within our Centres. The core of that excellence begins with our educators who are trained and qualified to provide a superior level of instruction and teaching.

### Nourish the Body

Activity, fitness and play are all key elements to our program. With regular outdoor time and planned indoor activities, our children experience a world of movement, dance and recreation. At BrightPath, we have incorporated nutrition and physical fitness into our programs. We have partnered with a Registered Dietician & Nutritionist who has developed a menu that provides fresh food, prepared daily. Our guidelines reduce the intake of sugar and salt in children's diets and meet all recommendations from Canada's Food Guide. Our menus are rotated each week and can be adapted to meet the needs and concerns of children's allergies.

### Inspire the Soul

The BrightPath environment encourages a child's individuality, creativity and exploration. We help develop children's social, emotional and physical needs as they grow, develop and mature throughout their journey. We promote freedom and independence while emphasizing the importance of team work and social skills. We celebrate differences and emphasize inclusion, while maintaining a strong sense of connection within the communities we serve. BrightPath demonstrates and practices respect in our Centres and classrooms, for each other and our families, while always representing a commitment to our values.

## THE BRIGHTPATH PROGRAM

BrightPath offers a wide variety of developmentally appropriate programs for children with a blended approach combining Frog Street (curriculum based programming) and Emergent (child lead). Our team aims to provide a well-balanced learning environment where children are free to observe, question, experiment and explore.

### AGE GROUPINGS

Centre classrooms may be divided into the following groups:

- Infants
- Toddlers
- Threes
- Preschoolers
- ECS
- Out of School Care

Each educator brings individual skills and experiences that enhance their unique teaching style, therefore variations within rooms will occur. The centre has a clear set of goals based on current early childhood education theories, practices, and curriculum, which form the basis of each classroom's program. Your child's educator is available to discuss our program and your child's progress with you.

### PROGRAM LAYOUT

The **morning program** is focused on various activities from our **Frog Street curriculum**.

Frog Street curriculums are divided into four age groups:

- Infants (0-18 months)
- Toddlers (19-36 months)
- Three's (36-48 months)
- Pre-K (48-60 months)

For Toddlers, Three's and Pre-K these activities relate to a theme. This curriculum includes age appropriate, intentional activities from each of the four learning domains (language, physical, cognitive, social-emotional) every day. The activities are designed to move children forward in their development. All programs are based on the latest early brain development research and geared to each age group's specific needs. Frog Street offers a strong daily routine that develops key social skills and emotional control. While Frog Street is implemented all centres/shelves are open and children are free to choose what activity/centre they want to participate in.

The **afternoon program** focuses on **Emergent programming**, your child will be invited to explore a topic based on the interests of the children in the classroom. These interests are determined by written observations of the teachers based on what the children are playing and talking about. After observing the children's interests, teachers plan a project based learning experience for the children using an inter-disciplinary approach to learning. The natural pace of individual and group learning can emerge without the constraints of the clock. The teachers will create documentation panels to record and follow the learning experience of the children throughout the class projects. These panels will be shared with the children and parents through display in or outside the classroom. The observations will also be documented through BP Connect and sent through daily reports to keep parents informed of their children's interests and skill development.

## DAILY ACTIVITIES

*Books and Literacy:* Books allow children to enter a world of “make believe”, learn about new and exciting things, and gain an understanding of the function and purpose of the written language. A wide selection of books and a quiet place for reading fosters a love of literature.

*Puzzles & Manipulates:* Small muscles in the hand are developed while handling and positioning puzzle pieces. The recognition of shape and pattern needed to complete puzzles is an important pre-reading and pre-writing skill.

*Blocks and Floor Toys:* Manipulation of blocks (stacking, balancing, arranging and lifting) helps children develop gross motor and fine motor skills needed to develop the pincer grip. Blocks provide opportunities for expressing creativity, developing problem solving skills and familiarity with size, weight and shape.

*Group Time:* Group time is an important part of the classroom’s routine. It is a time for story and language development, music and movement activities, and other varied learning experiences. Children learn to respond to the needs of others while in a group situations.

*Dramatic Play:* Every room has a pretend and learn area devoted to developing a child’s sense of “make believe”. Dramatic play and social interactions begin here, but are not confined to this space. Dramatic play grows from the experiences of the children and is a meaningful way for children to share both experiences and knowledge of the world.

*Sensory Play:* Sensory activities allow children to play and explore materials with all their senses. Children develop in all learning domains as they explore, create, and play with these materials. Some materials you might find at the sensory tables include: sand, water, rice or cornstarch goop.

*Music & Movement:* Music time is an important and fun part of the children’s day. As children move and sing they breathe more deeply delivering more oxygen to the brain. Music enhances mood, memory and attention, teachers incorporate various activities including movement and sing along to the program. Research believes that music rhythms, patterns, contrast and varying tonalities are a powerful way to present information to children. The inter-curricular program offers a dedicated time each month with a professional music instructor introducing various genres of music.

*Creativity:* Children are free to explore various art and collage materials in this area. The children are encouraged to express themselves through different mediums with the focus on the process rather than the product.

*Naps & Quiet Time:* Nap time is important for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and some kindergarten children. Infants sleep “on-demand”, based on their own schedule. For other age groups, our daily schedule incorporates a balance of active and quiet play, including a rest period. During this time, children are encouraged to rest, but not required to sleep. Children who do not sleep are allowed to get up and participate in quiet activities after a period of rest, while still respecting the quiet time so others can nap.

*Hatch Computers (Applicable/centres ONLY):* iStartSmart by Hatch revolutionizes classroom technology, providing research-based content combined with the latest touchscreen technology and powerful progress monitoring tools. Children can use the technology independently, putting individualized learning at each child’s fingertips. iStartSmart engages them in core math and literacy concepts and automatically moves them through scaffolded levels. The system monitors each child’s progress every time they login, so teachers can quickly and easily understand the diverse needs of each child in the classroom.

*Tablets (Applicable centres/programs ONLY):* Tablets are available with age appropriate programs focusing on literacy, math and science based programs. Technology time is limited for each child, is monitored by the educators and follows the technology policy.

*Outdoor Play:* Outdoor play develops gross motor skills such as climbing, running, jumping and throwing. Children cannot develop the fine motor skills required for writing before the large muscles of the arms are developed. Outdoor activities develop spatial and body awareness. Children experience what it is like to fly through the air when they jump, what it means to go under, around, through and over. A full knowledge of where they are in relation to the other objects and what they can do is essential before children can begin to be in full control of their body. Ball games teach children to throw, kick, roll or bat at targets. Hand-eye coordination is essential skill developed through these activities.

We provide our research-based proprietary **WeeMove** physical literacy program for preschool age children. The program focuses on development of locomotor, manipulative and balance skills in a fun and challenging way. This program is provided indoors and outdoors depending on access to playgrounds due to weather conditions.

*Cultural Activities:* Our program at BrightPath is planned to encourage the children's understanding of and involvement in the broader community. The program includes various ethnic and cultural activities. Cultural pictures, puzzles, manipulative toys, books, dolls, dress up clothes, decorations, and music are incorporated to develop an awareness of the variety of cultures which exist in our society.

*Loose Parts:* Loose parts are open-ended materials that can be arranged, re-arranged and combined in many ways. The loose parts can include items from nature such as pinecones, sticks, rocks and seashells or synthetic items. Children are free to choose and create with any combination of materials. Loose parts allow for creative expression, imagination, risk taking, an understanding of cause and effect and problem solving.

*Inter-Curricular Programs:* Music and fitness (dance, yoga) programs are provided once a month at the centre. These are inclusive programs facilitated through the activity fee. The programs are taught by professional instructors that have been trained in the various disciplines.

*Science and Nature:* A nature and science centre is an integral part of the classroom and offers hands-on learning. The nature and science learning centres include a variety of science tools, materials, and collections for children to explore and investigate. The materials in the classroom are chosen to support science concepts being explored based on children's interest and concern for our environment.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR RECREATION PROGRAMS (WHERE APPLICABLE)**

BrightPath Studios offers a variety of active programs in Centre's that have a dedicated gym. These options range from dance and gymnastics/acro to karate and multi-sports classes. We also offer Early Learning Programs to assist with reading and math skills, which provide a unique opportunity to reinforce essential learning skills in a small group setting. Programs vary by location and are taught by qualified instructors.

These programs are offered to engage your child's mind and body during their day, providing an opportunity for them to meet children with similar interests, while freeing up valuable time in the evening and on weekends to spend with family. These programs are offered at an additional fee and run in three terms through the year. Information on classes, locations and fees can be found at [www.BrightPathStudios.ca](http://www.BrightPathStudios.ca).



## **BEGINNING YOUR JOURNEY AT BRIGHTPATH**

### **ORIENTATION/TRANSITION**

The Centre will provide opportunities for transition into the program to allow children to be gradually introduced to, become familiar with the classroom routines, activities, Centre personnel and their peers. This experience is an essential part of ensuring that your child is comfortable during their first week of care. Orientation sessions are usually held between 9:00 and 11:00 daily based on availability, with parents pre-booking prior to enrollment. Parent is required to stay on site as the child is not yet registered to the program.

### **FIRST DAY: WHAT TO BRING**

- Indoor shoes (these are required to stay at the Centre)
- Nap bedding (A sheet & blanket in a bag – these will be taken home every Friday for washing)
- Diapers, wipes and diaper cream if applicable (ensure they are clearly labeled)
- Spare clothing
- Weather appropriate clothing
- Milk (if special type required) – please ensure this is labeled correctly with child's full name
- Hat and sunscreen in the spring, summer and fall
- Family picture
- Medication form (if required)

### **Do NOT Bring**

- Toys from home
- Cell Phones and Electronic Devices
- Outside food (Unless your child is at a Centre with no kitchen then check with Director)

### **COMMUNICATION DURING THE FIRST WEEK**

Our child care educators understand that it is difficult for parents/guardians to leave their child for the first time, and encourage parents/guardians to call throughout the day to check on their child's progress. The centre will provide parents/guardians daily updates in the form of reports through BrightPath Connect (communication app) for babies, toddlers and preschoolers detailing their daily activities including toileting, fluids intake, nap times, activities and other notes as applicable.

### **AGES AND STAGES QUESTIONNAIRES (ASQ-3 & ASQ:SE)**

The first 5 years of a child's life are very important. BrightPath wants to help you provide the best start to your child's life. As part of our service, we provide the Ages and Stages Questionnaire to our families twice a year, to help keep track of your child's development.

When the questionnaire is sent home, we ask that you complete the questions with your child and return to the Centre within ten days. The questions are specific to the age of your child and include questions about your child's communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving, personal-social skills and social emotional development.

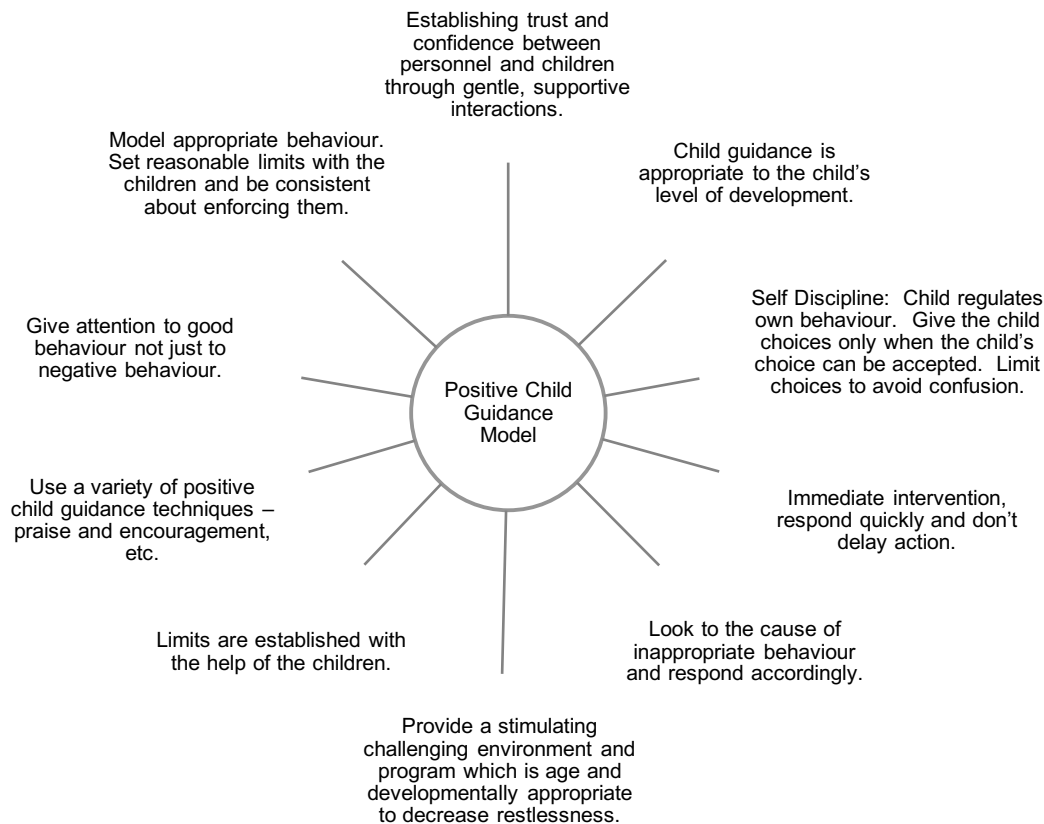
Once the questionnaire is returned it will be scored and a copy of the summary sheet will be returned to you identifying your child's strengths and if there are any areas of concern. If the questionnaire shows that your child is developing without concerns, we will provide some activities designed to encourage your child's development.

If the questionnaire shows some possible concerns, we will contact you and set up a meeting to review further going over plans for follow up, community resources/services that may be useful.

## CHILD BEHAVIOURAL GUIDANCE

It is our policy to focus on encouragement and positive guidance, rather than discipline. Child care educators try to recognize why a child behaves in a certain way, and encourage more acceptable forms of behaviour. They also work hard to discover guidance strategies that work well and promote positive behaviour for each individual child. When necessary, children are given time away from the situation to reflect on their behaviour and consider more appropriate responses. Thinking time is a quiet, relaxed, neutral break – it is not punishment. At no time will a child be physically disciplined.

We have developed a philosophy of guidance that is age appropriate with self-control as the goal. The child, as well as the parents/guardians, will have input into the consequences for behaviour. For more details about our Child Behavioural Guidance policies and procedures, please contact your Centre Director.



The Child Guidance Policy is signed by each parent/guardian (or school age children, when applicable), and the educator that is responsible for the care of the children.

## **OUT-OF-SCHOOL PROGRAM – CHILD GUIDANCE**

When undesirable behaviours occur and a child needs to be stopped or redirected, the following intervention methods may be used:

- Discussion of the issue between the child care educator and the child or children involved.
- If, due to inappropriate behaviour, other children's safety may be at risk during a field trip, the Centre Director may have to suspend the child for the day of the trip.
- The child will be offered a choice of appropriate alternate activities. The adult will encourage the child to become interested and settled in the new experience. The children will be encouraged to use self-discipline, self-control and problem-solving skills. The educators will calmly discuss with the child how they feel and what would be the appropriate behaviour expected.
- Discipline procedures will first be handled by the educator on hand. If assistance is required, the Centre Director will be consulted. If the educator believes the situation to be of a reoccurring nature, the
  - parent/guardians will be notified of their child's behaviour.
- Resolution to the situation is sought through fair with inappropriate and appropriate consequences dependent upon adverse action, which was carried out. The children will be involved in deciding consequences for program of actions.
- Should a child continue behaviour to the point where a child is the physically, emotionally or verbally abusive to other children and educators, means
  - dismissal will be discussed with the parent/guardian and the Centre Director.
- Discipline will not result in the mistreatment of children such as physical or mental punishment. All disciplinary action will be age appropriate. The goal of the discipline policy is to encourage self-esteem and self-control. We encourage school-age children and parent/guardians to develop consequences for behaviour.
- Each September, a group meeting is held with all the children in the program to go over the rules of the program. If problems do arise within the group, the educator will sit down and discuss the problem with the children and how they can resolve it. If the problem is more specific and involves only one of two children, then they will be reminded of the guidance policy and talked to about the consequences of their behaviour.
- Whenever guidelines and rules are broken an incident report is filled out and must be signed by the parent/guardian. If problems persist then it may be necessary to setup a contract with the child, educator and parent/guardians stating procedures and consequences.

## **CODE OF ETHICS – FOR CHILD CARE PRACTITIONERS**

1. Work in partnership with parents, recognizing that parents have primary responsibility for the care of their children, valuing their commitment to the children and supporting them in meeting their responsibilities to their children.
2. Demonstrate caring for all children in all aspects of their practice.
3. Work in ways that enhance human dignity in trusting, caring and co-operative relationships that respect the worth and uniqueness of the individual.
4. Promote the health and well-being of all children.
5. Pursue, on an ongoing basis, the knowledge, skills and self-awareness needed to be professionally competent.
6. Enable children to participate to their fullest potential in environments carefully planned to serve individual needs and to facilitate the child's progress in the social, emotional, physical and cognitive areas of development.
7. Work in partnership with colleagues and other service providers in the community to support the well-being of children and their families.
8. Demonstrate integrity in all of their professional relationships.

Revised: APRIL 2017

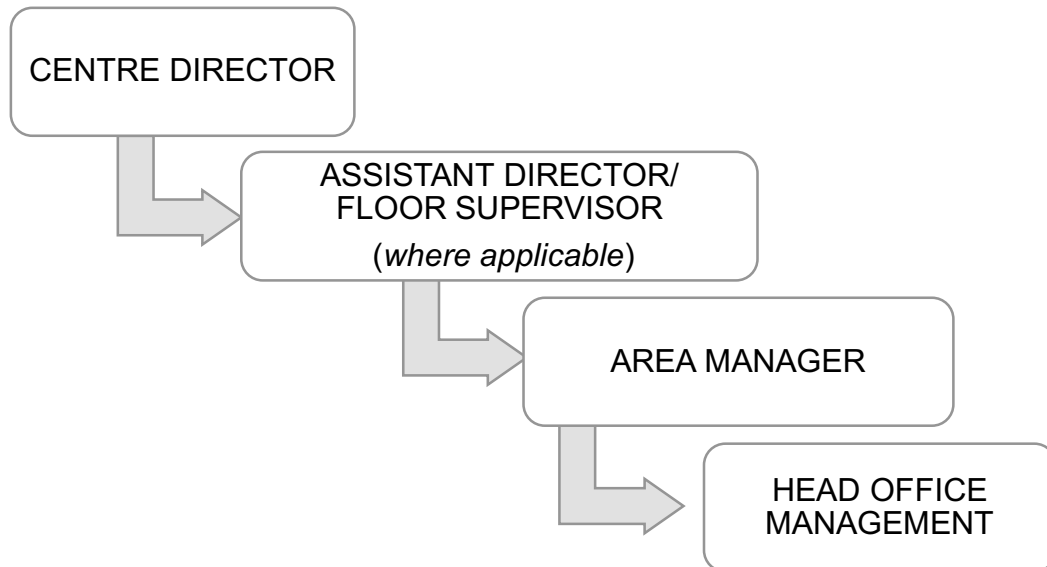
## COMMUNICATION

### KEY CONTACTS

For any questions/concerns regarding the daily operations of the Centre, please use this hierarchy whenever possible:

Toll Free Phone Number: 1.888.808.2252

General Email: [operations@BrightPathKids.com](mailto:operations@BrightPathKids.com)



### PARENT/GUARDIAN COMMUNICATION, FEEDBACK AND INPUT

The Centre actively encourages effective communication between parents/guardians and Centre. Your feedback and active involvement help us ensure that you and your child have the best experience with BrightPath. The following strategies are in place at each Centre to ensure effective communication:

- Daily two-way communication between parents/guardians and Centre personnel which is open and honest is an effective technique to share children's experiences, goals and expectations;
- Once a year, parents/guardians will be invited to participate in a survey to provide feedback regarding the program, personnel interaction, activities and suggestions for the future;
- Newsletters will be produced at a minimum of every 4-8 weeks and will include information such as: Centre information, parenting tips, highlighting policies and programming events for each class group;
- Centre personnel will provide families with information about the child's day in care including the following: activities that the child participated in, dietary intake, toileting information for infants and toddlers, sleeping patterns, and general disposition;
- If requested, we will arrange a mutually convenient time to conduct a Parent-Educator meeting to discuss the individual child;
- All Centre methods of communication (i.e. daily log books, communication books) will be reviewed with the parent upon their Centre orientation. We want to ensure parents/guardians are aware of all methods of communication available in the Centre;
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to volunteer in the program by attending special events at the Centre such as fundraisers, holiday celebrations, etc.;
- Parents/guardians will be invited to attend Information evenings throughout the year;

Revised: APRIL 2017

- Parents/guardians are encouraged to evaluate the Centre and provide feedback accordingly. Constructive criticism is an effective tool to improve the service delivery provided by the Centre to children and families. There is a suggestion box at our Centre, and parents are encouraged to submit their feedback to us there. Parents are also welcome to email [operations@BrightPathKids.com](mailto:operations@BrightPathKids.com);
- All parents are encouraged to become involved with the Parent Involvement Committee. This committee allows families to assist in planning special events at the Centre. Parents/guardians are also encouraged to volunteer in the program by attending special events at the Centre such as fundraisers, holiday celebrations etc.
- A Parent Wish List is distributed to the families on a regular basis. We ask for input from our families to identify any items, special events that they would like to see at the Centre.
- ASQ's (Ages and Stages Questionnaire) is a screening tool that provides a quick look at how children are doing in the areas of communication, physical abilities, social skill and problem solving. This tool is provided to parents/guardians two times per year to complete.
- We encourage all families to provide current email addresses to ensure all correspondence can be communicated in a timely manner. Failure to provide email addresses or opting out can result in missed information that is important such as closures, cancellation of bussing, emergency evacuations etc. The Centre cannot be responsible for lack of communication if email information has not been provided or is not up-to-date.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA BETWEEN PERSONNEL AND PARENTS**

BrightPath personnel are encouraged to not communicate or socialize with parents/guardians through social media, such as Facebook. We ask our personnel to remain professional with families, even in their personal lives.

## **OPEN DOOR PHILOSOPHY**

The 'Open Door' philosophy encourages the participation of parents/guardians, extended families and members of the community to enrich the programs and care provided to children. Families are encouraged to visit the Centre during operating hours to experience first-hand the educational programs offered to children. These visits allow parents/guardians to gain a more thorough understanding of their child's development progress.

## **CANADIAN ANTI-SPAM LEGISLATION (CASL) & OPTING OUT OF ELECTRONIC MESSAGES**

Canada implemented the anti-spam law in 2014, which requires express, versus implied, consent to send commercial electronic messages, including messages to email addresses and social networking accounts, and text messages sent to a cell phone. Please be advised that should you opt out of electronic messages, in cases of mass communication for an emergency or other timely information, you will not receive these. Where there is a need to communicate in such a case, Centres may not have time or ability to contact all affected parents by telephone. BrightPath head office may resort to use of social media (such as posting to Facebook pages managed by the company) to further ensure as many outlets to communicate are available to parents/guardians.

## **UPDATING YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION**

BrightPath is required by provincial licensing to request all parents/guardians update their contact information with the Centre. This usually occurs in September and April. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure the Centre has correct contact information on file. Please consider updating us with changes to emergency contacts, mailing addresses (even if you leave BrightPath, specifically for your tax receipts), anything regarding custody or access to the child(ren), etc. BrightPath cannot be responsible for lack of communication if email information has not been provided or is not up-to-date.

## **ENROLLMENT POLICIES, FEES AND PAYMENT TERMS**

### **ENROLLMENT POLICIES**

Enrollment Forms: Documents for enrollment must be filled out and returned to the Centre on or before your child's first day. The information you provide to us is extremely important and will remain confidential at all times.

Attendance Days: The Centre will do its best to accommodate all enrollment applications, however if placements are unavailable at the Centre you have chosen we will try to offer you a place at another BrightPath Centre. Part-time care is subject to Centre schedule/availability and is not available at all Centres.

Change of Schedule: If you need to make any changes to your child's schedule written notice must be provided on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month prior to requested change. This can include which days a week you require care, or full to part time, and vice versa. If your child needs additional days prior to the change you will be charged the daily drop-in rate for these days. Changes and additional days are subject to availability and must follow our part time policy.

Eligibility for the Out of School and Kindergarten Program: Every Out of School and Kindergarten Program has a maximum licensed capacity. In order for us to maintain this capacity it is necessary for us to implement a policy that limits the number of children enrolled in our program.

In doing so, the following considerations will be made for children to be enrolled into the Out of School and Kindergarten program: age of children, schools they currently attend, children with siblings in the preschool program and children who have been enrolled with the Centre in another program.

Once your OSC spot is confirmed a non-refundable deposit is required by August 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. This deposit will be put towards your September fees. If this deposit is not received, BrightPath cannot guarantee a spot for your child in the fall. Please contact your Centre Director for more information. If your child attends the School Age Program, the fees increase in the summer months to the full-time fee program.

Part Time Enrollment: At select locations, part time care is offered. Part time refers to full days, but not full week. BrightPath does not offer hourly, or a morning or afternoon option except where a separate program is available, such as Preschool/Kinder Prep.

If the Centre is able to accommodate your request for part time enrollment, you will be required to sign a separate form to advise you if our enrollment requires the space to be utilized by a full-time family, you will be provided first right-of-acceptance to move to full-time enrollment. Should this not meet the needs of your family, we will provide you one month's notice that will allow you to either transfer to another BrightPath location with part time availability or accept your withdrawal from our program.

Transferring to another BrightPath Centre: Should you wish to transfer to another BrightPath Centre, please talk with your Centre Director and they can help facilitate a smooth transition. All fees outstanding at the Centre must be paid in full before a transfer is allowed.

Withdrawal from Program: Written notice must be provided at least one month in advance. If notice is not received in writing, a fee equivalent to one month's childcare fees will be incurred.

## TUITION, ASSOCIATED FEES & PAYMENT TERMS

**Annual Fee:** An annual fee of \$50.00 dollars is charged upon enrollment. This helps pay for extra activities and special events held throughout the year.

**Increase in Fees:** The Centre reserves the right to adjust childcare fees. Families will be provided with at least 1 month written notice to change in childcare fees.

**Payment of Fees:** Full payment of child care fees are due on or before the first day of your child attending. Each month after, fees are due by the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month by Pre-Authorized Debit. A Pre-Authorized Debit “PAD” form will be provided at your time of enrollment and is to be completed and provided to the Centre with a void cheque. Should your payment be returned for whatever reason, a \$50.00 NSF Fee will be added to your account and the full balance must be paid within the same month returned by interact, certified cheque or PAD to avoid childcare suspension or termination.’ When your child ages up to the next age group, fees will change on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the following month after the age up occurs.

**Subsidy:** Some of our Centres are approved for families to participate in provincially based subsidy programs. Please note that subsidy approval is a parent/guardian responsibility and is to be applied for prior to commencing at the Centre. Subsidy approval must be provided to the Centre within 10 days of your child’s enrollment. Parents are required to pay any fees not covered by the Governments Subsidy Program, Social Assistance or other support agencies on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month in advance. If the request for subsidy is denied, parents/guardians are responsible for paying the full cost of childcare fees prior to going forward. Parents/guardians are responsible for renewing their subsidy within 30 days of receiving their notice from the Government and providing this information to the Centre. Failure to do so will result in responsibility of paying all childcare fees not covered while subsidy is expired.

**Late Fee:** A late fee of \$10/child for every 15 minutes or part thereof will be charged to any family who has not collected their child(ren) from the Centre by closing time. Your account will be billed accordingly, and will be added to your next payment scheduled. We understand that unexpected situations occur, so please call the Centre as soon as you can to advise them you will be late.

**Drop-In & Associated Fees:** BrightPath offers drop-in care at several locations. You may arrange set days you require drop in with the Centre Director, or contact us as soon as you know you require care. Drop-in care is not guaranteed, and is based on sufficient staff to maintain ratios and licensed space availability.

Drop-in fees vary by Centre and must be paid on day of drop in by debit at the Centre. Cash will not be accepted.

**Vacations/Illness:** Full monthly fees are required irrespective of days missed for vacations, illness or statutory holidays. The monthly fee covers both actual care and the guaranteed space. Credit will not be given for any missed days.

**Make Up Days (Part Time):** Make up days are not offered for children attending the Centre on a Part-Time basis. Part time children who attend days in excess of scheduled days will be charged based on our drop-in fees and will be required to pay via debit on these days.

## HEALTH & WELLNESS

### IMMUNIZATIONS

Immunization – Ontario ONLY: The Centre is required to maintain up-to-date immunization records for all children attending the Centre. Parents/guardians are requested to supply proof of immunization. Please advise the Centre of any updated immunizations. For parents who choose not to immunize we request parents to sign a form indicating this.

### ILLNESS/COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

It is our policy not to admit any child who has a communicable disease. We require the child to be symptom free for 24 hours or a doctor's clearance stating that they are no longer infectious before they can be re-admitted to the Centre. Please notify the Centre if your child has been exposed to or has a communicable disease. We will advise parents/guardians of a communicable disease in the Centre by placing a notice in each room and emailing. The Centre Director reserves the right to send home or refuse attendance to any child that is considered not well enough to attend. If your child is unwell or showing signs of an infectious or contagious disease, we will contact you immediately and you will be required to pick them up from the Centre. If illness occurs while a school-aged child is at school, the school must contact the parent/guardian directly. You must then advise the Centre of the situation.

### COMMON ILLNESSES

Outbreak of Illness/Communicable Disease: An outbreak is defined as a sudden rise or incidence of a disease. Alberta Services requires child care programs to report an outbreak if there are 2 or more incidences of one specific disease in a program.

In the case of an outbreak at the Centre we will inform all families and provide information relating to the disease. Thorough sanitization practices will take place daily during the time of the outbreak. Children will be excluded from the program until symptom free (24 to 48 hours as instructed by Health) or advised by the family physician.

Common Cold: Symptoms include mild cough, runny nose, sneezing and possibly fever. Your child can attend the Centre if they are well enough to take part in all activities including outdoor play. If they are running a fever, are lethargic or generally unwell they should remain at home as this is in the best interest of your child and the other children in the Centre.

Pink Eye: Symptoms include swollen eye lid(s), itchy sore eye(s) and yellowish puss-like discharge. As it is contagious, children must be excluded from the Centre for at least 24 hours after their first dose of antibiotic treatment.

Strep Throat & Scarlet Fever: Symptoms include a fever, sore throat, pus on tonsils, tender nodes in the neck and sometimes a fine rash develops known as Scarlet Fever. A child may return to the Centre after 24 hours of antibiotic treatment, if they are well enough to participate in all Centre activities including outdoor play and they are fever free.

Head Lice: Head Lice and their eggs (nits) can be seen at the nape of the neck, and behind the ears. They can vary in colour from white to brown to dark grey. The eggs are tiny round or oval shapes that are tightly attached to the hair near the scalp and do not slide up and down on the hair. Frequent scratching may cause broken skin or sores to form on the scalp. The damaged skin may weep clear fluid or crust over, and it may become infected. In response to infection, the lymph nodes behind the ears and in the neck, may become tender and swollen. Following the recommendations from [www.MyHealth.Alberta.ca](http://www.MyHealth.Alberta.ca). Children with head lice can return to the Centre after their first treatment of head lice medication. Confidentiality should be maintained so as not to embarrass a child who has head lice.



**Hand Foot and Mouth Disease:** Hand foot and mouth disease is an illness that causes sores in or on the mouth and on the hands, feet and sometimes the buttocks and legs. The sores may be painful and the illness usually doesn't last more than a week or so. It is common in children but can also occur in adults. It can occur at any time of the year but is most common in the summer and fall. Children are most likely to spread the disease during the first week of the illness. To help prevent the disease from spreading please keep your child at home, wash your hands frequently, don't let children share toys and speak to the Director about when your child can return to the Centre.

**Diarrhea/Vomiting/Fever:** A child has diarrhea if there are more bowel movements than usual, or if stool is unformed, loose and more watery than usual. Other symptoms that may accompany diarrhea may include fever, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, and stomach pains. Your child must be excluded from the Centre until the bowel movements have been normal for at least 24 hours, vomiting has ceased for 24 hours or until a physician declares they are well enough to return. If your child has a fever at the Centre, you will be required to pick them up immediately; your child will not be able to return to the Centre for 24 hours.

**Accidents and Injuries:** Even in the safest environments accidents and injuries do occur. Any accidents that may occur at the Centre are recorded on an Incident/Accident Report. If your child has been injured during the day you will be required to sign the Incident/Accident Report, indicating that you have been made aware of the incident. Parents will be notified immediately if there is an injury to the head. If necessary, you will be contacted to pick up your child. If you cannot be contacted and your child requires medical attention, we will take the necessary required steps. If an accident occurs while a school-aged child is at school, the school is responsible for all accident reports.

**Reporting Absences:** If your child is going to be absent, **you must notify the Centre no later than 10am**. If your child is ill, please notify us as to the nature of the illness, particularly if it is contagious. If your child is enrolled in our school-age program, please let the Centre Director know about any changes to your child's schedule. Additionally, if your kindergarten or OSC child is transported from school and is absent from school for the day, **please notify us at least 2 hours in advance**. This will give us adequate time to change the bus rosters and notify the appropriate bus driver.

## HYGIENE

Strict hand washing procedures are implemented. Children are encouraged to wash and dry their hands before and after meals, after using the toilet and after messy activities. All our Centres provide children with an alternative option of sanitizing gel for when they are in an environment without access to running water (e.g. the playground). We ask that all children and parents/guardians wash or sanitize their hands when arriving at the Centre.

## MEDICATION/HERBAL REMEDIES

The administration of medication is considered a high-risk practice and carries an obligation for both personnel and parents/guardians. Administration of medication requires attention to detail, excellent record keeping, teamwork and common sense. Incorrect administration has health risks and personnel must be trained to reduce health risks. All personnel who administer medication must have current and valid first aid training. Parents are expected to complete medication forms accurately in order to protect against any instructions that could be misunderstood. Personnel must ensure that documents are accurate before any medication can be administered. It is the parent's responsibility to inform personnel of any medication that has been administered while child(ren) is not attending the Centre such as prior to arrival.

If your child requires medication/herbal remedies you must complete a "Medication/Herbal Remedy Form" detailing the following important information:

- Name of medication
- Dosage
- Time medication is to be administered
- Time of last dose
- Parent/guardian signature
- Doctor prescribed label on the bottle

Revised: APRIL 2017

No over the counter medications will be administered unless prescribed by a doctor. The Medication/Herbal Remedy Form must be completed for all medications including Tylenol, Advil, teething gel etc. Medication must remain in its original named container and clearly labeled with the child's name, dosage and specific instructions to administer the medication. If the form is not completed, we are unable, by legislation, to administer the medication/herbal remedy to your child. Any medication must be handed directly to the Centre Director, Assistant Director or the designated senior staff member, so that it can be stored in an area inaccessible to children, in a locked box. Parents/guardians are requested to collect medication from this area on departure. Please ensure that no medication, creams, etc. of any kind are left in your child's bag. Management with a valid First Aid Certificate will administer all medicine/herbal remedies. If any further health needs are to be provided, please contact your Centre Director.

Any emergency medication, such as EpiPens and puffers are not locked, and are stored in the child's room in an emergency backpack and out of the reach of all children.

In Ontario, school age children may wear their own EpiPen in a pouch. In B.C., older children can administer their own medication in the presence of an educator.

Diaper Cream: If required, parents are responsible for supplying their child's diaper cream as follows:

- The diaper cream must come in new and un-opened
- The cream must be clearly labelled with the child's name.
- It must have an expiry date (if applicable) clearly listed.
- Prescribed diaper rash creams will require an additional medication form to be completed.
- Permission form must be completed in full.

## **NUTRITION**

BrightPath has partnered with a Registered Dietitian to ensure that all meals and snacks meet the highest nutritional value. The majority of our Centres prepare meals in-house and have a five-week rotating menu consisting of morning and afternoon snacks and lunch. Those Centres that are not equipped with a fully operational kitchen are able to access our dietician's resources and provide info and advice for you.

If you would like more information about our Registered Dietitian, please contact your Centre Director.

## **DIETARY RESTRICTIONS**

If your child requires a special diet for cultural or medical reasons, we will do our best to accommodate you. However, please be advised that we may not be able to supplement everything. Please speak to your Centre Director and they will work with you to accommodate as they can.

## **NUT/PEANUT SENSITIVE**

All BrightPath Centres do their very best to maintain a nut free environment. All parents are reminded on enrollment that our Centres have eliminated nuts/peanuts and nut/peanut products from our Centres. BrightPath cannot guarantee that all products in the Centre are free of all traces of peanuts. When available our Centres choose "peanut free" items to purchase. We can neither be responsible for children or families who may bring peanuts to our Centre or for any residue that may remain on surfaces.

It is extremely important that parents of children with peanut allergies notify the Centre, in writing, and provide an Epinephrine Auto-injector (Example: EpiPen) in case of emergencies. If your child does have an allergy you will be required to complete the "Allergy Details and Action Plan Form". Information for each child is posted in the classroom, the kitchen and the office. This ensures the quick and easy identification of a child by any member of our team. Please ensure that an updated photo of your child is provided on an annual basis.

## OUTSIDE FOOD

Except for infants, outside food is not permitted at the Centres that have kitchens. This includes all homemade goods, as well as store bought food. Other than for infants, the only exceptions are for a child with allergies that we are not able to supply alternatives, and for children not yet able to eat table food. For those children not yet eating table food, please bring a day's supply of meals, including prepared bottles that are labelled with the child's name, date and contents. All breast milk must be labeled with mother's name, child's name and date of expression. Please note, any food you supply must be nutritious and follow Canada's Food Guide. This is required by legislation.

Some of our Centres do not have kitchens, therefore food/snacks must be provided for your child(ren). Please note, any food you supply must be nutritious and follow Canada's Food Guide. Pack food in a thermos or in a lunch bag with an ice pack. Please let the educator know if food needs to be heated. No nut products, candy, pop, junk food, or food containing high levels of sugar or salt will be allowed into the Centre. These types of foods will be returned home with the child.

## KEY POLICIES

### ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

Please note that drop off or pick up of your child(ren) may be in different room and personnel other than their assigned class. This is usual only for the first hour and half and the last hour and half of the day, as staff arrive or finish for the day. During these times, licensing ratios are maintained as usual.

Arriving at the Centre/Signing In: Please keep your child with you at all times, especially when exiting your vehicle in our parking lot. Do not leave children, regardless of their age, unattended in your car when dropping off or picking up. Lock your car, as we cannot be responsible for any personal belongings taken from your vehicle while it is on our property. You are required to sign in your child on arrival – once on iPad and also on the sign-in sheet in the classroom; this is not only a legal requirement but ensures that we have a record of all children in attendance each day. Before leaving the Centre, **ensure that communication has been made with the Educator in the classroom**. In order to maximize your child's experience, we ask that children are in attendance by 10 am daily. If you cannot drop your child off by 10 am, we ask that you contact the Centre.

Picking up your Child: When you arrive to pick up your child, allow time for your child to complete whatever activity he or she is participating in. Please remember to let the child care educator know your child is leaving and to sign out in the room and on the iPad as you exit the building. Once transfer of care has taken place and the possession of the child has changed over, all responsibilities lie with the parent. We must ask you to make every effort to pick up your child before closing time. A late fee of \$10 for every 15 minutes or part thereof will be charged to any family who has not collected their child(ren) from the Centre by closing time. This late fee must be paid to the Centre directly and not the educator. If you are going to be late, please call the Centre immediately. If we do not receive a call from you and cannot reach your emergency release contacts, we may be required to call local authorities to assist with the situation. Members of our team are not permitted to take your child home with them.

Releasing your Child: We will only release your child to his or her parents/guardians and the authorized persons listed on your child's Enrollment Form and Emergency Card. Transfer of care is once the child has been signed out of classroom and into parent(s) possession. We require any release authorizations to be given to us in writing prior to releasing your child to any persons who are not listed on your emergency contact. Government issued photo identification must be shown for any person not positively known to us before we can release your child. We will not release a child to anyone (other than a parent/guardian) under the age of sixteen (16) including siblings. If a parent/guardian wishes BrightPath to release their child to anyone under the age of sixteen (18), written permission will be required. If there is an emergency situation and you are unable to submit a written request authorizing

someone to pick up your child who is not listed on your emergency contact, we will use your personal information to verify their identity.

## INDOOR & OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

*Sun Smart:* We aim to promote a positive attitude towards skin protection and take effective measures to ensure the children's safety from the sun. The child care educators will apply and reapply sunscreen when needed prior to outdoor play. Sunscreen and insect repellent must be supplied by the parents/guardians in the original bottle, labelled with each child's full name. Please provide a hat for your child each time they attend and our educators will ensure that your child is wearing it prior to going outdoors.

*Cold Weather/Winter:* During the winter months, outdoor play will be based on the weather. Once the temperature and/or wind-chill is lower than -18 degrees Celsius:

Infants (Alberta & BC: 0 – 19 months; Ontario: 0-18 months) will not engage in outdoor play when the temperature combined with the wind chill is lower than -10 degrees Celsius as measured by the Weather Network at the time of scheduled outdoor play or at the discretion of the Director or member of the management team. During colder weather, outdoor activities may be limited to 15 minutes.

Children over 19 months will not engage in outdoor play when the temperature combined with the wind chill is lower than -18 degrees Celsius as measured by the Weather Network at the time of the scheduled outdoor play or at the discretion of the Director or member of the management team. During colder weather, outdoor activities may be limited to 30 minutes.

*Summer/Hot Weather:* During extreme heat, outdoor play may be limited at the discretion of the Centre Director. Our educators will ensure that children are well hydrated at all times and given the option to cool down as needed.

*Appropriate Clothing:* During the day, your child will participate in many different activities and it is important that they are dressed in appropriate clothing. Remember, children are hard at "work" while they are with us and often the most beneficial learning experiences come from messy play. We encourage children to wear aprons when painting or participating in other messy activities. Children are encouraged to wear proper footwear and comfortable casual clothes, which are suitable for climbing, running, or painting. Overalls and suspenders are not recommended as children find them difficult to handle and will not be able to get in and out of them easily when they need to go to the washroom. Please remember to send along a change of clothes every day.

It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure the child wears appropriate clothing for all weather conditions. If your child normally walks to school, please do not expect that we will be able to drive him/her in rainy or extremely cold weather. As well, we will not be able to make an extra trip if your child forgets anything or needs a change of clothing while at school.

*Indoor Shoes:* All children enrolled in our Centre are required to have a pair of indoor shoes or slippers to be worn in the classroom only. A separate pair of shoes or boots should be available for outdoor play. All shoes, both indoor and outdoor must be fitted securely to the child's foot. Flip flops/open backed shoes will not be allowed as indoor or outdoor shoes. Please keep in mind that during outdoor play your child is running around and climbing on the outdoor equipment so outdoor shoes should be conducive to this type of play.

*Field Trips:* On occasion, our Centres may plan trips to special places for children aged 4.5 and up. Parents/guardians will be informed in advance of any planned excursions. A release form for each field trip or excursion will be provided to the parent/guardian to authorize their child to engage in the event. All consent forms regarding field trips must be received prior to date of trips. If your child does not bring in a consent form he/she is not permitted to participate. If you decide not to send your child on a field trip, you will need to find alternative child care for your child as our educators cannot be left at the Centre to accommodate a 1:1 ratio.

Educators will review all the safety policies with the children and parent/guardian volunteers. They will prepare the children for the trip by explaining where they are going, why, and who they need to listen to.

Outings Local Parks & Neighbourhood Walks: Babies in strollers and children ages 3 and older will have outings and walks in the neighborhood. Whenever an outing occurs the Centre will post a notification as to the location of the outing and the estimated time of return.

## TRANSPORTATION

BrightPath meets or exceeds strict government regulations concerning driver qualifications, vehicle safety and emergency equipment as well as insurance. Our school drop-offs and pick-ups for our OSC children will be scheduled within 15 minutes before or after school hours. Children should wait at the designated spot or inside the nearest door in inclement weather until pick up. They may go to the office if they feel they have been forgotten. Under no circumstances may they leave the school yard or be playing away from the designated pick up area. A transportation agreement must be signed on an annual basis which provides detailed information of your child's transportation needs.

BrightPath personnel are prohibited from transporting any children to or from the Centre/school in their person vehicles.

Bus Service for School Children – Weather: Bus service to schools is to be cancelled if the temperature (combined with the wind chill factor) is lower than -39 degrees Celsius, as measured by the Weather Network APP at approximately 6:30 am.

If bus service is cancelled at 6:30 am, the Weather Network APP will be checked again one hour before the scheduled pick up time. If the decision to withhold children from being transported to school is made, re-assessments can be made throughout the day by periodically checking and monitoring for the temperature to rise above -39 degrees Celsius. Area Managers will be made aware of any cancellation of transportation schedules.

In the event that bus service is cancelled, all children will remain at the Centre under the care of our child care educators.

Walking Children to School – Weather: BrightPath plans to walk the children as much as possible; it is not this policy's intention to prevent children from attending school. BrightPath leaves the decision of walking children to their respective schools completely up to the discretion of Centre management, knowing that the decision will be made with full consideration towards the safety of children and educators.

Weather monitoring will begin by Centre management at -27 degrees Celsius (without wind-chill consideration) using the Weather Network APP. Considerations for wind-chill, weather advisories and distance to schools will be accounted for in the decision to walk children to school or remain at the Centre.

If the decision to walk the children to school is made, Centre management and educators will use caution and best judgement to ensure children are dressed appropriately to be taken outside. The decision to walk the children will be made at approximately 6:30 am.

If the temperature (including wind chill) drops below -39 degrees Celsius, the decision to withhold children from walking to school will be automatically enforced due to the safety of our children and educators. If the decision to withhold children from walking/transporting to school is made, reassessments can be made throughout the day by periodically checking the weather and monitoring for the temperature to rise above -27 degrees Celsius. The decision to continue with the afternoon pickup will be made on this basis as well.

## **GENERAL CORPORATE POLICIES**

**Appropriate Language:** Parents/guardians and their guests must use appropriate language while on our property. Foul language of any kind is not permitted on Centre grounds, which includes our parking lots and playgrounds.

**Cell Phones and Electronic Devices:** Children are encouraged to keep cell phones or any electronic devices at home including iPads, iPods, hand held game systems, etc. If these items are brought to the Centre, we ask that they are stored in your child's backpack. Please note the Centre will take no responsibility for the loss or damage of any of these devices.

**Celebrations:** We encourage parents/guardians to let their children share special celebrations with us at the Centre. If you would like us to celebrate any occasion with your child, please talk to our child care educators. At many of our Centres, we celebrate birthdays once a month and our cook prepares a cake to honour all children who had birthdays throughout that month.

**Children with Special Needs:** Our goal at BrightPath is to meet the individual needs of the child within the structure of our program, while maintaining a healthy and safe environment for all the children and educators. We will make reasonable accommodations to offer children with disabilities full and equal enjoyment of our programs and services in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs. However, where the Centre is unable to meet a child's individual requirements some negotiation may be required regarding the child's enrollment.

**Community Relationships:** As a company, BrightPath's charity-of-choice is Ronald McDonald House, which provide families of sick children with a home to stay at while their child is being treated at a nearby hospital. There are currently 15 Ronald McDonald Houses in Canada, and at least one located in every province.

In the community, relationships have been created with:

**Alberta:** Alberta Education, Family Resource and Facilitation Centre, United Way, Public Health Services, Ronald McDonald House, Mommy Connections, Renfrew Educational Centre (Calgary), Community Options, Grit (Edmonton) and local school boards.

**Ontario:** Mommy Connections, local public health services, local school boards, Children First, local children's services, Quality First, Raising the Bar, Ronald McDonald House, Life With A Baby, Children's Services: Special Needs Resources York Region Early.

**BC:** Fraser Health Unit, SHARE Society, Simon Fraser for Community Living, YMCA Childcare Resource and Referral, Port Moody Rec Centre/Coquitlam Rec, Port Moody Art Centre, Tri-Citi Mental Health, surrounding public schools and select private schools

**Community Resources:** There are a variety of community services that support the needs of families whose children have extra challenges, behavioural, physical, or social/emotional needs. Your Centre Director can assist you in accessing these types of services. If you are interested in family education opportunities specific to the needs of your child, we will be happy to share information on community services available in your area.

**Lost Property:** Please check the lost property box regularly. Labelling all your children's clothing including socks, shoes and underwear assists child care educators in locating the owner.

**Non-Discrimination Program:** The Centre has a non-discriminatory and non-biased policy. We welcome all children and families, and appreciate the opportunity to learn about various heritages and backgrounds. It is our policy to provide an environment that is free of unlawful discrimination of any type including discrimination based on race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability or any other characteristic protected by law. This policy governs all aspects of our Centre's operations.

**Personal Toys:** It would be appreciated if children did not bring toys or valuables from home unless they are required for a special event. No toy weapons or actions figures of any kind that promote violence are to be brought to the Centre. Toys from home can become lost or broken and it saves a lot of heartache if these items are left at home. We encourage the children to bring nature items and other items of general educational interest. Comfort toys – stuffies, soft toys or a blanket are more than welcome.

**Photograph & Video:** From time to time, children may be included in photographs taken by team members at BrightPath and used for display within the Centres. BrightPath occasionally shares pictures from our Centres on Facebook & Twitter, however we ensure that photographs shared online do not include the children's faces, unless we have consent from their parents/guardians. If you do not consent, please notify your Centre Director or make a note on the last page of this parent handbook. Photo of child should be updated annually for BrightPath's records.

BrightPath conducts regular reviews and evaluations of our child care educators and their work with the curriculum. At times our classrooms may be videotaped during their regular activities. These will become internal teaching tools for BrightPath Centres. The videotapes will remain the property of BrightPath Kids.

**Physical and Verbal Punishment of Children on Centre Property:** We do not allow parents/guardians to use any type of corporal punishment on any child, whether enrolled in our program or not, while on Centre property. This includes parking lots, playground, and within the Centre. Further, while verbal reprimands may be appropriate, it is not appropriate for apparent/guardian to verbally abuse their child while on our premises. Doing so can cause undue embarrassment and emotional distress to a child. Violations of this policy may result in immediate withdrawal from our program. Parents/guardians are also prohibited from addressing or disciplining a child that is not their own. If you have a concern about the behaviour of another child at our Centre, please bring your concern to the Centre Director who will address your concern and resolve it.

**Resolution of Disputes:** In the event that a dispute arises, we encourage you to attempt to resolve such matter in good faith directly with your Centre Director. Your Centre Director can provide you with the contact information for additional management personnel who will be happy to work with you to resolve any issues you may have.

**Smoking:** Smoking is prohibited on all Centre property, including parking lots and playgrounds. No one is permitted to smoke anytime with or in the presence of a child or in view of the Centre.

**Statutory Holidays – Centre Closures:** Our Centres will be closed during the following statutory holidays:

**Alberta**

New Year's Day  
Alberta Family Day  
Good Friday  
Victoria Day  
Canada Day  
Heritage Day Labour Day  
Thanksgiving  
Remembrance Day  
Christmas Day  
Boxing Day

**British Columbia**

New Year's Day Family Day  
Day  
Good Friday  
Victoria Day Canada Day  
Day  
British Columbia Day Labour Day  
Day  
Thanksgiving Day  
Remembrance Day  
Christmas Day  
Boxing Day

**Ontario**

New Year's Day  
Family Day  
Good Friday  
Victoria Day  
Canada Day  
Civic Holiday  
Labour Day  
Thanksgiving Day  
Christmas Day  
Boxing Day

**Students & Volunteers:** BrightPath accept students/volunteers from local colleges and/or high schools. The students are placed with one of our full-time personnel to learn about and experience what working in a child care facility is like. The following policies are in place for students and volunteers:

- No child is to be supervised by a person under 18 years of age
- Only paid personnel over 18 years of age will have direct, unsupervised access to the children.
- Students and volunteers are not counted in staffing ratios at any time during their placement at the Centre.
- All students/volunteers must have a current criminal reference check, completed within the last 6 months.
- All students/volunteers must provide proof of up to date immunization prior to being placed at the Centre. (BC & Ontario only)
- Students and volunteers are never left alone with the children

**Threats and Threatening Behaviour:** We have a responsibility to provide a safe environment for our personnel, the children we serve, and other adults. Therefore, we have a zero-tolerance policy regarding threats or threatening behaviour in our Centres, whether the threat comes from a child or an adult, and regardless of who is the target of the threat. This includes, but is not limited to, threats to do physical harm to someone or threats to retaliate in any way. Violation of this policy may result in immediate withdrawal from the Centre.

## **EMERGENCY POLICIES**

### **COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS DURING AN EMERGENCY**

Our primary concern at the Centre during an emergency is the safety and well-being of the children and personnel. Our personnel are trained in case of an emergency and are keeping your children calm and following our policies based on the emergency. Notifications will be sent by email in the event of bad weather, emergencies, power outages or any other situation where the Centre will be closing or unable to open. Parents/guardians may receive an email from head office in the event of an emergency. We will advise what we know of the situation, where the children have relocated (where applicable), and what procedures are being taken. If parents/guardians are required to pick up the children, we will advise this as well. We ask that you refrain from calling the Centre as they may need to keep their phone lines open. You may reach head office or the Centre Area Manager if you need more information.

You are required to provide us with your email address; this allows us to inform all parents of emergency situations in a fast and effective manner vs. spending time making phone calls. Please note that if you have Opted Out of receiving electronic messages, you will not receive such notifications. BrightPath head office may resort to use of social media (such as posting to Facebook pages managed by the company) to further ensure as many outlets to communicate are available to parents/guardians.

### **EVACUATION**

In the event of a fire/emergency situation, the Centre Director will inform the classroom educator that the Centre will be evacuated. If it becomes necessary to remove the children from the property, each Centre has an emergency evacuation (muster point) site. An emergency evacuation plan is displayed in each classroom and foyer. Once a month, the Centre conducts a fire drill. The aim of these drills is to ensure that in the event of an emergency, the children can be evacuated quickly and easily. If you are present at the Centre during the fire drill, you are encouraged to participate in this procedure. The evacuation (muster point) site is posted in all rooms and foyers.

### **SECURITY THREATS AND LOCKDOWNS**

In the event there is a security threat in our Centre or in close proximity to our Centre, BrightPath's policy is to lockdown the location. This includes, but is not limited to, locking all external entry points such as doors and windows and no one will be permitted to enter or exit the building under any circumstance. This policy is very



similar to most schools, and should there be a lockdown at a school BrightPath services, the personnel member whom normally receives the children will await the school's lockdown to be lifted and children will be picked up and returned to the BrightPath location.

Please note that our first concern is the children's safety. Cell phone usage by personnel is not allowed during a lock down, and we ask that you refrain from calling the Centre as they may need to keep their main phone lines open.

## **LICENSING AND ACCREDITATION**

### **BRIGHTPATH'S CORPORATE STANDARD**

It is BrightPath's corporate standard that every Centre be licensed and accredited (where applicable). Provincial licensing sets out the minimum standards that must be met in a licensed child care program to ensure that the health, safety and developmental needs of children are met.

Child care accreditation in Alberta is a voluntary process through which licensed and approved child care programs (day care programs, out-of-school care programs and family day home agencies) can demonstrate that they meet the accreditation standards of excellence which are over and above the provincial licensing regulations and family day home standards. The accreditation standards of excellence were developed by Government of Alberta in consultation with child care operators, early childhood educators and professionals, child care organizations and key stakeholders. The standards reflect leading practices to provide high quality child care for families and children from birth to 12 years of age. (Source: [www.humanservices.alberta.ca/family-community/child-care-accreditation.html](http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca/family-community/child-care-accreditation.html))

Our Centres also participate in the Quality Improvement System administered by the Accreditation of Early Learning and Care Services. Currently this is only assessed in Alberta but we continue the same standards throughout all of our Centres and manage audits internally.

### **PROVINCIAL LICENSING REQUIREMENTS**

Provincial licensing requirements and strict enforcement of standards are in the best interest of all children. All of our Centres meet or exceed applicable licensing regulations and standards. These standards relate to our facility, educators, health and safety procedures, nutrition, educator/child ratios, and record keeping. Our Centres are subject to inspection by provincial, health, fire and licensing officials.

It is the right of the provincial licensing agency, as well as Child Protective Services, Social Services or Children and Family Services to perform their duties as follows:

- Privately interview children and/or educator without prior notice or parental/guardian consent.
- Inspect, audit, and copy child and educator records, without prior notice or parental/guardian consent
- Observe the physical condition of the child, including conditions that could indicate abuse, neglect, or inappropriate placement and if determined necessary, provide protective custody and /or have a licensed medical professional physically examine the child.

The Centre has carefully developed systems to ensure the comfort and protection of your child. As a parent/guardian, you can always expect our Centre to adhere to all the provincial regulations governing safety, fire, nutrition, and child/educator ratios. Our inspection reports are posted on the parent board and available upon request from the Centre Director. Our goal is to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all children with programs to suit each developmental level. We welcome your comments and suggestions that may help us achieve these goals.

## LICENSING RATIOS AND MAXIMUM GROUP SIZES BY PROVINCE

General Description	Age of Children	ALBERTA		ONTARIO		BRITISH COLUMBIA	
		Primary Staff Member to Child Ratio	Maximum Number of Children in a Group	Primary Staff Member to Child Ratio	Maximum Number of Children in a Group	Primary Staff Member to Child Ratio	Maximum Number of Children in a Group
Infants	Infants less than 12 months	1:3	6	1:3 / 3:10	10	1:4	12 Requires IT Personnel
	Infants 12 months to less than 19 months	1:4	8				
Toddlers	19 months to less than 3 years	1:6	12	1:5	15		
Preschool	30 months to school age					1:8 / 3:25	25
	3 years to less than 4.5 years (5 years in Ontario)	1:8	16	1:8	16	No more than 2 children under 36 months	
	Preschool AM or PM only					1:10	20
Kindergarten	4.5 years and older	1:10	20				
	Junior Kindergarten (44 to 67 months as of Aug 31 of the year)			1:13	26		
	Senior Kindergarten (56 months to 67 months as of Aug 31 of the year)						
Out of School (OSC) / Before & After School (BAS)	Out of School Kindergarten to Grade 1	1:15	30	1:15	30	1:12	24
	Out of School Grade 2 and up					1:15	30

## LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

### ALLEGED INTOXICATION / UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF DRUGS OR ALCOHOL /SUSPECTED MEDICAL CONDITION AUTHORIZED PICK-UP

BrightPath has a legal responsibility to the extent possible to not release a child to an authorized person who seems to be unable to adequately care for a child. If a permanent personnel member believes that a pick-up person is impaired or appears to be having a medical episode, the Centre Director or personnel member will offer to call a relative/friend to pick up the adult and the child.

If the pickup person is driving a vehicle, the personnel member will explain that driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol is not only against the law but BrightPath is obligated to ensure the safety of the child(ren) and adult. If the alleged person chooses to get into the vehicle with or without the child the personnel member is obligated to notify the police immediately.

### CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION

Information pertaining to a child and his or her family is kept confidential at all times. Occasionally, records may be reviewed by regulatory agencies for information that may be pertinent to a child's well-being or requested by a legal subpoena. The children's files are otherwise confidential and monitored only by the Centre Director, Area Manager and Manger of Licencing. If your child is involved in an incident involving another child, our educators will not reveal the other child's identity.

## **CUSTODY ARRANGEMENTS**

If you have a legal agreement outlining custody or restraining arrangements, please provide the Centre with a copy for our records. Our Centres will only abide by what is outlined in the custody arrangement. Parents/guardians are kindly requested to notify the Centre Director immediately if these legal circumstances change.

## **MANDATED REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT**

As caring and concerned child care educators, we take our responsibilities seriously. Abuse and neglect, whether physical or emotional, can happen in all types of families, from all walks of life, and in varying degrees. When abuse occurs, both children and parents/guardians are victims and need support, understanding and help. Our educators have been trained to recognize the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect. Furthermore, the law requires us to report all suspected cases of abuse or neglect. Parents/guardians may ask the Centre Director for a confidential referral for outside intervention and suggested resources for prevention and assistance in dealing with this sensitive matter.

## **SERIOUS OCCURRENCE REPORTING (ONTARIO ONLY)**

The safety and well-being of our children is the highest priority and BrightPath ensures that they comply with the Ministry of Education legislation in regards to the reporting of Serious Occurrences. To provide greater transparency, all BrightPath Early Learning and Child Care Centres, post a Serious Occurrence Notification Form to keep parents informed of Serious Occurrences in their child's Centre.

## **TERMINATION OF CARE**

BrightPath has the right to terminate the service of child care without notice, should you, or your child threaten the safety or welfare of others at the Centre which may include another child or personnel. All families must abide by the Operational policies of the Centre and all policies set forth; failure to do so may result in termination of child care services.



**BRIGHTPATH CENTRE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CHILD(REN)'S NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

I have received and read the BrightPath Parent Handbook in full and fully understand the policies and procedures entailed in the handbook and understand my requirements regarding my child(ren).

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent/Guardian (1) Printed Name*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent/Guardian (2) Printed Name*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent/Guardian (1) Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent/Guardian (2) Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date Signed*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date Signed*

I, \_\_\_\_\_, give consent to receive electronic messages from BrightPath Kids Corp. including Centre updates, important info and emergency communications.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*