



Parent Handbook

**Bright
Beginnings**

CHILD CARE INC.



Child Care & Early Education



Child Care & Early Education
3520 Pollina Avenue, Fort Gratiot, MI 48059
(810) 982- 3191

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Our Philosophy

We believe a safe and consistent environment is essential to a child's well-being.

We appreciate the importance of a child's early years on his or her future emotional, educational, and social successes.

We understand that children acquire skills at different rates, and we believe that every child has the right to learn at his or her own pace.

Therefore, each of our age-specific programs is planned with developmentally appropriate activities designed to engage and then enhance each child's unique abilities.

Partnership with Families

Our staff understands the level of trust you place in us when you enroll your child at Bright Beginnings; every caregiver is committed to supporting your family to raise happy, healthy, and secure children! Here are some ways in which we strive to maintain a positive environment with you:

Open Door Policy

Parents/guardians are welcome to visit our center at any time. Visitors must check-in at the office and be brought back to the classrooms by a staff member.

Parent Notification Policy

We will immediately contact you (via phone, text, or email) about any serious incidents regarding your child in order to give you the opportunity to decide how you'd like the situation handled. We will inform you of minor incidents when you pick up your child.

Suggestions

Your suggestions and constructive criticism are welcome at any time. We are not and most probably never will be infallible, but we do care about our children and the job we are doing with them and for them. You can help us help them by letting us know what you like as well as what you feel we could do better.

Contact Us

We appreciate how busy you are; therefore, we have a variety of methods you may use to contact us:

Phone: (810) 982- 3191

Email: brightbeginningsinc@msn.com.

Facebook: www.facebook.com/funatbrightbeginnings

Schedule of Operation

Bright Beginnings is open Monday through Friday from 6 AM until 6 PM.

Bright Beginnings will be closed in observance of the following holidays:

- ✓ New Year's Day
- ✓ Memorial Day
- ✓ Fourth of July
- ✓ Labor Day
- ✓ Thanksgiving and the day after
- ✓ Christmas and one additional day

Admission Requirements

We accept children from 6 weeks through 12 years of age.

Prior to initial attendance, a parent must submit a completed Child Information Card for each child. This card must be reviewed annually and updated whenever changes occur.

Prior to initial attendance, a parent must provide proof that children under school-age have received a minimum of one dose of each immunizing agent required for Michigan Child Care/Preschool Attendance. Within four months of enrollment, a parent must provide proof that all additional immunization requirements have been completed or submit a signed statement by a licensed health care provider stating immunizations are in progress. If you choose not to immunize due to religious, medical, or other reasons, you must complete and submit an Immunization Waiver Form, which is obtainable from the St. Clair County Health Department.

Within 30 days of initial attendance, a parent must provide a Health Appraisal signed by a licensed health care provider. For infants (up to 12 months of age), the physical must have been performed during the preceding three months and then be updated yearly. For toddlers (12 months to 30 months of age), the physical must have been performed during the preceding six months and then be updated yearly. For children 30 months to school-aged, the physical must have been performed during the preceding year and then be updated every two years. If a parent objects to a physical examination or medical treatment on religious grounds, the parent must sign a statement annually that the child is in good health and that the parent assumes responsibility for the child's state of health while at the center.

Upon initial attendance and annually thereafter, a parent must sign a statement confirming a school-aged child is in good health, any activity restrictions are noted, the child's immunizations are up to date, and the immunization record or appropriate waiver is on file with the child's school.

Our Programs

Our programs are designed to meet each individual child's developmental and educational needs. We strive to build a strong foundation for learning by including literacy, math, science, sensory, fine and large motor, and social-emotional learning activities in our daily curriculum.

When your child is enrolled in each classroom, you will receive an introductory packet to help familiarize you with your child's classroom. We will also include a copy of the daily schedule as

well as a calendar of events for that month. You will continue to receive monthly calendars to keep you involved with what your child will be learning.

We strive to keep you informed of your child's day. Children up to the age of three will receive a daily written report detailing their eating, sleeping, and diapering/bathroom patterns, as well as their temperament, achievements, and learning activities. We provide any/all of this information for children over the age of three upon request.

Tuition/Fee Policy

For current rates for tuition and fees , please request a rate sheet from the office.

We offer full-day attendance for our Infant and Toddler Classes and full- or half-day attendance for our Preschool Prep, Preschool, and Prekindergarten Classes. Students in these classes must have a set schedule of at least two days per week. Our School Age Classroom offers flexible scheduling for before- and after-school care.

Tuition amounts are calculated by the week, with tuition being due on the first day of attendance each week.

Bright Beginnings has an unlimited vacation or absence policy. If your child will be absent for the entire week and you give us two weeks notice, you will be required to pay half tuition to reserve your child's spot. If your child attends any portion of the week (including when Bright Beginnings is closed for a holiday) or has any unplanned absences (including for illness) full tuition is due.

Bright Beginnings accepts check or cash payments.

ADDITIONAL FEES-

An enrollment fee (per family) is due upon initially registering your child(ren) at Bright Beginnings.

A family registration fee is due annually on the first of January.

A fee will be applied to the balance if tuition is late.

A fee will be charged if you pick up your child(ren) late.

A fee will be charged for a returned check and we will have the option to refuse any further payment by check.

An administrative fee will be charged for preparing paperwork for court or other personal matters. An hourly fee will be charged for court appearances.

School-aged children attending Bright Beginnings for a full day (due to school cancellation, holiday breaks, etc.) will be charged accordingly.

Withdrawal Policy

We require one week's written notice prior to your child's withdrawal from Bright Beginnings. If you fail to provide one week's written notice, you will be charged one week's tuition after your child's last day.

If Bright Beginnings decides to dismiss your child from our center, we will give you at least one week's notice so that you may make alternative child care arrangements. Reasons for disenrollment include but are not limited to: nonpayment of fees and excessive and/or aggressive behaviors.

Discipline Policy

At Bright Beginnings, we recognize that positive discipline teaches and encourages the healthy development of a child's self-esteem. Bright Beginnings does not allow the use of corporal or physical punishment by teachers. Instead, teachers employ positive discipline techniques that include but are not limited to:

- Praising/calling attention to appropriate behavior
- Redirection/stating what a child should be doing rather than what he/she shouldn't be doing
- Acting as good role models
- Utilizing natural and logical consequences
- Offering choices
- Establishing a consistent routine
- Setting limits that are developmentally appropriate and consistently enforced

We do not allow any child to interfere with the learning process and safety of another child. If a child does not respond to the discipline methods listed above, the following procedure may be followed:

1. The child may be placed in the "thinking area" for the developmentally appropriate length of time (maximum 1 minute for every year of age). When the time is up, teacher will discuss with the child the reason he/she was sitting in the thinking area, including the feelings and emotions of all involved in the incident, what the proper course of action would have been, and have the child apologize as necessary.
2. Any child who does not respond to approved disciplinary procedures may have his/her parent called to come and pick up the child.
3. If a behavior problem occurs that cannot be adequately solved at school, a parent conference may be requested.
4. If the uncooperative behavior continues after all of the above has been followed, the parent may be asked to permanently remove the child from Bright Beginnings.

In the case of ongoing severe behavior (biting, bullying, etc.), the teachers will collaborate with the parent to develop the best possible plan of action.

If there are any concerns with the Discipline Policy, parents should feel free to discuss them with the child's teacher and the director.

Health Care Policy

We are not staffed to care for sick children at our center. Please use the following criteria to determine when your children are unable to attend child care, as they either require more care than we are able to give or are a source of communicability of infection to other children:

- a. Fever – any temperature over 100° degrees (or even less if the child doesn't feel well).
- b. Rash – unless a doctor has determined it is not contagious.
- c. Heavy nasal discharge.
- d. Constant cough.
- e. Red or watery eyes.
- g. Vomiting.
- h. Diarrhea two or more times in an hour (including diarrhea caused by medication).
- i. All communicable diseases.

In the instance a child develops any of the above while at our center, a parent will be contacted to pick up the child.

Children who have been ill may not attend until they have been symptom-free without the use of medication for 24 hours (e.g. fever, vomiting, diarrhea). Children taking antibiotics may not attend until they have been treated for 24 hours (e.g. strep throat, pink-eye). Bright Beginnings reserves the right to request a doctor's note stating the child is well enough to return to childcare.

Please remember that most illnesses are contagious early in the course of the infection. Therefore, it is important that you check your child thoroughly prior to bringing him/her to the center to prevent exposure to other children. If your child is absent due to illness, please notify the center immediately so we may inform other families that their child was exposed to an illness.

These restrictions also apply to staff and volunteers.

In the event of a serious illness or accident, an emergency vehicle will be called when deemed necessary. You will be responsible for any incurred expenses.

Medication Policy

We must have prior written permission before we may give or apply any medication (prescription or non-prescription, oral or topical) to your child. Oral medication is defined as anything that goes into your child's mouth other than food/drink, and topical medication is anything that is applied to your child's body.

You may leave ongoing/maintenance medication here (such as an inhaler, teething remedies, or acetaminophen or ibuprofen). We will call for your permission before giving any medication. Please be aware that if we administer acetaminophen or ibuprofen and your child's fever does not drop below 100° F, we will have to send your child home.

Any medication that states "ask a doctor" on the dosage chart must have a doctor's note before we are able to administer it. This usually applies to most medications for children under two and

all cough medications, although there may be some exceptions. The doctor's note must exactly state the medication name (for example, if you bring generic acetaminophen, the note cannot be written for Tylenol®)

Nutrition Policy

Bright Beginnings will provide snacks and lunch of sufficient quantity and nutritional quality to meet the dietary needs of each child. A child in attendance before 8 AM may bring breakfast or be served breakfast for \$1.00. A child attending a half-day (8 AM- 12 PM) will be offered one snack and lunch, the price of which is included in the child's weekly tuition. A child attending a full day (up to ten hours) will be offered two snacks and lunch, the price of which is included in the child's weekly tuition. Monthly menus are planned to meet the requirements set forth by the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Menus are posted in each classroom; any substitutions made will be indicated here. Copies of menus are available to take home and are also posted on our Facebook page.

Bright Beginnings' Nutrition Policy applies to all enrolled children, with the following exceptions: children enrolled in the Infant Classroom, children with special needs, and children following cultural norms. In accordance with the State of Michigan's Child Care Center Licensing Rule 400.8330(3), we will team with parents to ensure children with special dietary needs receive snacks/meals that meet their individual needs. Parents whose children are unable to eat from the Bright Beginnings menu for any of the above-mentioned reasons must complete the "Agreement for Children with Special Dietary Needs," which allows parents to provide food for their children. This agreement shall detail which snacks/meals or portions of snacks/meals the parents will provide. Bright Beginnings will ensure that a child is not deprived of a snack/meal if a parent fails to provide food. If your child does not require a special diet due to the above-mentioned reasons, please do not bring alternative food for your child to eat for snacks and/or lunch.

We understand that children are picky eaters and that a parent may become concerned that his/her child is not eating enough. We abide by the following guidelines at snack and mealtimes to ensure your child is getting enough to eat:

Breakfast ends at 8 am so that our classroom sessions may begin. If your child has not finished breakfast by then, he/she may finish breakfast during our 9 AM snack (in addition to being offered snack from the Bright Beginnings menu). If your child arrives at Bright Beginnings after 8 AM, he/she may eat breakfast brought from home during our 9 AM snack (in addition to being offered snack from the Bright Beginnings menu).

Small feedings of nourishing foods are offered over the course of the day. In addition to the above-mentioned breakfast guidelines, Bright Beginnings will serve morning snack at 9 AM, lunch at 11 AM, and afternoon snack at 3 PM.

For snacks, children will be given additional helpings upon request. For lunch, children will be given additional helpings upon request, regardless if children still haven't eaten other parts of their meals (such as a child who only likes the fruit or vegetable portion of the meal but doesn't care for the main dish). Children will be given one glass of milk or juice at each snack or mealtime, but allowed to get water if they are still thirsty.

Safety Policies

Allergies

Due to the increasing prevalence of severe nut allergies, we are a “Nut-Free” center. Items on our lunch and snack menus are completely nut-free. Please note that we are unable to serve anything you may bring from home (including special occasion treats) that may/does contain nuts or nut products. This includes items you might bring from home intended only for your child.

Court Orders

We abide by all court/custody orders. We must have a copy of the court/custody order on file in order to deny any rights to a parent.

Emergency Planning

We have well-defined emergency plans for weather-related situations or various crises. We hold regular fire and tornado drills and review our crisis management plans often. Should an emergency requiring evacuation of the center occur, you will be notified immediately. If it is necessary to close the center due to severe weather, we will announce it on Facebook and on the following radio stations (tuition must be paid even if the center is closed):

WGRT 102.3 WSAQ 107.1 WPHM 1380 AM WHLS 1450 AM

In the event our phones are inoperative during business hours, you can contact us via Facebook or email.

Licensing

Bright Beginnings Child Care Inc. is licensed by the State of Michigan. The license is displayed in the office. We are inspected periodically by our regulatory agencies to ensure the best for your child in the areas of health, safety, and specific requirements mandated by state standards.

We maintain a licensing notebook which includes all licensing inspection reports, special investigation reports and all related corrective action plans. This notebook contains all reports since May 27, 2010; it is located in the office for your convenience.

Pesticide Applications

We will notify you when pesticide applications occur on the premises. Children will not be present when the applications occur. Notification will be given in 2 ways: a general posting in each classroom and a copy of the general posting will be sent home.

Safety Precautions

Children’s backpacks/diaper bags are stored in their classrooms, making them accessible to other children. If you have brought medicine or ointments for your child to use at Bright Beginnings, please do not leave it in their backpack/diaper bag; rather, hand it to a staff member so it can be stored safely out of reach. If the bag you bring to Bright Beginnings is the bag you normally use when you take your child out and you routinely store medications/ointments in it, please either take these items with you when you leave or give them to a staff member to be safely stored until you pick up your child at the end of the day. Also, please be careful about the kinds of items you keep in these bags; many things may be safe for a child to have when supervised one-on-one (necklaces, bouncy balls, coins, candy, gum), but these items can be extremely unsafe if a child

were to get them out of a backpack/diaper bag without permission. Please keep anything that could possibly be dangerous at home.

Staff Regulations

Staff members must pass a TB test and a criminal background check including receiving clearances from the Child Abuse/Neglect Central Registry and the Public Sex Offender Registry. Our staff is required by the Child Protection Law of 1975 to immediately report suspected child abuse and/or neglect to the proper authorities.

Transfer of Responsibility to and from Our Care

During drop-offs, please bring your child into the center and escort him/her into the classroom, ensuring that he/she is under supervision before you leave. Please reenter the building when you are picking up your child. If you require assistance for any reason, please call the office as you enter the parking lot so a staff member can accompany your child to/from the car. You (or a staff member if you are unable to enter the building) are required to sign your child in and out upon arrival and departure.

Your child can only be released to adults (18 and older) who have been designated by the parents/guardians in writing on the child's Information Card. It is your responsibility to notify the center any time the child will be picked up by a person not authorized on the Child Information Card. Staff members will require picture identification from anyone they do not recognize.

Transportation

We will walk enrolled children to and from Thomas Edison Elementary. It is important you notify us immediately of any changes to your child's schedule, so we know if we are responsible for your child and his/her transportation to Bright Beginnings.

We do not offer any vehicular transportation. We do not take field trips.

Volunteers

Volunteers are not left alone with children at any time. This policy includes outside volunteers as well as parents of children in care. Due to the strictness of this policy, we do not require any documentation (such as those required by staff) clearing volunteers. Our volunteers are required by the Child Protection Law of 1975 to immediately report suspected child abuse and/or neglect to the proper authorities.

Supplies for Parents to Provide

The following is a list of supplies parents must provide for their child(ren):

SEASONAL NEEDS

- ✓ We will be going outside daily, unless the weather is extreme. Please be sure to dress your child appropriately.
- ✓ During the summer months, please bring in sunscreen for your child. Please be aware that if you elect not to bring in sunscreen, we cannot use someone else's and your child will still go outside.

- ✓ During the winter months, please bring in snow gear for your child (hat, gloves, snowpants, and boots).
- ✓ If your child wears snowboots or rainboots to school, please send a pair of shoes for him/her to wear indoors.
- ✓ PLEASE LABEL EVERYTHING YOU BRING WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.

CLASSROOM-SPECIFIC NEEDS

- ✓ Infant formula/breastmilk must be brought daily in ready-to feed bottles labeled with the child's full name and the date. Leftovers will be discarded one hour after each feeding begins.
- ✓ Infants who are unable to eat from our lunch and snack menus will need to have their own food supplied by the parents/guardians. Please be sure to check your child's daily sheet to see when additional supplies are needed. Anything that needs to be refrigerated after opening will need to be taken home that night.
- ✓ For children not yet potty-trained, please bring in a large supply of diapers and wipes, and a tube of diaper cream. Please be sure to check your child's daily sheet to see when additional supplies are needed.
- ✓ For children who are potty-training, please bring in several extra outfits (including socks). An extra pair of shoes is recommended.
- ✓ Please bring in a full change of clothes (including socks and underwear) for all children in the Infant, Toddler, Preschool Prep, Preschool, and Prekindergarten Classes.
- ✓ For infants (up to one year old), please note we do not permit children at this age to sleep with *anything*, including a blanket, in their cribs. Parents may bring a swaddle sack for a child up to 2 months old and a sleep sack for a child up to 12 months old. These items may be left here for the week, but please be sure to take them home to be laundered on the last day your child attends that week.
- ✓ We provide a state-required rest period for children ages 1-5 years (children up to 18 months are permitted to sleep on demand). Please bring in bedding for your child; a blanket is sufficient but you may also bring a pillow and a stuffed animal/doll. These items may be left here for the week, but please be sure to take them home to be laundered on the last day your child attends that week.
- ✓ PLEASE LABEL EVERYTHING YOU BRING WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.



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Parent Acknowledgement Form

Please sign and return this form to the director.

By signing this handbook, I acknowledge that:

I have received/or reviewed a parent handbook (located online at www.funatbrightbeginnings.com). I have read and understand all of the information and policies listed within. I agree to follow all policies in order for my child(ren) to remain enrolled at Bright Beginnings.

I have been informed that Bright Beginnings maintains a licensing notebook of all licensing inspection reports, special investigation reports, and all related corrective action plans. I understand that this notebook is available for review during regular business hours. I am aware that licensing inspection and special investigation reports from at least the past two years are available on the Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing website at www.michigan.gov/michildcare.

I understand that Bright Beginnings uses photographs of enrolled children in advertising, publicity, or promotional material.

- I do not consent for my child(ren)'s photograph(s) to be used for advertising, publicity, or promotional material.
- I grant Bright Beginnings Child Care Inc. permission to use, reuse, exhibit, display, print, and reprint my child(ren)'s photograph(s) in advertising, publicity, or promotional material. I acknowledge that I am signing freely and voluntarily, and I intend my signature to be a complete and unconditional release of all liability to the greatest extent allowed by law.

Please Print Enrolled Child(ren)'s Name(s):

Please Print Parent/Guardian Name:

Parent/Guardian Signature:

Date:
