



## **PARENT HANDBOOK**

(507) 235-5021

610 Summit Dr. Fairmont. MN 56031

SECTION 1

MISSION STATEMENT

SECTION 2

ADMISSIONS

ENROLLMENT

CONFIDENTIALITY

LOCATION

REGISTRATION FEE

CONTRACT INFORMATION

CHANGE OF SCHEDULE

SECTION 3

AGE CATEGORIES

STAFFING AND RATIOS

RATE INCREASES

RATE INFORMATION

LATE FEE

LATE ARRIVALS

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

SECTION 4

BILLING AND PAYMENT INFORMATION

HOLIDAYS AND DAYS BBLC WILL BE CLOSED

SECTION 5

FAMILIES RECEIVING CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS RECEIVING CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE

SECTION 6

FUTURE ENROLLMENT

WAITING LIST

SECTION 7

TRIAL PERIOD

WITHDRAWAL FROM CONTRACT

SECTION 8

TREATMENT OF BBLC STAFF

SECTION 9

RELEASING A CHILD

INEBRIATED PARENTS OR OTHER AUTHORIZED PICK-UPS

CUSTODIAL PARENTS

MISSING CHILD

SECTION 10

HEALTH POLICIES

IMMUNIZATIONS

HEALTH CARE SUMMARY

SECTION 11

ILLNESS POLICY  
INFECTION CONTROL WITHIN THE BUILDING  
HEAD LICE

SECTION 12

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

SECTION 13

EMERGENCIES  
ACCIDENTS/INCIDENTS

SECTION 14

FIRE  
TORNADO  
BLIZZARD/SNOW STORM  
POWER FAILURE  
LOCK DOWN PLAN/CODE RED

SECTION 15

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING

SECTION 16

FAMILY MAILBOXES  
ADMINISTRATION MAILBOX  
PAYMENT BOX

SECTION 17

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN TEACHERS AND PARENTS  
LESSON PLANS  
DAILY SCHEDULES  
BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

SECTION 18

CLOTHING/FOOTWEAR  
EXTRA CLOTHING  
OUTDOOR PLAY  
POTTY TRAINING

SECTION 19

NAPS  
INFANT SLEEP CHECKS

SECTION 20

PARENTAL PERMISSION FORMS  
PUBLIC RELATIONS

SECTION 21

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES  
PARENT VISITS  
DONATIONS  
FUNDRAISERS

SECTION 22

PETS

BIRTHDAYS

OTHER VISITORS

VOLUNTEERS

SECTION 23

MEALS AND SNACKS

WATER

SECTION 24

SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS

FOOD ALLERGIES/INTOLERANCES POLICY

SECTION 25

INFANT MEALS

INFANT FORMULA

INFANT FOOD

INFANT WATER

SECTION 26

CHILD CARE PLAN

SECTION 27

CIVIL RIGHTS STATEMENT

# **BUILDING BLOCKS** **LEARNING CENTER & CHILD CARE**

610 Summit Drive, Suite 1, Fairmont, MN 56031

Phone: 507-235-5021

## **HOURS OF OPERATION:**

Monday-Friday

6:30am-5:30pm

## **Mission Statement:**

Building Blocks Learning Center and Child Care exists to provide a safe, developmentally appropriate environment for infants, toddlers, preschool and school age children. Our focus is to provide a stimulating early care and education experience which promotes each child's social/emotional, physical, and cognitive development.

We pride our Center's focus on the individual needs of each child. Each child is considered unique in temperament and rate of development. Curriculum is planned to enhance and challenge individual needs, interests and abilities. Activities and relationships occur in a healthy, positive and relaxed environment in which well-qualified staff provide personal attention, guidance and nurturing to each child.

Building Blocks Learning Center strives to maintain continuity and consistency throughout the program and to encourage children to be life-long learners.

It is our goal at Building Blocks Learning Center and Child Care to:

- Provide affordable, convenient, dependable child care services
- Create a child care setting for social, cognitive, and physical development
- Provide a nurturing environment
- Provide a preschool program, readying children for lifelong learning

### **Admissions:**

Before a child can be admitted, a parent/guardian must complete the following:

- Enrollment packet
- Information form
- Emergency authorization
- Medical information
- Medical attention authorization
- Parent permission form
- Food allergies and special diets form
- Food program forms
- Signature on contract

Two business days before the child's first day of attendance, registration fee and first week's tuition must be paid and immunization record from Health Care Provider must be received.

Health Care Summary must be completed by Health Care Provider within 30 days of enrollment.

***BBLC must receive all necessary paperwork at least 2 business days before child is to attend!***

### **Enrollment:**

Enrollment is granted on a first come, first contracted basis. Current Building Blocks families will get first choice on the days and times they need. Any remaining spots are given to new enrollments.

Admission to the program will be granted as vacancies occur. Openings will be posted on BBLC's Facebook page.

Building Blocks will not knowingly enroll more children than it has the capacity to care for, however, the center may, under some circumstances, be forced to terminate a child who is enrolled on a part time basis due to children becoming older and moving up to the next room. Every effort will be made to rearrange schedules to meet the needs of all children. Children attending part time will be asked to find alternate care if their spot is needed for full time children that are being transitioned into the next room.

**Confidentiality:**

All child records and parent information are kept in the child's file in the office and all files are kept confidential. Children's records are only available to the Directors, Administrative staff, the child's teacher, parent or legal guardian, and the Department of Human Services Licensing Division.

**Location:** Building Blocks Learning Center is located within the Lakeview Health Services building. While we are an entirely separate entity, we take walks down the hallways, waving to residents passing by and as a center we feel that our children benefit from the intergenerational setting. Studies show that such setups are beneficial to not only the residents, but to the children:

- Preschool children involved in intergenerational programs had higher personal/social developmental scores (by 11 months) than preschool children involved in non-intergenerational programs. (*Rosebrook, V. (2006)*).
- Children who regularly participate with older adults in a shared site program at a nursing home have enhanced perceptions of older adults, persons with disabilities and nursing homes in general. (*Foster, K. (1997)*).

**Registration Fee:**

There is a \$50.00 registration fee per family. This must be paid at the time of enrolling your child. This is nonrefundable. Your child will not be considered enrolled in the program until this payment is received at least two business days before their first day in attendance.

**Contract Information:**

- Contracts specify the exact days of the week and the exact drop off and pick up times that your child will be attending Building Blocks.
- Contracted rates will be charged according to the child's contracted schedule, regardless of the child's attendance.
- If children attend more hours than what their attendance contract states, that over time will be calculated on the following week's bill.

- Contracts require a two week notice for withdrawal. If a two weeks notice is not received, you will still be billed for the two weeks' tuition.
- Building Blocks Learning Center may terminate at will.

**Change of Schedule:**

Schedule changes must be submitted to the office in writing at least 2 weeks in advance. Last minute schedule changes must also be submitted in writing and be verbally approved by office staff. There are Change of Schedule forms above the family mailboxes, or you may write the schedule change on a piece of paper with your child's name, the date, and your signature. If there is no written record of a schedule change, your child may not be able to attend on that day if there is not adequate staff.

\*Schedule changes are NOT guaranteed. If we are unable to accommodate a schedule change, you will be notified ASAP.

**Age Categories**

*Maximum Number of Children*

Infants: 6 weeks to 16 months .....	12
Toddlers: 16 months to 33 months .....	14
Preschoolers: 33 months to Kindergarten .....	30
School Age: 5 years up to 12 years .....	19

**Staffing and Ratios:**

BBLC will be generally over-staffed, adhering to ratios lower than those mandated by the state. It is our belief that having more adult eyes and more adult hands in a classroom equals better supervision which equals fewer problems and accidents. Having extra eyes and hands also alleviates stress for caregivers which allows them to be better caregivers. It also allows children to get more attention and keeps them safer and happier.

State mandated ratios:

- Infants (6 weeks up to 16 months of age): 1 adult to every 4 children
- Toddlers (16 months up to 31 months of age): 1 adult to every 7 children
- Preschoolers (31 months up to Kindergarten): 1 adult to every 10 children
- School Agers (Kindergarten through age 12): 1 adult to every 15 children

**Rate Increases:**

There will be a yearly increase of at least 3% to our tuition rates.

**Rate Information:**

Building Blocks Learning Center operates on a full day and full week rate system. Rates are based on the age of the child:

***Infants*** (6 weeks to 16 months)

Full week: \$230.00

***Toddlers*** (16 months to 33 months)

Full week: \$220.00

***Preschool***

Full week: \$200.00

### **Late Fee:**

After 5:30 pm/closing time pick up fee:

If your child is picked up after 5:30 pm there will be a late fee per child that will be added to your bill. The late fee is \$5 for every minute that your child is at the center past 5:30 pm. The amount due is per child.

It should also be noted that the State of Minnesota requires that if a child is not picked up 30 minutes after the center closes and we have not been notified, we are required to call the authorities and report an abandoned child. BBLC will first contact your emergency contacts before this call is made, but if no one is able to pick the child up it is our duty to follow these requirements.

### **Early and Late Fee:**

Parents and the director create a contracted schedule. This schedule is based on exact drop off times and pick up times. This is how the staff schedule is created (some drop off and pick up times may not be available upon enrollment). If the schedule is not followed this will result in an early drop off or late pick up fee of \$5.00 each time. Note the late arrival policy below for dropping your child off later than their scheduled time. Picking your child up early will not result in a fee.

### **Late Arrivals:**

If your child will be arriving later than their scheduled time, you are required to call the center and either leave a message on the machine or let the staff know what time your child will be arriving within 1 hour of the child's scheduled time. If we are not notified within an hour of your child's scheduled time, your child may not be allowed to attend for the day due to staffing ratios.

Children in the Toddler and Preschool Rooms will not be allowed to arrive between 11:30 am and 1:30 pm (nap time).

### **Arrival and Departure:**

***Parents are responsible for their children at the time of arrival and departure.***

For the safety of your child, we ask that you walk your child into the building and bring them to their room. If your child's class is not in the room, please check the "Where Are We?" board in the hall outside the classroom. Please make sure that you have left your child with his/her teacher. When picking your child up, you are required to keep your child under your supervision at all times. Your children are not allowed to run around the building/premises. The first time it happens, you will be given a verbal warning. If it happens again, your contract will be terminated.

Dropping off can be hard for your child, they may cry or be upset with you leaving. If you are comfortable and confident, your child will be too. We find it best if you make drop offs consistent, short and quick. Children are nearly always quick to get involved in play or activities as soon as the parent is gone. Always feel free to give us a call or email to see how your child is doing; we do want you to be comfortable and confident in your child's care.

Children **CANNOT** arrive no earlier than 6:30 a.m. and be ***picked up no later than 5:30 p.m.*** In the case of an emergency, please contact BBLC immediately if you are going to be arriving later than scheduled. (Please see additional late pick up charge information.)

**Billing and Payment Information:**

1. Bills for the following week will be placed in your family mailbox on Wednesdays to be paid before pick up on Monday.
2. \*\*Prepayment is due weekly, prior to a child's first day of attendance.\*\*
3. If payment is not received before or on Monday at pick up, a \$30.00 late fee will be added to your bill.
4. If payment is not received within 5 business days, services will be suspended until payment is received.
5. If payment is not received within 10 business days, your contract will be terminated.
6. Payments may be placed in the payment box located next to the family mailboxes.
7. Bills are calculated according to a child's contracted schedule, not attendance.
8. A charge of \$50 will be applied to all non-sufficient fund checks. A cash payment or money order may then be required after an NSF check has been received from a family.

***~ Building Blocks Learning Center plans our staffing, supplies, and food according to our projected attendance. Your tuition is our consistent source of income. We greatly appreciate your prompt payment. The life and quality of our program depend on it. ~***

**Holidays and Days that Building Blocks Learning Center will be Closed:**

Building Blocks will be closed on the following days in 2022:

(Please note that although we are closed the following days, you will be billed for these days.)

President's Day (February 21st)

Friday before Easter (April 15th)

Memorial Day (May 30)

Friday of the Martin County Fair

Labor Day (September 5th)

Columbus Day (October 10th)

Thanksgiving (November 24th)

Friday after Thanksgiving (November 25th)

December 23rd and 26th

\*\*\*Please note that any additional days that are closed will be announced 30 days in advance, with the exception of unforeseen circumstances.

**Families Receiving Child Care Assistance:**

BBLC receives payments from MN Department of Human Services (DHS) Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). However, CCAP does not reimburse the full amount of our tuition. Parents are responsible for paying the difference in our rates and the reimbursement rates.

Weekly Rates

Age category	BBLC weekly rate	DHS weekly reimbursement	Amount not covered by DHS to be paid by parent
Infants	\$230.00	\$222.00	\$8.00
Toddlers	\$220.00	\$207.00	\$13.00
Preschoolers	\$200.00	\$188.00	\$12.00

***Responsibilities of Parents Receiving Child Care Assistance:***

- Parents will make full and prompt payment of all copays. Non-payment of copays will be reported to their case worker, at which time their case will be closed until payment is made in full. In the event of their case closing, they will be required to pre-pay privately all of their child care expenses. If pre-payment is not received, services may be terminated.
- ***Parents will pre-pay all child care costs that DHS will not reimburse.***
- Parents are to inform BBLC of any changes in their daycare assistance and are asked to have documentation of these changes available.
- Parents are responsible for knowing when their case is closing. They will be responsible for privately paying all child care costs. Not knowing the end date of their assistance is not an excuse to omit payment. Any amount DHS does not pay is the parents' responsibility.
- DHS will reimburse parents for the registration fee and will typically reimburse beginning on the child(ren)'s start date. However, BBLC requires the \$50.00 registration fee + first week's tuition amount before a child will be considered contracted. When DHS reimburses their portion, the excess payment will be credited to the parent's account.

- DHS will not cover overtime fees or late payment fees. Parents are responsible for prompt payment of these fees.
- A two weeks' notice is required for any change in contract.

### **Waiting List:**

Building Blocks Learning Center does not have a waiting list. We will post any openings on our Facebook page. We operate on a first come, first contracted basis. (see Enrollment for more information.)

### **Future Infant Openings:**

Building Blocks is able to project future openings in the Infant room based on when the children will transition to the Toddler room. Openings are filled on first come, first serve basis.

These future openings can be held by:

- Calling or e-mailing the center to see if any spots are available.
- A holding fee agreement must be filled out.
- A non-refundable \$510 deposit is paid (\$50 registration fee and the first 2 weeks tuition).
- \$460 will be used towards the first 2 weeks tuition in attendance.
- Must begin paying weekly tuition on the agreed upon start date. Whether in attendance or not (\$230 a week).
- Spot will be forfeited immediately upon non-payment which is due at the beginning of each week.
  - \$460 will be applied toward 2-week notice, to fill the spot if forfeited.

**Trial Period:**

Child care is a very important aspect of childhood. Building Blocks is truly concerned about every individual child and making sure that their needs are being met, that they are comfortable and secure in their surroundings, and that they are receiving the maximum benefit of our program. Each child adapts differently to child care settings, and for some children a center may not be the right fit. The first month of the child's enrollment will be considered a trial period. During this time, both parents and staff will be able to determine whether BBLC is right for the child. If either parents or BBLC feels that the center environment is not working for the child, the contract may be terminated. There will be no refund when the contract is terminated. BBLC will do everything in our power to work with parents and children to make the early transition period as pleasant and easy on the child as possible. Again, our first concern is for the children and we want what is best for them.

**Withdrawal from Contract:**

A two-week written notice is required to withdraw from the program. If a two-week notice is not given, you will be billed the equivalent of two full weeks' tuition.

**Treatment of BBLC Staff:**

Building Blocks Learning Center and Child Care employs teachers with training and education in child development and early childhood education. Teachers are put through additional extensive training and observations, and are chosen because of their knowledge, patience, respectfulness, integrity, and so much more.

Parents are expected to treat BBLC's staff with respect. Please value our teachers and show them common courtesy. Parents should view our teachers/staff as an important part of their child's development and treat them accordingly.

BBLC has ZERO TOLERANCE for raised voices, foul language, and any other aggressive behavior in our center. Violating this policy will result in immediate termination of contract.

### **Releasing a Child:**

Building Blocks Learning Center will release children only to their custodial parent(s)/legal guardian or to other people stated in writing on the child's information sheet as authorized pickups. If someone new comes to pick up the child and their name is on the authorized pickup list, but they have not met the staff, the staff will ask for identification before releasing the child.

Please inform anyone you have picking up your child that they will be asked for identification. If someone whose name is not on the child's authorized pickup list comes to pick up the child, and if we have not been notified by the parents that they have permission to pick up the child, the child will not be released. Staff will:

1. Request identification
2. Contact the parents by telephone
3. The director, assistant director, and or other authorized person will be notified
4. If deemed necessary, the police may be called

Regardless of verbal permission via parents, BBLC is only able to follow written permissions for releasing children. BBLC's form may be used, or a parent may give their permission on a piece of paper including the child's first and last name, the authorized pick up's first and last name, the parent's signature, and the date.

If at closing time, no one has picked up a child, and the staff has not heard from the child's parent, we will go through the child's emergency contacts and attempt to locate a person authorized to pick up the child. If by 30 minutes after official closing time we have not been able to reach anyone authorized to pick up the child, we will call the local police and child protection services (per state regulations).

### **Inebriated Parents or other Authorized Pick-Ups:**

If a parent or other authorized pick up person arrives inebriated at the center to pick up their child and the child's safety is endangered by releasing the child, the staff will:

- Call a person of the parent's choice or the emergency contacts on their information sheet to pick up the child
- Call the police if deemed necessary

### **Custodial Parents:**

Divorced or separated parents maintain all parental rights with their children unless altered by a court order. If parental rights have been changed, the Director must have access to a copy of the court order stipulating those changes. Staff will follow the directives stated in a court order and the directives regarding the access to the child provided by that court order. This includes authorized pick-ups granted by the

parents. Both parents maintain the right to authorize who will pick up their child unless we receive a copy of a court order stating otherwise.

**Missing Child:**

In the event that a child should be missing from a group, the authorities will be called immediately. The staff will take all steps necessary to locate the missing child including searching the premises and surrounding area, utilizing all available persons within and outside our program. Parents will be called and informed.

**Health Policies:**

A complete copy of BBLC’s health policies is available in the office for parents to review at any time. A health consultant reviews the center’s health policies and procedures to verify that they are adequate to protect the health of the children on a yearly basis. The health consultant comes for monthly inspections of the infant and toddler classrooms.

The health authorities will be notified within 24 hours if there is a suspected case of reportable disease received from a parent. (A list of reportable communicable diseases can be found on the MN Department of Health’s website.)

**Immunizations:**

Before a child may attend BBLC, parents must provide an immunization record, and all shots must be up to date before a child can attend. For parents who are conscientious objectors to immunizations, a signed notarized statement of parental objection to the immunization must be presented to the center.

**Health Care Summary:**

Before a child is admitted to the center, or within 30 days of enrollment, parents are required to submit a report of a current physical examination of the child. A completed Health Care Summary signed by the child’s source of medical care is due within 30 days of enrollment. If not completed, the parent will be asked to withdraw the child until this document has been received.

For children already enrolled in BBLC, an updated report of their physical exam signed by the child’s source of medical care is required annually for the children under 24 months of age, and whenever a child 24 months or older advances to an older age category.

## **Illness Policy:**

Building Blocks Learning Center is not licensed to provide care to children who are too ill to participate in normal activities. Therefore, it is very important for you to make prior arrangements for substitute care when your child is ill.

If a child is unable to participate in daily activities, seems lethargic, or requires more care than the staff is able to provide, parents may be contacted and asked to pick their child up. Our primary concern is the welfare of your child.

Should your child become ill while at BBLC, parents will be notified immediately. If we are unable to reach parents, the emergency contacts will be called. The child is to be picked up as soon as possible with a wait time of no longer than 30 minutes. If parents cannot pick up the child within 30 minutes, an emergency contact person will be called.

A child who arrives at BBLC exhibiting any of the following conditions will not be admitted for the day or parents will be called to come and pick the child up. Also, if your child has not been without any of these symptoms for at least 24 hours, please do not bring them to the center so that we may keep the other children in our care and our staff healthy:

- Temperature of 100.4° or higher within the last 24 hours (before fever reducing medicine is given)
- 3 diarrhea episodes within 24 hours – unless infectious diarrhea has been circulating, one diarrhea episode may constitute the child being sent home
- Vomiting (1 time in 24 hours)
- Eye drainage - including contagious conjunctivitis (pink eye) or undiagnosed drainage from the eye
- Ear drainage
- Lice, ringworm, or scabies
- Undiagnosed rash
- A bacterial infection (Impetigo, streptococcal pharyngitis)
- Chicken pox
- Significant respiratory distress
- A severe cold
- A severe cough that has not been diagnosed by a medical authority
- Any other contagious illness
- Any reportable communicable disease

A child may return to child care when:

- The child has been fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medicines
- 24 hours after an episode of recurring diarrhea or vomiting
- 24 hours after symptoms have cleared
- After BBLC has received a Health Care Provider Evaluation Form that has been signed by the child's source of medical care

A child must be free of any of the above stated symptoms for 24 hours before they return to BBLC. If a child is put on antibiotics, they must be on that antibiotic for 24 hours before returning to BBLC. In addition, a doctor's note stating when the child is able to return to BBLC is required in order for a child to return, when applicable.

When doubtful about your child's health condition, play it safe for the sake of your child, other children, and staff at the center. We strongly encourage you NOT to bring your children who are ill, even if they are symptom-free due to the use of over the counter medication. The medications typically only mask the symptoms rather than cure the illness. Bringing in a child who is ill may cause the child to become more run down, thus requiring a longer recovery period or make the illness worse. Please also consider the other children and our staff that would be exposed to your child's illness.

### **Head Lice:**

Whenever a case of head lice is detected, a notice will be posted in the child's room. When head lice or nits are detected on a child, the child's parents will be called and the child must be removed immediately. BBLC requires that the child that is infected must be treated to kill live lice. The child may return only after there is absolutely no trace of nits or lice in the hair and a 24-hour period has passed since treatment. Staff will check the child's head every day for two weeks and parents/guardians will not be allowed to leave until the child is cleared to stay. If lice/nits are found, the child must be removed from the center and re-treated. Nits generally hatch 7-10 days after a treatment. 7-10 days after the initial treatment, another treatment should be done to ensure that any hatching nits are killed. All children in that classroom may be checked periodically/daily for the two-week period.

If there is continual re-infection, the family may be asked to pursue further treatment and may be asked to leave the center until the problem is cleared up. If the problem continues to be on-going, BBLC reserves the right to terminate services.

BBLC has not, at this point, had head lice transfer from one child to another in our care. We plan on keeping this record, therefore we must maintain our strict policy when it comes to head lice.

\*Please note that the child who has head lice will not be identified to anyone other than the parents. We realize that it can be embarrassing for both the child and the parent, but please know that anyone can get head lice. It has nothing to do with cleanliness. In fact, the cleaner the hair, the better the lice like it. We sympathize with the family that must deal with the issue and we will do what we can to help. Dealing with head lice is not fun and can be very stressful, please know that you have our support.

### **Infection Control Within the Building:**

All reportable communicable diseases diagnosed within Building Blocks Learning Center's children and Lakeview's residents will be communicated amongst administration staff. Building Blocks will follow the above stated policy of reporting and informing families about such cases.

Building Blocks Learning Center's illness logs will be provided to the appropriate Lakeview staff for review as requested. (Confidential information will remain as such.)

Any changes suggested by Building Blocks' health consultant will be communicated with Lakeview staff. When activities are planned including both residents and children, children or residents showing any sign of illness will be excluded from the activity. Building Blocks' children will be given an alternate activity to be completed away from the residents.

Children will wash their hands before and immediately after activities/interactions with residents.

### **Passing of Lakeview Residents:**

With our program being integrated into a nursing home, it is inevitable that bonds will be formed between children and residents. In the unfortunate event that a resident with whom your child has formed a bond passes away, we will call you and let you know before we talk to your child. It will be your choice if you would like us to talk to your child, or if you would rather talk to them when you pick them up.

## **Administration of Medication**

The MN Department of Human Services and BBLC have requirements that must be met for administration of medication. The following procedures will be followed:

### **Non-Prescription Medication:**

- BBLC will get written permission from the child's parent before administering medicine, diapering products, sunscreen lotions, and insect repellents. Nonprescription medicines, diapering products, sunscreen lotions, and insect repellents will be administered according to the manufacturer's instructions unless there are written instructions for their use provided by a licensed physician or dentist
- All medicine must be kept in its original container and have a legible label stating the child's name. The medicine must be given only to the child whose name is on the label. The medicine must not be given after an expiration date on the label, and any unused portion must be returned to the child's parent or destroyed.
- BBLC will ensure that the administration of medicine is recorded and give the name of the child, name of the medication, date, time, dosage, and the name and signature of the person who dispensed the medicine. The record will be available to the parent and maintained in the child's record.
- A product to control or prevent diaper rash, including premoistened commercial wipes, must be labeled with the child's name and used only for the individual child whose name is written on the label.
- Medicines, insect repellents, sunscreen lotions, and diaper rash control products are stored according to directions on the original container and so that they are inaccessible to children.

### **Prescription Medication:**

- BBLC must receive and follow written instructions from a licensed physician or dentist before administering each prescription medicine. Medicine with the child's name and current prescription information on the label constitutes instructions.
- The parent will provide the staff with the medication in the original container marked with the child's first and last name. Medicine will be stored according to the directions on the original container and locked up, out of reach of children.
- The administration of the medicine is recorded on the medication log with the name of the child, name of the medication, date, time, dosage, and signature of the person giving the medicine. The record must be maintained in the child's file, available to the parent, and reviewed with the parent periodically. Any behavior changes that have implications for medication changes will be documented and information will be shared with the parents.

- Any medication given by use of nebulizer or special equipment will require written instructions. Staff will not be responsible for any damage to equipment. Equipment will need to be left at the site or be easily transported from room to room. The equipment must not pose any threat or danger to other children.
- If any dosages of medication are forgotten or given to a child more than 15 minutes later than scheduled, the parent will be notified by phone immediately and in writing on BBLC's incident report form. A copy of the form, signed by a staff member and the parent, will be filed in the child's file. The parent will keep a copy.

\*\*Special consideration will be given when planning field trips to allow for regular dosages of medications to be given. If necessary, field trip plans will include transporting the medication safely and administering the medication on the field trip. The medicine, the measuring/administering devices, and possibly a bottle of water will be brought in the first aid kit. The first aid kit cannot be taken off of the staff person in charge of the kit if it contains any medications.\*\*

### **Emergencies:**

Building Blocks Learning Center teachers are trained in Child CPR and First Aid.

- In case of a medical emergency during the day, first aid will be administered by the caregiver.
- The parent or other authorized emergency contacts will be notified right away.
- If medical attention is required, the staff will call 911.

Parents are required by state regulations to provide a primary and secondary source for medical care. Whenever possible, those sources will be utilized. If more immediate care is needed in the case of a medical emergency, BBLC will have children transported to the Fairmont Mayo Health Center/ Hospital/Emergency Room. All expenses incurred due to emergency care are the responsibility of the parents/guardians.

Barbara Sewald, RN, is our regular health consultant.

Mayo Health Systems Hospital and Clinic: 507-238-8100

Dr. Jon T. Erickson, DDS: 507-238-2812

### **Accidents/Incidents:**

The child care program is operated in a manner which minimizes accidents and injuries to the children and staff. Should your child sustain an injury during the day, staff will act immediately to administer first aid and an Accident Report Form will be completed. A parent's signature is required and this will be logged in an accident/incident log. These forms will include: child's name, date, time, and place of incident/accident, and actions taken. BBLC Administration will monitor the log and modify procedures as needed. BBLC takes the well-being and safety of all children very seriously. We will do everything in our power to make sure that all children receive quality services.

If it appears an accident may lead to future complications, or if it becomes serious, the child needs to be medically examined.

The following procedures are required in the case of accident:

- An Accident Report Form must be completed and signed by a parent/guardian.
- If a parent/guardian does not pick up the child, whoever picks up the child will sign, verifying they were informed.
- All accident/incidents must be logged on the Accident/Incident Log.
- Parents are required to have a Health Care Provider Evaluation Form filled out by a Health Care Provider should the child be taken to a medical facility.

**Fire:**

Should it be necessary to evacuate the building, the staff has been instructed in procedures for exiting the building and a monthly fire drill is conducted to assure timeliness. During a fire or fire drill, infants will be put in a designated crib that is equipped with wheels in order to transport quickly.

In the event of a true fire or if the weather is inclement for a drill, staff will take children to the Evangelical Covenant Church. Parents will be notified as to when and where to pick up their children.

**Tornado:**

In the event of severe storms, if alerted by the Civil Defense in regard to a tornado warning, children will be evacuated to designated areas of protection in the building. Please do not get worried if you call and there is no answer; we will return to our classrooms as soon as we are given the all-clear. Each month between April and September tornado drills will be held.

**Blizzard/Snow Storm:**

Please check BBLC's Facebook for any closing or late starts due to extreme bad weather. In the event of a blizzard while the children are at the program, the children's safety and well-being will be the prime concern of the staff. If the Highway Department advises no unnecessary travel and roads are being closed, parents will be notified immediately and asked to pick up their children. In the event of severe weather, you may want to call the center to make sure that we are adequately staffed to take your child for the day. In the rare event that BBLC is closed due to weather, you will not be billed for that day.

**Power Failure:**

In the event of a power failure at the program, the director will immediately determine if the failure is program-based or covers a larger area. The children will be kept inside if the power failure is due to downed power lines nearby. If the weather conditions outside are such that proper heating or cooling will not be maintained at the program, parents will be notified.

**Lock down Plan:**

The Fairmont Police Department has trained BBLC staff in emergency response/active shooter procedures.

If a "CODE RED" is given on the walkie-talkies, due to a threatening situation in the building, the children and staff will be locked in their rooms away from doors and windows in as calm a manner as possible. Police will be notified immediately. Parents will be informed when police's all-clear has been given, in order to protect the children and their families.

**Child Abuse Reporting:**

In Minnesota, child care workers are mandated to report all cases of suspected abuse and/or neglect. This policy does not require the child care worker to make any decisions about the extent of the abuse, but rather to report any unusual occurrences to Martin County Department of Human Services. Any reports made are not discussed with the family prior to reporting and confidentiality policies will be strictly enforced. The Department of Human Services takes over at that point to assess the information and to determine what action, if any, needs to be taken. If you suspect abuse or maltreatment to have occurred at Building Blocks Learning Center by our staff, you may make a report to the Minnesota Department of Human Services Licensing Division at 651-296-6314.

**Family Mailboxes:**

Mailboxes are located in the office. Please be sure to check your mailbox daily. This is where you will find important communications, bills, book orders, and lots of other announcements or information.

**Administration Mailbox:**

There's an administration mailbox located to the left of the family mailboxes in a brown tray. This mailbox can be used as a communication between families and administration. Anything needing the attention of administrative staff should be placed in the mailbox if staff isn't available at that time.

**Payment Box:**

The payment box is located next to the family mailboxes. Please drop all payments in this box. If you are paying in cash and no one is in the office, there are envelopes beside the payment box to put your payment in – **please write the amount enclosed, your name, and the date on the envelope** and we will put a receipt in your mailbox.

### **Communication Between Teachers and Parents:**

Communication between staff and parents is very important for your child's success. Please allow yourself enough time to visit with your child's teacher on a daily basis. Our administration and other staff are also available for questions or concerns that you may have. We rely on your suggestions and concerns to improve our program. If you do not tell us what works and what is not working, we may never know what to fix. A parent has an insight to our program that we do not have – please share with us so that we can provide the best care possible for your child.

### **Lesson Plans:**

Lesson plans are posted outside the doors of each room. This information will show you some of the activities that your child did that day or will be doing during the week. Be sure to check these out, so when your child's answer to "What did you do today" is "Nothing", you can lead a conversation about what they really did today.

### **Daily Schedules:**

Daily schedules are posted in each classroom so that you can see the layout of your child's day.

### **Behavior Management:**

BBLC uses redirection if a child's behavior is unacceptable. This tactic helps the child feel they have the ability to be responsible for their own actions. If the unacceptable behavior continues, the child may be removed from the group and a staff member will discuss appropriate behavior with the child. Continued misbehavior may warrant a behavior plan to be set up between the teacher and the director. A parent may be called to pick up their child if the behavior becomes disruptive to the class and the safety of the other children becomes a concern. At this time, a conference will be scheduled between the parents, the teachers, and the Director, to discuss how the behavior can be modified. If the unacceptable behavior cannot be managed after the parents have been called to pick up their child 5 times, the parents may be asked to withdraw their child from Building Blocks Learning Center. \*Please see "Behavior Guidance".

### **Clothing/Footwear:**

Children should wear clothing that they are comfortable in and can actively play in. We encourage independence in children, so it is recommended that children wear clothing that they can easily get in and out of for toileting or for changing if they become soiled.

Children are required to wear footwear with non-slip soles. Slippers and flip flops are not allowed. They are required to have closed-toe shoes and a strap behind the heel. You may leave a pair at the center to change out of sandals or snow boots if you so choose.

BBLC will not be liable for injuries sustained by children while wearing inappropriate footwear. During large motor times, children wearing inappropriate footwear will be given an alternative activity to do sitting down and will not be allowed to participate in large motor activities.

**\*\*BBLC IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST/DAMAGED CLOTHING, SHOES, ITEMS.** Please send your child in clothing that you are okay with getting wet, painted on, dirty, etc.

### **Extra Clothing:**

For all children, an extra set or 2 of seasonally appropriate clothing + underwear + socks must be provided at the time of enrollment. Please label with your child's first and last name.

### **Outdoor Play:**

It is our goal to have the children outdoors daily, weather permitting. Please make sure that your child has weather appropriate outerwear, labeled with their name.

We follow the "Child Care Weather Watch" to determine whether the children can go outside.

### **Potty Training:**

When you feel your child is ready for toilet training, inform your child's teacher and you will be given our potty training information packet. It is important for parents and staff to communicate openly about methods of training to offer consistency to the child. We want this to be a positive and successful experience for everyone.

**WE REQUIRE PARENTS TO BRING PULL-UPS FOR CHILDREN THAT ARE BEING POTTY TRAINED.** For further information, please ask for our "Potty Training Packet".

## Naps:

- Naps and rest are provided in a quiet area that is physically separated from children who are engaged in activity that will disrupt a napping or resting child.
- Cribs and cots are placed so there are clear aisles and unimpeded access for both adults and children on at least one side of each piece of napping and resting equipment.
- Cribs and cots are placed directly on the floor when in use.
- A blanket is to be provided by parents/guardians, otherwise BBLC will provide a separate blanket for each child in our care.
- Blankets are washed weekly and when soiled or wet.
- Cots are sanitized daily and washed with soap/water then sanitized once a week.

When more than 80% of the children are sleeping, the remaining staff will have at least the qualifications of a child care aide.

All children, ages 1 year to 5 years of age, are required to nap for at least thirty minutes each day.

- If a child does not sleep, they are asked to lay quietly on their cot for at least 30 minutes each day
- After 30 minutes of cot time, the child will be allowed to have a choice of quiet activities on their cot, at the table, or other designated areas.

\*\*A child who has completed a nap or rested quietly for 30 minutes will not be required to remain on a cot or in a crib.

## School age children

- Children 5-12 years of age are required to have a minimum of 30 minutes of “down time”. • During this time the children can nap, read, draw, write or do other quiet activities

## Infants:

Infants will follow their individual nap time routines.

A crib is provided for each infant for which the center is licensed to provide care. The equipment is of safe and sturdy construction that conforms to federal crib standards under Code of Federal Regulations, Title 16, Part 1219 for full-size baby cribs, or Part 1220 for non-full-sized baby cribs. Routine crib inspections are conducted.

Infants are placed to sleep on their backs, unless BBLC has documentation from the infant's physician directing an alternative sleeping position for the infant. The physician directive must be on a form approved by the commissioner and will remain on file at BBLC. An infant who independently rolls onto their stomach after being placed to sleep on their back may be allowed to remain sleeping on their stomach if the infant is at least six months of age or BBLC has a signed statement from the parent indicating that the infant regularly rolls over at home.

If an infant falls asleep before being placed in a crib, the teacher/aide will move the infant to a crib as soon as practicable. When an infant falls asleep while being held, supervision needs of other children will be considered when determining when to place the infant in the crib. The sleeping infant will not be in a position where the airway may be blocked or with anything covering the infant's face.

Staff will conduct Infant Sleep Checks every 15 minutes to ensure the infants' safe sleep.

**INFANTS 12 MONTHS OF AGE AND UNDER ARE NOT ALLOWED TO HAVE A BLANKET OR ANY OTHER ITEMS IN THEIR CRIB OTHER THAN A PACIFIER.**

BBLC will launder sheets and blankets weekly, or as needed. You are welcome to bring a labeled blanket from home, if you so choose.

**Infant Sleep Checks:**

The staff in BBLC's infant room will conduct sleep checks every 15 minutes while infants are sleeping. A sleep chart will be used to document these checks.

At the beginning of the day, the sleep chart will be filled out with the infant's name and date.

When the first infant to fall asleep is placed in their crib, the staff will start the timer for 15 minutes and document that the infant was laid on their back.

When the timer goes off, a staff will go to the crib area and check on each infant that is sleeping in their crib: checking their vitals, documenting their sleep position, and any other comments I.E: spit out pacifier, rolled over, etc.

The staff will then set the timer for 15 minutes.

If other infants began their nap within the 15 minutes since the timer was set, staff will also check those infants when the timer goes off – even if it hasn't been 15 minutes since they were laid down.

### **Parental Permission Forms:**

Parental Permission forms will occasionally be sent home with your child. These forms must be read and signed by you before your child may participate in field trips. When field trips are planned, the permission slip will include the location of the field trip, what time the trip begins and the time we will return to the center.

The permission slip will also let parents know if we will be walking or taking a bus.

### **Public Relations:**

The following are all public relations activities that the children and staff may be involved in:

- Newspaper
  - ◊ Print
  - ◊ Website
- Facebook
  - ◊ Under the pages of BBLC, Lakeview Methodist Home, and other community pages, including, but not limited to, Martin Co. Library, Fairmont Aquatic Park, 4H, Fairmont Chamber of Commerce, KEYC, etc.
  - ◊ These may be “shared” by people
- Television
- Building Blocks Learning Center website
- Lakeview Nursing Home website
- Other community websites
  - ◊ Examples including, but not limited to, Martin Co. Library, Fairmont Aquatic Park, 4H, Fairmont Chamber of Commerce, KEYC, etc.
- Television in the entry to Lakeview Methodist Home
- Pictures on posters and/or flyers in the community
- Pictures in the hallways and other locations at BBLC and Lakeview Health Services
- Brochures
- In-house trainings
- Advertising

### **Parent/Teacher Conferences:**

The domains and components that are used in our curriculum are also used to evaluate the physical, intellectual, social, and emotional development of the children in our care. This information is documented in a child's record and conveyed to the parent during conferences. BBLC will conduct conferences two times per year. There will be a sign-up sheet outside of your child's classroom to sign up for a time slot, if you so choose. If conference times/dates do not work with your schedule, you may set up a different time with your child's teachers.

### **Parent Visits:**

Parents are invited to visit the center at any time during hours of operation. You are always welcome to check on your child, take them out for lunch, etc. However, we ask that you consider your child's best interest. For example, if your child will be upset by you stopping in to say 'Hi', we ask that you don't disrupt their day if it isn't necessary. Ultimately, BBLC has an open-door policy for parents/guardians so you may use your discretion.

### **Donations:**

Building Blocks Learning Center accepts donations of cash, toys, equipment, paper, art supplies, office supplies, children's clothing, children's winter outerwear, baby equipment, etc. If you or someone you know has items or money they would like to donate, we are always in need and all donations are greatly appreciated.

### **Fundraisers:**

Building Blocks Learning Center may hold fundraisers throughout the year. The money raised is usually for a specific purpose, which will be indicated at the time of the fundraiser. Though your help in these efforts is greatly appreciated, it is not mandatory that you participate.

**Pets:**

Pets are not allowed at BBLC.

**Birthdays:**

BBLC will celebrate each child's birthday in a special way. Parents may provide a special treat for their child's birthday, but it is not required! If treats are brought they must be purchased at the store and remain in the original package until served.

**Other Visitors:**

If other family members or friends will be visiting during the day, we ask that parents notify us in advance and let the visitor know that they will be asked for identification.

**Volunteers:**

We encourage parent involvement in our center. If you, or someone you know, have a skill or extra time and would like to volunteer at our center, please talk with the Director for scheduling and other details.

**Meals and Snacks:**

BBLC provides all children in our care with breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack. Lunch is catered by the kitchen staff at Lakeview. All meals meet the daily requirements of the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Nutrition Program. \*Infants follow their personal individual schedules.\*

Meals are served at the following times:

<u>TODDLERS</u>	<u>PRE-K</u>
Breakfast: 8:00 – 8:15	8:00 – 8:20
Lunch: 11:00 – 11:15	11:00 – 11:20
Snack: 3:00 – 3:15	3:00 – 3:20

\*If your child will not be in attendance at these times, please make sure they are fed prior to attending.\*

Nutrition labels and recipes (if applicable) for menu items are available in Lakeview’s kitchen, and BBLC will supply parents or staff with additional information at any time.

**Water:**

Drinking adequate amounts of water is a very important element in a child’s health and development. Health officials stress that dehydration can contribute to illness in both children and adults. In addition, studies show that drinking water throughout the day allows a child’s brain to work to its full potential and aids in brain development.

If that is not enough reason, licensing mandates that all children have an adequate amount of water offered to them on a regular basis in child care centers – Drinking water will be offered to the children at frequent intervals, and is always available to them upon request.

### **Special Dietary Needs:**

BBLC will provide for a child's dietary needs prescribed by the child's source of medical care. If a child's special dietary needs are not deemed medically necessary, BBLC may require the parents to provide the prescribed diet items that are not part of the planned menu.

A copy of the "Special Dietary Needs" form will be kept on file for the duration specified in the child's record. All special dietary needs will be posted in a confidential, yet accessible, manner in the child's room in order to keep caregivers informed.

### **Food Allergies/Food Intolerances Policy:**

Children are sometimes diagnosed with food allergies, or more commonly, food intolerances. BBLC follows the USDA guidelines for food allergies.

All food allergies are posted in the rooms. This posting will be updated quarterly, or more often if needed.

If a child's food allergy is anaphylactic, an epi-pen must be available at the parent's expense.

Upon a child's enrollment: Every enrollment packet has a place that asks if the child has any food allergies or intolerances. A child's food allergies or intolerances must have a Special Diet Statement form signed by a licensed physician stating the child's dietary needs.

If the child's food allergy is diagnosed as a life threatening (anaphylactic) disability, and the Special Diet Statement for a Participant With a Disability has been completed by a licensed medical authority, BBLC will provide all food substitutions for the child in accordance with the USDA nutritional guidelines.

If the child's food allergy is not a life threatening (anaphylactic) disability, and the Special Diet Statement for a Participant Without a Disability has been completed by a licensed medical authority, BBLC is at liberty to decide to what extent they will provide substitutions for the child. This will be discussed with each family on an individual basis. BBLC will do as much as they can to accommodate each child's needs.

The child's name and a list of the child's allergies/intolerances will be added to each of the posted lists of Allergies and Medical Conditions that are posted in each of the rooms before the child attends, or as soon as a Special Diet Statement is received.

A list of the child's specific allergies will be compiled. This list will also contain specific food items that the child cannot eat. This list will be kept in the room binder with the Special Diet Statement. Each new item that is indicated that the child cannot eat, will be added.

All BBLC staff will be made aware of each child's allergies before a child starts attending or as soon as a Special Diet Statement is received. The directors will give each staff member verbal orientation on the child's dietary needs. The list stating what the child cannot eat will be looked at prior to serving the child. If a child does not have a component of the USDA meal pattern in the meal the parent sent with the child, the staff and the kitchen will work together to make sure that the child is served a food item that the child is not allergic to from the food service vendor.

Any food items that BBLC provides for the child will be documented on a calendar that will be provided for every child with a food allergy/ intolerance. Each entry will be initialed by the staff member serving the food item. Staff will be diligent about adhering to the special dietary needs of all children. A child with food allergies will have their food intake monitored and documented in detail to protect the child's health.

### **Milk/Dairy Intolerances**

#### ***Milk/Dairy Intolerances Classified as a disability (child has an anaphylactic reaction when milk/ dairy is ingested):***

If a child has a milk allergy/intolerance that is classified as a disability (anaphylactic), and a "Special Diet Statement for a Participant WITH a Disability" has been completed by a licensed medical authority, BBLC will provide the suggested replacement for the milk.

#### ***Milk/Dairy Intolerances Not Classified as a disability (child does not have an anaphylactic reaction when milk/dairy is ingested):***

If a child has a milk allergy/intolerance that is not classified as a disability (anaphylactic), and a "Special Diet Statement for a Participant WITHOUT a Disability" has been completed by a licensed medical authority, BBLC will provide the milk replacement recommended by the recognized medical authority. This replacement may include lactose free milk, goat's milk, or soy milk.

Building Blocks Learning Center will provide soy milk if:

- A “Special Diet Statement for a Participant WITH a Disability” has been completed by a licensed medical authority and the milk replacement named is soy milk
- A “Special Diet Statement for a Participant WITHOUT a Disability” has been signed by a licensed medical authority stating that the child must have soy milk instead of cow’s milk
- A parent has received a written statement from a licensed medical authority authorizing soy milk as a replacement for milk

**Milk Substitutions That are a Parent’s Choice and not Prescribed by a Doctor:**

Parents can choose to not have their child served milk and that request must be in writing.

In accordance with MN State Licensing regulations, all meals that a child eats at Building Blocks Learning Center must meet USDA regulations. If a child brings in a meal that does not meet the USDA requirements, BBLC must provide meal components that will meet USDA requirements and meal patterns as well as respect any allergies or intolerances that the child may have. (This applies to all children ages 6 weeks to 12 years of age.)

**Infant Meals:**

Infant meals will be served according to each individual child's schedule. Each child's schedule will be posted in the food preparation area. Each infant's diet will be determined by the infant's parents.

**Infant Formula:**

Parents will need to provide their own formula or breast milk. Parents they may bring bottles that are pre-mixed and ready to be served, or bring a can of powdered formula to keep at BBLC. All unused pre-mixed bottles will be sent home with the child each night and fresh formula must be provided the next day. Each bottle must have the child's first and last name on it for identification. Pre-mixed formula and breast milk will be stored in a refrigerator with a temperature of 40°F or less.

**Infant Food:**

BBLC will provide Rice cereal for infants in accordance with the USDA food program. If parents wish to provide their own, they may sign a decline notice and provide their own cereal. BBLC will provide a fruit, vegetable and protein source in accordance with the USDA food program. If parents wish to provide their own baby food, they may sign a decline notice and provide their own jar baby food. Non-contaminated, opened un-used food will be kept in a refrigerator with a temperature of 40°F or less. All food will be dated with the date it was opened. All food brought in must be labeled with the child's first and last name.

**Infant Water:**

BBLC will use tap water (Fairmont City water) when mixing a child's formula, cereal, or offering infants water. If parent's wish to provide their own bottled water, they may do so.

## **Child Care Plan:**

The children we serve are at the most critical period of their physical, emotional, and intellectual development. There are many recent studies that demonstrate the importance of early learning and how it determines a child's future success in their education and in their contributions to their communities later in life. What happens to young children at this critical time in their development matters not only to them as individuals, but to all of us as they become our neighbors, our students, our employees, and contributing members of society. The children are our future community and it is our responsibility to make sure they have all of the tools necessary to be able to maintain the community that we wish for them.

At Building Blocks Learning Center we have made a commitment to provide the children in our care a safe, caring, environment that promotes positive physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development. It is our belief that all children, regardless of race, color, creed, background, developmental stages, physical limitations, or family income, deserve exposure to an intensely educational, quality, early care program to insure their future educational and personal success.

Building Blocks Learning Center has developed a curriculum for infants through school age children that is based strongly in literature, language, creative thinking, movement, community awareness, and social skills. We have created a schedule of themes that are followed by all of our teachers for each age group. Weekly lesson plans are developed by our Lead Teachers and gone over by our Directors. These lesson plans are posted in each classroom and are carried out accordingly. Each day is filled with circle time activities, reading/literacy skills, outdoor time, music & movement, construction activities, dramatic play, science activities, fine motor skill activities, sensory activities, art activities, table activities, and centers.

Building Blocks has a schedule for each of the rooms that provides for adequate time for indoor and outdoor large motor play. We make every attempt to get the children outdoors to play each day, however, we are required to follow the "Child Care Weather Watch". The schedules provide for alternating quiet and active play. Children are allowed ample free choice activities as well as teacher directed activities.

**Curriculum:**

We have aligned our curriculum with the Minnesota Early Childhood Indicators of Progress, and have used the domains and components in order to build our curriculum. Those domains and components are as follows:

**Social and Emotional Development**

- Trust and Emotional Security
- Self-Awareness
- Self-Regulation
- Relationships with Other Children

**Language Development and Communication**

- Listening and Understanding
- Communicating and Speaking
- Emergent Literacy

**Cognitive Development**

- Exploration and Discovery
- Memory
- Problem Solving
- Imitation and Symbolic Play

**Physical and Motor Development**

- Gross Motor Development
- Fine Motor Development
- Physical Health and Well-Being

**BBLC provides DAILY access to the following interest areas:**

- Creative Arts and Crafts
- Construction
- Dramatic or Practical Life Activities
- Science
- Music
- Fine Motor Activities
- Large Muscle Activities
- Sensory Stimulation Activities

BBLC has staff who have been trained in the Minnesota Reading Corp Program and work intensely with children to create a literacy-rich environment and focus on emergent literacy skills. Emergent literacy is the encouragement of children's ability to read through participation with adults in meaningful activities. MRC's goal is to help each child become a proficient reader by the end of third grade. This road begins here in our preschool classrooms!

Literacy-rich Environment - Literacy is the ability to read, write, and talk. At Building Blocks Learning Center, we support these skills with a literacy-rich environment, including:

- Daily schedules displayed for children to follow - keeping consistency throughout their days
- Learning centers in each classroom - reading, dramatic play, trucks & blocks, writing, art, science, math, and music.
- Thematic curriculum and lesson plans.
- Print rich aspects of the classroom - labeling, environmental print, books in each center, etc.
- Daily sign-in - children practice writing their names daily with one-on-one instruction.
- Daily reading aloud - children participate in the reading of a book while engaging in meaningful conversations about vocabulary and book/print rules.

## ***ROOM DESCRIPTIONS***

### ***Infants (6 weeks up to 16 months of age):***

Our Infant Room has plenty of space for infants not crawling or walking yet, providing a place for the babies to explore their world and develop their mobility skills of crawling in a safe and protected environment. There's also space for the infants who are beginning to explore their world on a more mobile level. We have toys for the babies to pull themselves up on, stand-behind push toys to help them master the art of walking, and plenty of open space for them to crawl and run around safely.

Our staff offers extra nurturing care that promotes each child's social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language development. Each day we offer our infants:

- free play time
- sensory exploration
- music time

- outdoor time (weather permitting)
- tummy time
- art activities
- fine motor activities
- building activities
- dramatic play activities
- quiet time
- and plenty of cuddling and responsive care.

A schedule of activities is posted in the infant room. Please keep in mind that this is just a basic guideline and is meant to be very flexible.

Our infant room follows each child's own schedule for eating, diapering, playing and sleeping. Each infant is fed when hungry, sleeps in their own crib when tired, and has their diaper changed when it is wet or soiled (diapers are checked at least every hour, changed every 2 hours, and always changed as needed). With adult help, infants begin to develop their own patterns for sleeping, eating, and other basic needs, but each has their own schedule. In our infant room, there are as many schedules as there are infants.

**\*\*PLEASE NOTE: STATE LAW REQUIRES US TO PUT INFANTS TO SLEEP ON THEIR BACKS.**

A lesson plan for the week's activities is posted in the Infant Room in order to keep parents informed. A daily note will also be given to the parents each day (cuddlegrams). On this you will find what and when the child ate, when they napped, diaper changes, and any other special occurrences in their day.

**Toddlers (16 months up to 33 months of age):**

Everything for the toddlers is fast paced and all about "ME". The toddlers are beginning to get into the routine of preschool. Their day is filled with circle time activities, beginning to learn about self-care, learning self-regulation of behaviors, and all of the other basics of preschool, just a bit more flexible.

Our toddlers are provided with a nurturing and stimulating environment that promotes each child's social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language development. Each day we offer our toddlers plenty of free play time, sensory exploration, music time, outdoor time (weather permitting), circle time, art activities,

science activities, fine motor activities, building activities, dramatic play activities, quiet time, and plenty of TLC.

These toddlers are developing their counting and color identification skills as well as other pre-literacy and pre-math skills. Social development is also very important at this age, and though the focus is still primarily “ME”, they begin to work on the “WE”.

A lesson plan for the week’s activities is posted in the Toddler Room in order to keep parents informed of their child’s week. A daily note (cuddlegrams) will also be given to the parents each day. In this note, you will find what and when the child ate, when they napped, diaper changes, and any other special occurrences in their day.

Some of the daily basics in our Toddler Room:

Circle Time Activities:

Finger Plays

Story Time

Songs

Mini-Lessons on topic of the week/other skills

Nursery Rhymes

Dancing to the Music

Dramatic Play Area

Shape Sorting Toys

Art activities

Science activities

Being Read To

A variety of sensory toys and experiences

Musical Instruments

Block/Construction Area

Mirrors

Sensory Table

Outdoor/Large Motor Time

Push/Pull Toys

Riding Toys

Puzzles

Climbers

Busy Boxes

Play

**Lots and Lots of TLC!**

Appropriate clothing:

\*Please note that our Toddlers go outside every day, weather permitting. This means that in the winter they will need snow boots, snow pants, hats and mittens. It is also important that the children have shoes to wear (not snow boots) while at Building Blocks Learning Center. Please make sure that your child has these items available to them. During the summer, they need swimming suits for water play here. Swimming suits and towels can be kept at BBLC if you would like. We will wash them and have them ready to go for the next water play day.

We also ask that your child’s swimsuit and towel are kept in a zippered bag and LABELLED to prevent lost items!!

**Preschoolers (33 months up to Kindergarten):**

Our preschoolers are provided with a nurturing and stimulating environment that promotes each child's social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language development. Each day we offer our Preschool children plenty of free play time, sensory exploration, music time, outdoor time, circle time, art activities, science activities, fine motor activities, building activities, dramatic play activities, quiet time, pre-literacy and pre-math activities.

BBLC preschoolers have a regular routine of scheduled activities. A schedule of activities is posted in the Preschool Room. This routine is followed daily in order to provide a secure and predictable environment for the children.

A lesson plan for the week's activities is posted in the Preschool Room in order to keep parents informed of their child's week. Parents and staff are encouraged to keep the communication lines open in order to provide the best experience possible for the children.

Some of the daily basics in our Preschool rooms:

- |                                 |                              |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Circle Time Activities          | Pre-Literacy Activities      |
| Finger Plays, Story Time, Songs | Pre-Math Activities          |
| Puzzles/Games                   | Sensory Toys/Experiences     |
| Science Activities              | Outdoor Time                 |
| Musical Instruments             | Reading Books                |
| Dramatic Play Area              | Access to a Quiet Area       |
| Art Activities                  | <b>Lots and Lots of TLC!</b> |

Appropriate clothing:

\*Please note that our preschoolers go outside every day, weather permitting. This means that in the winter they will need snow boots, snow pants, hats and mittens. It is also important that the children have shoes to wear (not snow boots) while at Building Blocks Learning Center. Please make sure that your child has these items available to them. During the summer, they need swimming suits for water play here. Swimming suits and towels can be kept at BBLC if you would like. We will wash them and have them ready to go for the next water play day.

We also ask that your child's swimsuit and towel are kept in a zippered bag and LABELLED to prevent lost items!!

***Behavior Guidance:***

Our goal for behavior guidance at Building Blocks Learning Center is to help children develop safe and appropriate ways of interacting with others and with the environment. Children are working toward being independent, cooperating, and learning self-control. The behavior guidance techniques used by the staff will center around positive reinforcement, positive role modeling by the staff, intervention techniques, and redirection.

Another goal of Building Blocks is to help children develop tools to solve problems. Guidance is the external tool to help children develop internal control. Children learn by experimentation, testing limits and experiencing the consequences of behavior. Children need to learn the rules of participating in a group setting, and staff needs to balance the need for individual rights and self-expression with the needs of the group. It is important for children to know their boundaries: this provides a sense of security for the children. Rules and limits in a child care setting are likely to differ from those in a child's home because of the need to protect the rights and safety of other children.

When a behavior problem arises, we will assess the situation, the environment, and the needs of the child to help the child learn to choose an appropriate behavior. Providing each child with choices, determining problem situations, and responding to the child's needs immediately enables us to help the child positively without having to use discipline.

**To accomplish these goals the following guidelines will be used daily:**

**Prevention:** A well designed and well-equipped classroom, tailored to the developmental level of the children, prevents frustration, interruption and hazards. A preventative classroom offers privacy, independence and easy staff supervision. The daily routine provides enough time for play, a sense of security, little waiting and few transitions.

**Positive Redirection:** BBLC staff will use positive redirection, which is redirecting unacceptable behavior to an acceptable alternative. Giving a child who is having trouble handling an activity a choice, enables them to be a part of the decision-making process, and often results in an acceptable behavior.

Behavior that is unacceptable will be considered by staff as 'mistake behavior'. This behavior is the result of the child's developmental immaturity. The staff will be responsible for reinforcing reasonable limits and teaching children 'what to do instead' and not just 'what not to do'. The staff realizes that everyone makes mistakes and, when they do, they are capable of taking care of the mistakes with staff guidance.

The staff at Building Blocks focuses on positive behaviors and providing attention and encouragement when positive actions take place. This may be enhanced by verbal praise. We praise children for their appropriate behavior and successes by describing what we see and how we feel. Such as "I see all the blocks are on the shelf, it's nice to see such a clean room". The words "No" and "do not" are used only in emergency or rare situations.

It is important for all staff to be aware of the language, tone of voice, and the manner of speech they use when working with the children. Staff avoid giving children negative attention by calling their name loudly to correct an action. Children displaying attention seeking behaviors will not be given negative attention by staff if it is not disruptive to the other children or the class.

**Modeling:** Staff at BBLC will model appropriate behavior and communication and be positive models to help children learn responsibility for their actions.

The staff guide children in appropriate behavior through their actions, body language, and voice level. Children copy what they see and hear. If we wish to provide a peaceful and cooperative environment in which children are to grow and learn, then we must demonstrate this in our actions and tone of voice. When voice

levels are calm, the children set their tone in a similar fashion. The staff will also model appropriate expressions of their feelings when dealing with the children

**Limit-Setting:** It is important for children to clearly understand their boundaries. We have a few clear, simple rules that vary according to the developmental level of the children. The rules are based on respect for the individual, environment, and other children. Each teacher follows this guideline when establishing rules. These rules and expectations are talked about with the children daily.

**Problem Solving:** BBLC staff appeal to the child's growing intellectual and moral reasoning by using natural and logical consequences and asking questions to encourage problem solving. The staff help children identify their needs, feelings, causes, alternatives, and choices. We provide cues such as the statement "Use your words."

When discussing a problem with a child, the staff will be at the child's level and establish eye contact. The staff will speak softly, directly, and clearly when working out a problem with a child. In cases of conflict between two or more children, it is important to help the children to verbally solve the conflict using role modeling, helping with words, etc. Situations of misbehavior are used as a learning experience for all involved.

**Separation of a Child:** If the child finds it hard to come to a positive solution and other less intrusive methods have been used, it might be necessary to help them find another activity. We do not feel using the phrase "time out" is appropriate. Instead we use statements like "Do you need to take a break for a while?" or "This seems to be hard for you right now; can I help you find something else to do?" If the child does need to be separated (as a last resort), the length of time apart from the group may not exceed the time of one minute per year of age of the child. The child must remain within an unenclosed part of the classroom where the child can be continuously seen and heard by a program staff member. Many times, staff may ask the child to return to the group when the child feels they are ready to re-enter the situation.

If a child is separated from the group three or more times in one day, the child's parents will be notified. A child between the ages of six weeks and 16 months will not be separated from the group as a means of behavior guidance.

### **Persistent Unacceptable Behavior:**

In situations of persistent unacceptable behavior, the staff and directors will meet to discuss the unacceptable behavior and develop a plan of action to meet the individual needs of the child.

1. The Director will observe the classroom on multiple occasions while the Plan of Action is being implemented in the classroom – they will document these observations.
2. Observations will take place in the classroom until:
  - a. The child's behavior seems to be curbed and the biting stops. (Plan of Action Follow-up is filled out and put in the child's file.)

**-OR-**

- b. The implementation of the Plan of Action, including modifications per the Director's observations and analysis, is not working to curb the child's behaviors. (Plan of Action Follow-up is filled out and put in the child's file.)
3. If the Director comes to the conclusion that the Plan of Action is not working, even after modifications have been made to the center staff's best ability, a conference will be scheduled with the child's parents.
  - a. The Plan of Action that has been implemented by the staff and the Director's observations and conclusions will be gone over in detail with the parent.
  - b. Further action will be discussed with the parents, up to and including termination of contract.

### **Prohibited Actions:**

Children will not be subject to any form of corporal punishment. Children will not be subject to any form of emotional abuse, including name calling, ostracism, shaming, making derogatory remarks about the child or his family, or using language that threatens, humiliates or frightens the child. Children will not be punished by withholding food, clothing, medical care or toileting. No physical or mechanical restraints of any kind will be used on a child.

### **Grievance Procedures:**

Building Blocks Learning Center realizes that problems may arise and we promote an atmosphere of open communication. Parents are encouraged to discuss any issues openly and honestly with staff and/or the Director. If we are not made

aware of your concerns, we cannot address the issues. In the event that a parent may have a complaint or grievance that cannot be solved by meeting with the staff involved, a meeting between the parents/guardians and the Director will take place to resolve the issue.

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex age, or disability.

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202)720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

**Licensing Requirements:**

Building Blocks Learning Center is licensed by the State of MN as a center-based group child care facility. We follow guidelines as set up by the MN Dept. of Human Services Licensing Division and participate in annual and drop-in inspections of the center.

The MN Dept. of Human Services Licensing Division can be reached at: (651)431-6500.

The USDA food and nutrition program conducts regular inspections at BBLC.

**To report mal-treatment or abuse you may contact:**

The Minnesota Department of Human Services -Licensing Division at (651)431-6500

The Minnesota Department of Education has a website that gives trusted parenting information, resources and activities, by age, to help your children grow, develop and learn from birth through high school. [www.helpmegrowmn.org](http://www.helpmegrowmn.org)

## **Civil Rights Statement**

**In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.**

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**To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 6329992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:**

**(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410**

**(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or**

**(3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)**

***This institution is an equal opportunity provider.***

THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING

**BUILDING BLOCKS**  
LEARNING CENTER & CHILD CARE



## **PARENT HANDBOOK**

(507) 235-5021

610 Summit Dr. Fairmont. MN 56031