



# brightpath

EARLY LEARNING & CHILD CARE

## PARENT HANDBOOK

**Centre Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Centre Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Centre Director:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Area Manager/Contact #** \_\_\_\_\_

**Centre Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Hours of Operation** \_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency Evacuation Site:** \_\_\_\_\_

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## Welcome to BrightPath!

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to BrightPath!

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

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

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

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

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

Sincerely,

Mary Ann Curran

Mary Ann Curran  
Chief Executive Officer  
BrightPath Early Learning Inc.

## MISSION STATEMENT

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



### Develop the Mind

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

### Nourish the Body

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

### Inspire the Soul

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

## THE BRIGHTPATH PROGRAM

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BrightPath offers a wide variety of developmentally appropriate programs for children. Our team aims to provide a well-balanced learning environment where children are free to observe, question, experiment and explore.

### Age Groupings

Centre classrooms may be divided into the following groups:

- Infants
- Toddlers
- Preschoolers
- ECS
- Out of School Care
- Summer camps

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

### Frog Street Program

Frog Street is our comprehensive pre-school curriculum that integrates guidance and learning across developmental domains and early learning disciplines. The program is engaging for both teachers and children, and is exciting to implement. Children gain confidence as they take risks in their learning, and teachers are right there with them offering guidance, encouragement and support. The cornerstones of the program are:

- An extensive integration of theme, disciplines, and domains.
- Special attention to social-emotional development.
- Many levels and support of differentiated instruction.
- A joyful approach to learning.
- Introduction to writing, science and math

For more information about this program, please speak to your centre director.

## **DAILY ACTIVITIES**

### Books

Through books, children can enter a world of "make believe", learn about new and exciting things, and gain an understanding of the function and purpose of the written language. A wide selection of books and a quiet place for reading fosters a love of literature.

### Puzzles & Manipulates

Small muscles in the hand are used in the handling and positioning of puzzle pieces into the correct place. The skill of recognizing shape and pattern through puzzles is necessary for the further development of reading and writing skills.

### Blocks

By manipulating blocks, stacking, balancing, arranging and lifting, children use hand and arm muscles that must be developed before they can attempt to hold a pencil. Handling blocks also enables children to become familiar with size, weight and shape.

### Group Time

Group time is an important part of each group's routine. It can involve either whole or small group times for story and language development, for music and movement, and for varied learning experiences. Children learn to respond to the needs of others while in a group situation.

### Dramatic Play

Every room has an area devoted to developing children's sense of "make believe". Dramatic play and social interactions begin here but are not confined to this space. Dramatic play grows from the experiences of the children and is a meaningful way for children to share both experiences and knowledge of the world.

### Sensory Play

The sensory tables are an important piece of equipment in the centre. It is the place where children can be thoroughly absorbed in interaction with the elements of sand and water. Children can enjoy the tactile sensations of dry and wet sand, they can observe the flow of water, create miniature dams, rivers, and learn how to move water from one place to another. Educators become very creative in the sensory materials they place in our tables.

### Music & Movement

Music time is an important and fun part of the children's day. It is a time for listening and responding to what one hears. Music is not confined to this time and can often be heard throughout the day.

### Creativity

Children's creativity is obvious in all activities at the centre, most particularly in the art and collage area. Children are encouraged to express themselves through different mediums with the focus on the process rather than the product.

### Naps & Quiet Time

Nap time is important for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and some kindergarten children. Infants sleep "on-demand", according to their own schedule. For other age groups, our daily schedule incorporates a balance of active and quiet play, including a rest period. During this time, children are encouraged to rest, but not required to sleep. Children who do not sleep are allowed to get up and participate in quiet activities after a period of rest, while still respecting the quiet time so others can nap. Sheets are sent home every Friday to be washed. (In Ontario Only): Blankets are sent home, and sheets are washed at the centre.

### Hatch Computers (Alberta & BC Only)

iStartSmart by Hatch revolutionizes classroom technology, providing research-based content combined with the latest touchscreen technology and powerful progress monitoring tools. Children can use the technology independently, putting individualized learning at each child's fingertips. iStartSmart engages them in core math and literacy concepts and automatically moves them through scaffolded levels. The

system monitors each child's progress every time they login, so teachers can quickly and easily understand the diverse needs of each child in the classroom.

### Outdoor Play

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

### Cultural Activities

Our program at BrightPath is planned to encourage the children's understand and involvement in the broader community. The program includes various ethnic and cultural activities such as: Chinese New Year, Hawaiian Day, how other countries celebrate Christmas, cooking various cultural dishes, pictures, puzzles, manipulative equipment, books, dolls, dress up clothes, decorations, and music are incorporated to develop an awareness of the variety of cultures which exist in our society.

## KEY CONTACTS

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### Centre Directors

Our Centre Directors administer the daily operations of the centre including overseeing all children, educators, parents/guardians and ensuring that the centre is running efficiently and professionally. They are your first point of contact for any questions or concerns you may have about your centre.

### Assistant Centre Directors

Our Assistant Centre Directors assist the Centre Directors with overall operations of the centre. They provide backup when the Centre Directors are away from the centre.

<u>Your Centre Director's Name:</u>	<u>Phone Number:</u>	<u>Email:</u>
<u>Your Assistant Director's Name:</u>		

### Area Managers

The Area Managers provide overall management of their assigned child care centres to ensure they perform and operate in accordance to the guidelines outlined in the BrightPath Policy, as well as provincial and government regulations.

<u>Your Area Manager's Name:</u>	<u>Phone Number:</u>	<u>Email:</u>
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### Head Office Team

The BrightPath head office team provides overall operational and administrative support to each of our BrightPath centres. Our team includes a well-rounded group of professionals in operations, accounting, human resources, marketing, and administration. If you have any education or licencing questions or concerns, you can reach our head office and they will be happy to assist you.

Phone Number: 1.888.808.2252    Email: [info@brightpathkids.com](mailto:info@brightpathkids.com)



## **BEGINNING YOUR JOURNEY AT BRIGHTPATH**

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### **ORIENTATION**

Once registered at the centre, we encourage you to bring your child in for an orientation session. This allows your child to become familiar with their new surroundings and child care educators. This is an essential part of ensuring that your child is comfortable during their first week.

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

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

### **DO NOT BRING**

- ✓ Toys from home (Unless comfort toy is required)
- ✓ Cell Phones and Electronic Devices
- ✓ Outside food (Unless your child is at a centre with no kitchen)

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

Our child care educators understand that it is difficult for parents/guardians to leave their child for the first time, and encourage parents/guardians to call throughout the day to check on their child's progress. The centre will provide parents/guardians a daily sheet for babies and toddlers detailing their daily activities, and a weekly one for the pre-schoolers.

## KEY POLICIES

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### **NON-DISCRIMINATION PROGRAM**

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

#### Children with Special Needs

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

### **ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE**

#### Arriving at the Centre/Signing in

Please keep your child with you at all times, especially when exiting your vehicle in our parking lot. Do not leave children, regardless of their age, unattended in your car when dropping off or picking up. Lock your car, as we cannot be responsible for any personal belongings taken from your vehicle while it is on our property. You are required to sign in your child on arrival; this is not only a legal requirement but ensures that we have a record of all children in attendance each day. Before leaving the centre, ensure your child is left with a centre educator before leaving.

#### Picking up your Child

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

#### Releasing your Child

We will only release your child to his or her parents/guardians and the authorized persons listed in your child's Enrolment Form and Emergency Card. We require any release authorizations to be given to us in writing prior to releasing your child to any persons who are not listed on your emergency contact. Government issued photo identification must be shown for any person not positively known to us before we can release your child. We will not release a child to anyone (other than a parent/guardian) under the age of sixteen (16) including siblings. If a parent/guardian wishes BrightPath to release their

child to anyone under the age of eighteen (18), written permission will be required. If there is an emergency situation and you are unable to submit a written request authorizing someone to pick up your child who is not listed on your emergency contact, we will use your personal information to verify their identity.

## **COMMUNICATION**

### Parent/Guardian communication, feedback and input:

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

- Daily two-way communication between parents/guardians and centre personnel which is open and honest is an effective technique to share children’s experiences, goals and expectations;
- Parent Notice Boards, Newsletters, Parent Meetings and Discussions provide opportunities to inform families of Centre news and other matters which may affect their child;
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to provide their email addresses; this allows for quick communication about important centre information
- Newsletters will be produced at a minimum of every 4-8 weeks and will include information, such as: centre information, parenting tips, changes to policies and programming events for each class group.
- Centre Personnel will provide families with information about the child’s day in care including the following: activities that the child participated in, dietary intake, toileting information for infants and toddlers, sleeping patterns, and general disposition.
- If requested, we will arrange a mutually convenient time to conduct a Parent-Educator meeting to discuss the individual child.
- All Centre methods of communication (ie; daily log books, communication books) will be reviewed with the parent upon their centre orientation in order to ensure parents/guardians are aware of all methods of communication available in the Centre.
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to volunteer in the program by attending special events at the centre such as fundraisers, holiday celebrations etc.
- Parents/guardians will be invited to attend Information evenings throughout the year
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to evaluate the Centre and provide feedback accordingly. Constructive criticism is an effective tool to improve the service delivery provided by the Centre to children and families. There is a suggestion box at our Centre, and parents are encouraged to submit their feedback to us there. Parents are also welcome to email [info@brightpathkids.com](mailto:info@brightpathkids.com)
- Once a year parents/guardians will be invited to participate in a survey to provide feedback regarding the program, staff interaction, activities, field trips and suggestions for the future.

### Parent/Guardian Concerns

We encourage parents/guardians with any concerns to bring them to the attention of the Centre Director or child care educators immediately so they can be dealt with promptly. Should you still feel concerned after speaking with the Centre Director, our Area Managers are always available for further discussions.

### Open Door Philosophy

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

With your approval, we also welcome other relatives or friends to visit your child at the centre. For the safety of all children, visitors must provide current photo identification and sign in with the centre director upon arrival at the centre.

### Community Resources

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

### Community Relationships

In the community, relationships have been created with:

Alberta: Alberta Education, Family Resource and Facilitation Centre, United Way, City of Calgary/Edmonton Parks and Recreation, Public Health Services, Ronald McDonald House, Mommy & Me, Renfrew Educational Centre (Calgary), Community Options (Edmonton) and the Public and Catholic schools in the area.

Ontario: Momstown, Local Public Health Services Local School boards, Children First, Local Children's Services, ROCK (Reach Out Centre for Kids), Quality First, Raising the Bar, Ronald McDonald House, WRRRA (West River Residents Association), Children's Services: Special Needs Resources York Region Early

#### BC:

Fraser Health Unit, SHARE Society, Simon Fraser for Community Living, YMCA Childcare Resource and Referral, Port Moody Rec Centre/Coquitlam Rec, Port Moody Art Centre, Tri-City Mental Health, Surrounding Public Schools and a few Private Schools as well.

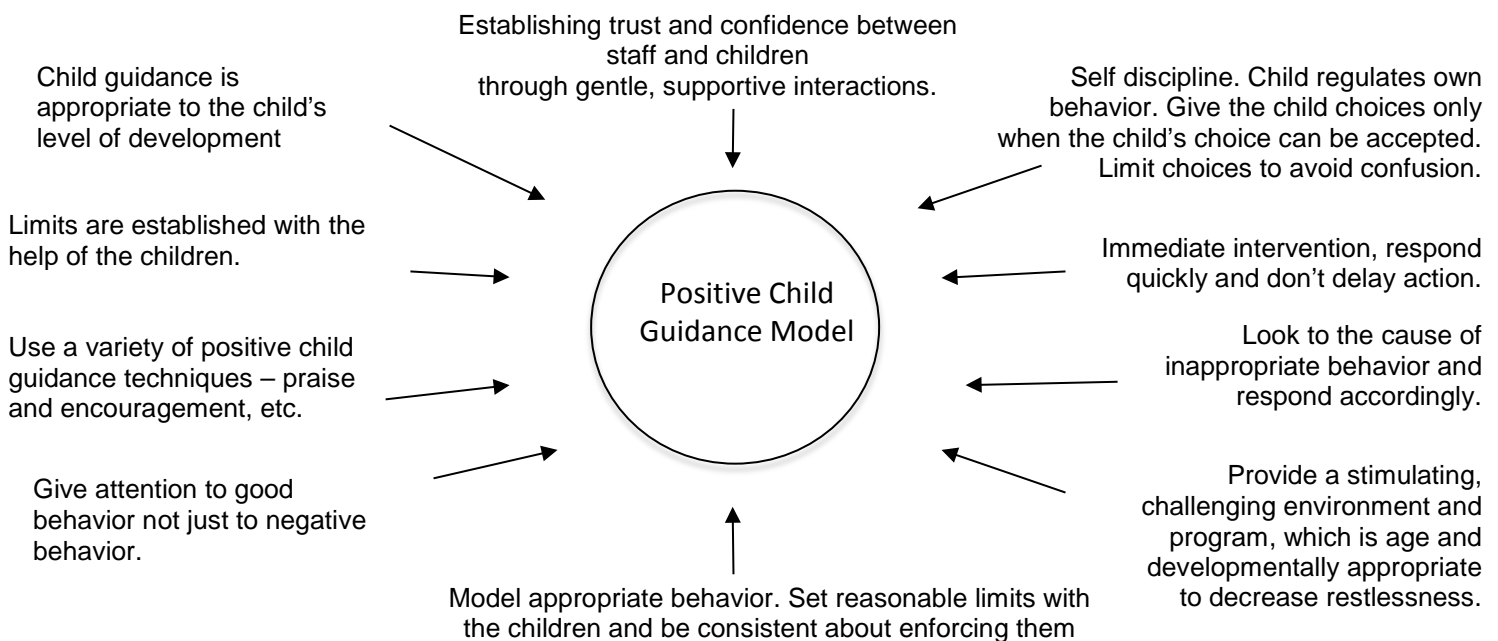
## **CHILD BEHAVIOURAL GUIDANCE**

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

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

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

### Child Guidance Model



### OUT-OF-SCHOOL PRORGRAM – Child Guidance

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

- Discussion of the particular issue between the child care educator and the child or children involved.
- The child will be offered a choice of appropriate alternate activities. The adult will encourage the child to become interested and settled in the new experience. The children will be encouraged to use self-discipline and self-control. The educators will calmly discuss with the child how they feel and what would be the appropriate behaviour expected.
- If, due to inappropriate behaviour, others children's safety may be at risk during a field trip, the Centre Director may have to suspend the child for the day of the trip.
- Discipline procedures will first be handled by the educator on hand. If assistance is required, the Centre Director will be consulted. If the educator believes the situation to be of a re-occurring nature, the parent/guardians will be notified of their child's behaviour.

- Resolution to the situation is sought through fair and appropriate consequences dependent upon the adverse action, which was carried out. The children will be involved in deciding consequences of actions.
- Should a child continue with inappropriate behaviour to the point where a child is physically, emotionally or verbally abusive to the children and educators, means for program dismissal will be discussed with the parent/guardians and the Centre Director.

Discipline will not result in the mistreatment of children such as physical or mental punishment. All disciplinary action will be age appropriate. The goal of the discipline policy is to encourage self-esteem and self-control. We encourage school-age children and parent/guardians to develop consequences for behaviour.

Each September, a group meeting is held with all the children in the program to go over the rules of the program. If problems do arise within the group, the educator will sit down and discuss the problem with the children and how they can resolve it. If the problem is more specific and involves only one of two children, then they will be reminded of the guidance policy and talked to about the consequences of their behaviour.

Whenever guidelines and rules are broken an incident report is filled out and must be signed by the parent/guardian. If problems persist then it may be necessary to setup a contract with the child, educator and parent/guardians stating procedures and consequences.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### Immunization

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

### Diaper Cream

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

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

### Hygiene

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

### Illness/Communicable Disease

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

### Accidents and Injuries

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

### Common Cold

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

### Pink Eye

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

### Strep Throat & Scarlet Fever

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

### Head Lice

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

Diarrhea/Vomiting/Fever

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

Reporting Absences

If your child is going to be absent, you must notify the centre no later than 9am. If your child is ill, please notify us as to the nature of the illness, particularly if it is contagious. If your child is enrolled in our school-age program, please let the Centre Director know about any changes to your child's schedule. Additionally, if your kindergarten or OSC child is transported from school and is absent from school for the day, please notify us at least 2 hours in advance. This will give us adequate time to change the bus rosters and notify the appropriate bus driver.

**MEDICATION/HERBAL REMEDIES**

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

- Name of medication
- Dosage
- Time medication is to be administered
- Time of last dose: and
- Parent/guardian signature
- Doctor Prescribed

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

- Any emergency medication, such as EpiPens and puffers are not locked, and are stored in the child's room in an emergency backpack and out of the reach of all children.
- (Ontario only) School age children may wear their own EpiPen in a pouch
- In B.C. older children can administer their own medication in the presence of an educator.



## **NUTRITION**

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

If you would like more information about our Registered Dietitian, please contact your centre director.

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

For those children not yet eating table food, please bring a day's supply of meals, including prepared bottles that are labelled with the child's name, date and contents. Please note, any food you supply must be nutritious and follow Canada's Food Guide. This is required by legislation.

## **NUT/PEANUT SENSITIVE AND OUTSIDE FOOD**

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

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

### **Outside Food**

Outside food is not permitted at the centres that have kitchens. This includes all homemade goods, as well as store bought food. The only exceptions are for a child with allergies, that we are not able to supply alternatives, and for children not yet able to eat table food. For more information, please ask your centre director.

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

## **INDOOR & OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES**

### **Sun Smart**

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

### **Cold weather/Winter**

During the winter months, outdoor play will be based on the weather. Once the temperature reaches -18 degrees Celsius (-15 in Ontario):

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

Children over 19 months will not engage in outdoor play when the temperature combined with the wind chill is lower than -15 degrees Celsius as measured by the Weather Network at the time of the scheduled outdoor play or at the discretion of the Director or member of the management team. During colder weather, outdoor activities may be limited to 30 minutes.

### **Summer/Hot Weather**

During extreme heat, outdoor play may be limited at the discretion of the centre director. Our educators will ensure that children are well hydrated at all times and given the option to cool down as needed.

### **Appropriate Clothing**

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

### **Weather Conditions: Clothing**

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

### Indoor Shoes

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

### Field Trips

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

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

## **TRANSPORTATION**

BrightPath meets or exceeds strict government regulations concerning driver qualifications, vehicle safety and emergency equipment as well as insurance. Our school drop-offs and pick-ups for our OSC children will be scheduled within 15 minutes before or after school hours. Children should wait at the designated spot or inside the nearest door in inclement weather until pick up. They may go to the office if they feel they have been forgotten. Under no circumstances may they leave the school yard or be playing away from the designated pick up area.

**Important:** BrightPath personnel are prohibited from transporting any children to or from the centre/school in their person vehicles.

### Bus Service for School Children – Weather

Bus service to schools is to be cancelled if the temperature (combined with the wind chill factor) is lower than -30 degrees Celsius, as measured by the Weather Network at approximately 7:30 am. If bus service is cancelled at 7:30 am, the Weather Network will be checked again one hour before the scheduled pick up time. If the decision to withhold children from being transported to school is made, re-assessments can be made throughout the day by periodically checking and monitoring for the temperature to rise above -30 degrees Celsius. Area Managers will be made aware of any cancellation of transportation schedules.

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

Walking Children to School – Weather

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

Weather monitoring will begin by centre management at -18 degrees Celsius (without wind chill consideration) using the Weather Network. Considerations for wind chill, weather advisories and distance to schools will be accounted for in the decision to walk children to school or remain at the centre.

If the decision to walk the children to school is made, centre management and educators will use caution and best judgement to ensure children are dressed appropriately to be taken outside. The decision to walk the children will be made at approximately 7:30 am.

If the temperature (including wind chill) drops below -30 degrees Celsius, the decision to withhold children from walking to school will be automatically enforced due to the safety of our children and educators. If the decision to withhold children from walking/transporting to school is made, re-assessments can be made throughout the day by periodically checking the weather and monitoring for the temperature to rise above -30 degrees Celsius. The decision to continue with the afternoon pickup will be made on this basis as well.

**EMERGENCY POLICIES**

In the event of a fire/emergency situation, the Centre Director will inform the classroom educator that the centre will be evacuated. Parent/guardians will be notified of the situation as soon as possible. If it becomes necessary to remove the children from the property, each centre has an emergency evacuation site. In the event of an emergency evacuation, you will be contacted and asked to pick your child up at the emergency evacuation site. These are posted in all rooms and foyers. You are required to provide us with your email address; this allows us to inform all parents of emergency situations in a fast and effective manner vs. spending time making phone calls. Notifications will be sent by email in the event of bad weather, emergencies, power outages or any other situation where the centre will be closing or unable to open.

An emergency evacuation plan is displayed in each classroom and foyer. Once a month, the centre conducts a fire drill. The aim of these drills is to ensure that in the event of an emergency, the children can be evacuated quickly and easily. If you are present at the centre during the fire drill, you are encouraged to participate in this procedure

## **GENERAL CENTRE INFORMATION**

### **Photograph & Video**

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

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

### **Smoking**

Smoking is prohibited on all centre property, including parking lots and playgrounds. BrightPath employees are not permitted to smoke anytime with or in the presence of a child.

### **Personal Toys**

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

### **Cell Phones and Electronic Devices**

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

### **Lost Property**

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

### **Celebrations**

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

### **Students & Volunteers**

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

- No child is to be supervised by a person under 18 years of age

- Only paid employees over 18 years of age will have direct, unsupervised access to the children.
- Students and volunteers are not counted in staffing ratios at any time during their placement at the Centre.
- All students/volunteers must have a current criminal reference check, completed within the last 6 months.
- All students/volunteers must provide proof of up to date immunization prior to being placed at the Centre. (BC & Ontario only)

### Statutory Holidays – Centre Closure

Our centres will be closed during the following statutory holidays:

#### **Alberta**

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

#### **British Columbia**

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

#### **Ontario**

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

## **LICENSING AND LEGAL REGULATIONS**

### Quality Improvement System Accreditation of Early Learning and Care services (Alberta)

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

### Mandated Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect

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

### Provincial Licensing Requirements

Provincial licensing requirements and strict enforcement of standards are in the best interest of all children. All of our centres meet or exceed applicable licensing regulations and standards. These standards relate to our facility, educators, health and safety procedures, nutrition, educator/child ratios,

and record keeping. Our centres are subject to inspection by provincial, health, fire and licensing officials.

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

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

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

#### Serious Occurrence Reporting (Ontario only)

The safety and well-being of our children is the highest priority and BrightPath ensures that they comply with the Ministry of Education legislation in regards to the reporting of Serious Occurrences.

To provide greater transparency, all BrightPath Early Learning and Child Care Centres, post a serious Occurrence Notification Form to keep parents informed of Serious Occurrences in their child's centre.

#### Confidentiality of Information

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

#### Custody Arrangements

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

#### Alleged Impaired Authorized Pick-Up

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

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

#### Appropriate Language

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

#### Physical and Verbal Punishment of Children on Centre Property

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

#### Threats and Threatening Behaviour

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

#### Resolution of Disputes

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



## ENROLMENT POLICIES, FEE'S AND PAYMENT TERMS

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### Enrolment forms

Enrolment forms must be filled out and returned to the centre on or before your child's first day. The information you provide to us is extremely important and will remain confidential at all times.

### Attendance days

The centre will do its best to accommodate all enrolment applications, however if placements are unavailable at the centre you have chosen we will try to offer you a place at another BrightPath Centre.

Part-time care is subject to centre schedule/availability and is not available at all centres.

### Child information changes

Please notify the centre of any changes to your child's information. It is important for the centre to maintain up to date contact details at all times. Each parent/guardian is required to update their child's file every 6 months.

### Eligibility for the Out of School and Kindergarten Program

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

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

### Pre-registration

A non-refundable \$50.00 fee is required to cover administration costs, and to be placed on our wait list. Being on the waitlist does not guarantee your child a placement.

### Registration

A non-refundable deposit is required to hold your child's spot once confirmed. The deposit will be credited to your first month's fees. A refund will not be issued if you chose to withdraw your child before their scheduled confirmed start date.

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

### Payment of Fees

Full payment of child care fees are due on or before the first day of your child attending. Each month after, fees are due by the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month by Pre-Authorized Debit. A Pre-Authorized Debit "PAD" form will be provided at your time of enrolment and is to be completed and provided to the centre with a void cheque. If payment is not received or returned back NSF and new arrangements are not made to bring your account up to date childcare will be suspended or terminated. A \$50.00 N.S.F Fee will be added to all returned items.

When your child ages up to the next age group, fees will change on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the following month after the age up occurs.

### Subsidy

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

### Out-of-School

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

### Late Fee

A late fee of \$10 for every 15 minutes or part thereof will be charged to any family who has not collected their child/ren from the centre by closing time. The centre staff will collect the late fee in cash only. We understand that unexpected situations occur, so please call the centre as soon as you can to advise them you will be late.

### Drop-in fees

Drop in fees must be paid on day of drop in by debit at the centre. Cash will not be accepted.

### Withdrawal from Program

Written notice of withdrawal must be given at least one month in advance. Notice must be received on or before the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month; if notice is not received, a fee equivalent to one month's childcare fees will be incurred. If your child leaves the centre mid-month, full payment is still required until the last day of the month.

### Change of Schedule (Full time/part time)

If you need to make any changes to your child's schedule written notice must be provided on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month prior to requested change. If your child needs additional days prior to the change you will be charged the daily drop in rate for these days. Changes and additional days are subject to availability and must follow our part time policy.

### Transferring to another BrightPath Learning Centre

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

Vacations/Illness

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

Make up days (Part-Time)

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

**PARENT HANDBOOK AGREEMENT**

Child Care Centre: \_\_\_\_\_

Childs Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_