



Bright Minds
Children Academy

Parent Handbook

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WELCOME LETTER TO PARENTS

Dear Parents,

Thank you for choosing Bright Minds Children Academy, where children come first! We will do our very best to make your time with us a safe, enjoyable and rewarding experience. We believe young children learn best by doing – through play and meaningful work. They need a safe, happy, stimulating, and nurturing environment offering concrete sensory experiences, positive social encounters and age appropriate learning opportunities.

We believe children can achieve their full potential by experiencing success with activities that encourage development of a healthy self-concept and foster positive interactions with peers and adults. Children learn to feel good about themselves as people when they are treated in a positive, caring manner. Trust and emotional security result when children learn to expect positive experiences with caring, affectionate adults.

We believe each child is unique and part of a family system. Since parents are the most significant adults in a child's life and know their children better than anyone, respectful, supportive partnerships between teachers and parents are critical to meeting each child's needs. Daily communication between parents and teachers is very important.

We believe parents and teachers benefit from child development educational opportunities, enhancing their skills and improving their ability to help children become independent, self-confident, inquisitive learners. Please familiarize yourself with the Parent Handbook and other assorted documents.

Additional information and helpful hints about child development are also available from the staff. Your comments and suggestions are welcome and expected. As owners, we want to know whenever you have a question or concern. Misunderstanding can occur when communication is lacking, so please be sure to let one of us (Lead Teacher, Director, or Owner) know when something is on your mind. We are proud of the faith you have placed in us and will work continually to justify your trust.

We look forward to having you with us!

Masroor & Hina Farooqi

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Bright Minds Children Academy. We are dedicated to quality child care and educational excellence. It is our goal to provide an environment for your child that encourages him/her to explore and discover new and exciting adventures.

Our facility is focused on accommodating your child's needs. We encourage staff and parents to develop a positive relationship that will work towards promoting the well-being of each individual child. Your input in facilitating this process is greatly valued. We assure you that we will do our best to provide your child with a safe physical environment and inspiring atmosphere.

We look forward to working with you and your child. If, at any time, you have any concerns or suggestions, please feel free to contact the Director or owner of the center. Please remember, working together we will make more progress.

To contact the center, please feel free to call our main line at (303) 369-8880 or email us at hina@brightmindsacademy.us

PURPOSE

Bright Minds Children Academy is dedicated to quality child care and educational excellence. It aims to be a pleasant facility ensuring a conducive environment for nurturing children in the area of education, recreation, self-development and interpersonal relationships. A well-trained staff provides age appropriate learning activities which are oriented towards development of the child's social, emotional, physical and intellectual needs.

PHILOSOPHY

We believe each child is a unique individual. The philosophy of Bright Minds Children Academy is to provide an environment that facilitates the cognitive, emotional, social and physical development of each child. In the process, we encourage collaboration among parents and staff. Together, we try to understand the unique needs of each individual child and implement strategies that will allow for maximum growth to occur.

We believe challenging and stimulating learning activities and experiences can enhance the formative years of a young child. Bright Minds Children Academy is dedicated to creating children with a positive self-esteem, individuality and a sense of responsibility that will allow them to discover and experience the world.

AGES OF CHILDREN/PROGRAM

Children of ages 6 weeks through 12 years are accepted at the Center. Children are grouped by appropriate ages. However, during transition times and special events children of different ages may be grouped together. We have a before and after school program. We provide transportation to their respective attending schools.

Additionally, we have a program for infants. We accept children referred by the county Social Services Department.

PARENT ADVISORY BOARD

We understand that family plays a major role in the child's development and your comments and suggestions are always welcome. In addition, we offer many opportunities for families to meet and get to know each other; Opportunities to work together and with Bright Minds Children Academy for the benefit of the children in our program. We welcome our family's talents and leaderships skills and ask families to join our Parent, Teacher and Administration advisory board; they meet on the First Monday of the month, here at Bright Minds Children Academy between 12:00 p.m. and 1:30 p.m.

CHILD ABUSE

State laws are followed concerning Child Abuse. A written policy on child Abuse is available at the Center. Should staff suspect a possible child abuse or neglect it has to be reported to the Department of Social Services.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Special needs children are not discriminated against. In this regard, Bright Minds Children Academy will comply with federal, state and other related laws. Every effort will be made to accommodate children of special needs depending on availability' of staff and other resources in compliance with American with Disability Act (ADA). We will work with the parents to address and accommodate the child(ren) to the best of our ability and will help in providing resources to the parents to work with professionals in the field to address the needs of these children.

If there is a health care plan authorized by the child's health care provider and parent(s)/guardian(s) defining the interventions needed to care for a child who has a health or developmental condition or concern like seizures, asthma, diabetes, severe allergies, heart or respiratory conditions, and physical disabilities. The staff working with a child with a health care plan must be informed, trained and delegated responsibility for carrying out the health care plan; supervision of the plan and interventions must be documented.

The admission of children who have special health care needs, disabilities, or developmental delays which includes children with social emotional and behavioral needs must be in alignment with the training and ability of staff and in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Services offered must show that a reasonable effort is made to accommodate the child's needs and to integrate the child with other children.

For child(ren) with special needs, the center must inform its Child Care Health Consultant (CCHC) prior to the first day of care of the enrollment so staff receive training, delegation and supervision as indicated by the child's individualized health care plan.

For a child with special health care needs requiring intervention and /or medication, the center must obtain written instructions for providing services from the child's parent or guardian and the health care provider. If an existing individualized health care plan is provided for the child, it must be reviewed and followed by the center staff when caring for the child. If the child does not have an existing individualized health care plan, the individualized health care plan must be obtained by the child's first day of care.

For a child with special health care needs, the center must obtain written instructions for providing services from the child's parents or legal guardian and the health care provider. If the child with special health care needs does not have an existing individualized health care plan, the individualized health care plan must be completed within thirty (30) calendar days of the child's enrollment.

The center must inform its child care health consultant as soon as possible of the enrollment of a child with special health care needs so staff can receive training and support as indicated by the child's individualized health care plan.

CHILD GUIDANCE & DISCIPLINE

Children's behavior will be guided by setting clear limits or rules for children. The teacher will talk with children about expected behaviors and model those behaviors consistently for them. They will state positively what children can do, using specific terms (e.g., "you need to walk" rather than "don't run"). Undesirable behavior will be redirected to another activity. Children will be given a wide variety of age-appropriate activities to choose from and will be given the attention they need before they demand it. Behavior management will be for the purpose of helping children develop self-control, self-esteem and respect for the rights of others.

We understand that there will be times when a child will become distraught, fussy or won't quit crying. Our first action in these situations will be an attempt to determine the cause of the distress. It may be related to a basic need such as hunger or comfort, or it may be that the child just needs some extra time and attention. We understand that crying is normal, and that all babies will have times when they cannot stop crying. At these times, we will stay calm and will do whatever we can to soothe your child. Sometimes this may mean just allowing the child to cry for a few minutes and then trying again. However, there also may be times when I need your advice or assistance, and I won't hesitate to call you if I feel that it is necessary.

A "time out" or "take a break" may be used when other techniques have not been successful. A time out will be used to remove a child from a situation that has gotten out of control before a child can hurt himself or others. Time outs will never exceed five minutes and will not be used with children under three years of age. When used, the time out will immediately follow the behavior. We will stay with the child and talk about what behavior was unacceptable, and what else s/he might have done or said instead. Rather than use a specific time-out chair or corner, we will have the child "take a break" near the others so the emphasis is on relax / cool down rather than isolation and punishment. The child will be praised after completing the time out and will be helped to rejoin the group.

We recognize that no single technique will work with children every time. If a child exhibits unacceptable behavior, we will request a conference with parents to consider how to deal with the behavior. If the behavior continues, the next steps may include referrals to appropriate community resources, and / or discharge of the child from care.

As a strict policy, actions that may be psychologically, emotionally or physically painful, discomfiting, dangerous or potentially injurious are prohibited. Prohibited actions include spanking, hitting, pinching, shaking, slapping, twisting, throwing or inflicting any other form of corporal punishment on the child; verbal abuse, threats or derogatory remarks about the child or the child's family; physical restraint, binding or tying the child to restrict the child's movement; enclosing the child in a confined space such as a closet, locked room, box or similar cubicle; withholding or forcing meals, snacks or naps; actions that are cruel, aversive, humiliating or

frightening to the child; or punishing a child for lapses in toilet training. These forms of punishment will never be used, even at a parent's request.

ENROLLING YOUR CHILD

To enroll your child, you need to fill out the registration information and health certificate information and pay a \$50.00 registration fee. All children must meet the health requirements of the State of Colorado to enroll in Bright Minds Children Academy. No one shall be denied access to our program because of race, sex, creed, religion or color.

For children who need to be administered medicines, all medications must be present before the child can start. If the medications are not present, the child may not be able to start that day. This includes, but is not limited to: asthma medication, severe allergy medication, seizure medications etc.

DISCHARGE OF ENROLLED CHILDREN

We require a two weeks' notice before withdrawing your child, and the parent is responsible for fees due for those weeks. Should your child be away on vacation from the center for one or two weeks, you will not be responsible for paying child care tuition for those weeks. We cannot hold a space for your child beyond two weeks. After that time your child will be withdrawn.

At Bright Minds we provide the proper care for all the children in our care. However, there are times when a child's behavior with the teacher, administration and other children makes the environment dangerous for themselves and others around them. We will ALWAYS make a good faith effort to address the issues with the child(ren), parents and teachers. We will document any issues and concerns on the "Classroom Behavior Report" to be provided to the parent. If however, there is no change in behavior and it is deemed by the center's staff and administration that the child(ren) are a danger to themselves and others in the center, the children will be asked to leave the center.

EXPULSION POLICY

Unfortunately, there are sometimes reasons we have to expel a child from our program either on a short term or permanent basis. We want you to know that we will do everything possible to work with the family of the child(ren) in order to prevent this policy from being enforced. The following are reasons we may have to expel or suspend a child from this center:

Immediate Causes for Expulsion

- The child is at risk of causing serious injury to other children or him/herself.
- Parent threatens physical or intimidating actions towards staff members.
- Parents exhibit verbal abuse to staff in front of enrolled children.

Parental Actions for Child's Expulsion

- Failure to pay/habitual lateness in payments.
- Failure to complete required forms including the child's immunization records.
- Habitual tardiness when picking up your child. Verbal abuse to staff.

Child's Actions for Expulsion

- Failure of child to adjust after a reasonable amount of time.
- Uncontrollable tantrums/angry outbursts.
- Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children.
- One or many attempts to run away from the classroom or center despite attempts of the teachers to control him/her.

Excessive biting

Prior to expulsion, a parent will be called and correspondence will be sent home indicating what the problem is, and every effort will be made by both the center and the parent to correct the problem. If, after one or two weeks, depending on the risk to other children's welfare or safety, behavior does not improve, and the center finds that they can no longer accommodate the child, the parent will be asked to remove him/her. The parent will be given a minimum of one week's notice to find another center to provide care for this child.

We can also refuse to admit a child if a statement from the health care provider is not submitted within 30 days of enrollment. Additionally, a child may be discharged from the center for reasons such as, but not limited to:

- Failure to pay fees on time (grounds for immediate termination, without advance notice).
- Lack of parental cooperation.
- Inability of child care program to meet the needs of the child. We will consult with the parent concerning how any problems might be solved before ending the care arrangement. The parent will be referred to other community resources.
- Repeated failure to pick up the child at the scheduled time.
- Failure to complete and return required forms.

ARRIVING & LEAVING THE CENTER

When bringing your child to the center, we ask that you sign the child in at the front office desk and accompany his/her to his/her classroom. It is the responsibility of each teacher to know who is in the classroom at all times of the day. By making brief contact with your child's teacher you are ensuring that we know your child is here and in the proper place.

Children arriving at the center at times when their regular class has left for field trips will be assigned to another age-appropriate class until their regular class returns.

We will release a child only to the parent who enrolled the child or to someone they have specifically authorized in **writing on the enrollment form**. It is the parent's responsibility not to restrict the rights of another parent or act in a manner contrary to court order. We are bound to abide by any legally served court orders and will communicate to the enrolling parent that an order has been served. When picking your child up, you will sign your child out of the center. We strongly encourage you to talk to the teachers on the progress of your child development.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Bright Minds Children Academy provides educational programs that are age-appropriate and meet the developmental needs of the child. The curriculum for toddlers, preschoolers, and school age

children has been designed to meet their respective needs. Information about daily activities is posted each day in the classroom.

We plan activities and provide children with a variety of experiences. Some of the activities include:

- Language development: Books, music, story time, finger plays, flannel board stories
- Large muscle skills: Balls, hula hoops, bean bags, swinging, outdoor play
- Small muscle skills: Arts / crafts, stringing beads, pegboards, blocks
- Creative expression: Dramatic play, puppets, music / instruments, flannel board
- Self-help skills: Assist with mealtime preparation, dress self for outdoors
- Literacy skills: Books, story board, alphabet and writing games

PLAY is the major component of our program. Enough time, materials and space will be provided for children to actively explore the world around them. Children will have an opportunity to use a variety of art materials and manipulative and housekeeping equipment

The toddler's program emphasizes language development, social skills, self-help and encourages exploration. The preschool program emphasizes reading and math skills, thinking and problem solving, and encourages physical and emotional development. The school-age and kindergarten programs address individual needs, encourage exploration and discovery, and provide choices of age-appropriate academic and extra-curricular activities. **For younger children, Parent/Teacher conferences are held two times each year to discuss your child's progress and other related needs.**

CURRICULUM

Bright Minds uses a Funshine curriculum in our Program, which has been aligned with Colorado Early Learning & Development. Our daily schedules in each room promote the physical, social emotional and cognitive development of young children. Our goal is to provide an environment where children can succeed through a combination of independent learning and teacher-led group instruction. Children learn best through play and hands on activities. Through play, children meet the Colorado Early Learning & Development Guidelines for curriculum which addresses the following domains to learning.

- Physical development and health
- Social and emotional development
- Language and literacy development
- Cognitive development
- Literacy knowledge and skills
- Logic and reasoning
- Mathematics knowledge and skills
- Science knowledge and skills
- Social studies knowledge and skills
- Creative arts expression

We offer plenty of opportunities through experimentation and problem solving. Basic skills are developed and nurtured through a variety of activities that are relevant to the children's lives. Activities are designed to enhance self-esteem and positive attitudes. Please see our weekly planning calendars posted on the classroom bulletin boards.

Our staff is offered annual trainings on curriculum implementation procedures.

Colorado Early Learning & Development Guidelines for infant's curriculum, which addresses the following domains to learning. Cognitive Development, Language and Literacy Development, Emotional and social development, Physical Development and Health Approaches

Our infant's curriculum meets the above domains. Children learn through daily routines and daily experiences, routine such as Hello and goodbyes, Diapering, and Feeding. In addition, children learn through daily experiences, such as playing with appropriate toys, enjoying book, connecting with music and movement, & language learning through positive interactions with adults and peers.

To learn more about the Colorado Early Learning & Development Guidelines, please go to <http://earlylearningco.org/> and for a complete PDF of the Colorado Early Learning & Development Guidelines please go to <http://www.cde.state.co.us/early/eldgs>

PRIMARY CAREGIVER POLICY

At Bright Minds we take the encouragement of relationships between the primary caregiver and child and family seriously. Therefore, we understand the importance of assigning a primary caregiver to each group of children. The assignment of a primary caregiver to every child in group care means that when a child moves into care, the child's parents, the director, and the caregiver knows who the person is who is principally responsible for that child. Primary care giving does not mean that one person cares for an infant or toddler exclusively, all of the time—there is teaming and teamwork in every classroom. Primary care giving does mean that the infant or toddler has someone special with whom to build a trusting relationship.

The biggest benefit to primary care is that the children develop trust and attachment to their primary caregiver and it provides consistency. By having a consistent teacher care for a specific group of children, a relationship is built in which the children develop trust and learn how to build relationships. Children learn to trust that their caregiver will change their diaper when needed, feed them when they are hungry, and support their interests. As well as provide comfort in stressful situations, like the departure of a parent during drop off and during transitions.

Primary caregivers also build relationships with parents. The parent's benefit of primary care is that they know that the child will receive consistent care based on the child's individual needs and be able to have communication with a specific teacher or team.

INTERPRETER POLICY

Our goal is to serve all our family's needs to ensure that all our families feel welcome and secure. One of the components to meet that need is that families have interpreters in their home language to help them with enrollment, parent- teacher conference, and family events. Our policy is to assist families by providing interpreters to help them with the process of enrolling their child, communicating with staff and other families, as well assist families in navigating community services so they may access resources.

Currently have four other languages spoken at the center, Arabic, Urdu /Hindi, Somali and Spanish. The administration and staff Bright Minds is fluent in five languages, English, Arabic, Somali, Hindi and Urdu. The Staff members names for these languages are: Ms. Hina (Hindi & Urdu). Ms. Hanan (Arabic and Somali), Ms. Genevieve (French). It is our policy to use the family's home language even before they enter our program. Upon answering the phone when we are asked if Somali, Arabic or Hindi is spoken we ensure that Somali, Arabic or Hindi/ Urdu speaking person helps the family. During the tour, we assign the family a person that can speak their primary language. During the

enrollment process we will assign a person to help the family fill out the admission forms and interpret the forms and handbook. Should the family need outside help with sources we will help them make the calls to ensure they are connected with a person that can help them with in their primary language. We ensure that the family has someone that can speak to them in their home language when we contact them. It is our policy to review our interpreter policy annually to ensure that our families' home language needs are being meet.

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

There are two-scheduled conferences during the year. In the fall you will have a "Get Acquainted" conference with your child's teacher, and one in spring. However, a parent or staff member may request a parent conference at any time he or she would like further information or an update.

The purpose of the conference is to share with parents the assessments performed during the year and the behavior, social and emotional progress of the child in the class room and ways parents can help support the education at home.

DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING AND REFERRAL POLICY

In the instance that we feel the child needs our support that what our staff is trained, we would have a documentation log of behavioral instances and have a conversation with the family. Depending upon the need we would refer to our nurse or give contact to Childfind.

To ensure that the needs of each child can be met through our learning program, a developmental screening of each child will be completed by the families and provided upon enrollment. We are using Ages and stages Questionnaire as our screening tool. It provides us the necessary information about child's development.

Studies show that observation and documentation about development increases the detection of developmental delays or learning difficulties. Initial screening of children will give us a baseline and allow us to individualize instruction to support each child, to identify possible special needs or learning difficulties, and to meet program accountability requirements in our state.

Each lead teacher will conduct a screening of for every child in Fall and Spring. We use as our screening tool. Staff will record results following our reporting procedures. A copy of the screening report will be shared with families at family conference and given to the director to be placed in the individual child's file.

CHILD ASSESSMENT

We do work with Early Childhood Therapist/ Consultant from Arapahoe Douglas Mental Health Works. Since Jan 2015 Sara Smith, LCSW is our assigned Therapist. She observes the classrooms and helps the staff in making appropriate modification in classroom or routines to meet children's individual needs. If developmental concerns arise, then we will contact parents/guardians and set up a conference. All pertinent staff and therapist will be at the meeting. During the meeting the Director and the child's teacher/ therapist will discuss their observations and concerns. We may plan a IEP or ILP or discuss Behavior modification strategies. We always recommend that family consult with their child's medical home (primary care provider). If they have any recommendations or plan a IEP or ILP or discuss Behavior modification strategies. Please provide us a copy and we will follow it here.

In addition, referrals to community resources will be given to the family for any identified needed services. Director will document any referrals to outside services. The director will follow up with family within 2 weeks to ensure that they have been able to access community resources.

Teacher will continue to monitor any child identified with potential special needs or learning difficulties. If warranted, additional updates on child's progress will be scheduled with the family. Otherwise, the child's progress will be shared at the next regularly scheduled family conference meeting.

We will offer trainings to staff every calendar year on these screening tools. Our Screening and referral policy is reviewed by administration annually.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WITH THE COMMUNITY SERVICE PROVIDERS

A community is more than just a location, or a collection of individuals who happen to live or work in the same place. When we talk about a 'sense of community' we usually mean the quality of the relationships and connections that bind people together, rather than just the fact that they see each other regularly. As early childhood educators, creating a 'sense of community' is an important part of what we do.

We encourage community participation by inviting local dentists, screeners, fire and police to come and talk with the children.

As mentioned in many different areas of this handbook (parent/staff communications, hearing aid screening policy, developmental screening policy) we also provide a large database of community resources in our "Medical and Health Screening Guide" for the parents if they need it.

MEDICAL AND DENTAL INSURANCE

Every child in Colorado should have access to affordable health and dental insurance. To ensure that each child has Medical and Dental insurance, our enrollment packet will include questions about your child's and family's access to health and dental insurance.

MEDICAL HOME (PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER) AND DENTIST

As part of our Child Health Promotion, we understand that is important that a child has a Medical home, a primary Care Provider. A Medical Home is the primary source for a child's primary care. It improves the coordination of care and provides support at all stages of a child's development. In addition, it helps families connect to services and resources that better serve the child's health and needs. We at Bright Minds have resources that we can connect the families with, to ensure that each child has a medical home. As part of our enrollment policy each child must fill out the Name, address, and phone number of their medical home/ primary care provider and Dentist in the enrollment packet.

HEARING, ORAL, AND VISION SCREENING

At Bright Minds we understand that preventative care for children in a medical home lays the foundation for school readiness. Many young children have health conditions that if left untreated, could lead to developmental delay. For example, a child with dental pain cannot concentrate on learning. Hearing loss can affect a child's ability to develop communication, language, and social skills. Your primary care doctor will ensure that services and referrals to specialists are coordinated as part of the child's care plan. To ensure that each child has received the proper hearing, oral and vision screening, our enrollment packet will include questions about your child's medical screening.

Our office staff will follow up with families that might need resources. Our intention is to ensure that families have connections and resources that meet their health needs. Please stop by the office and speak with our staff about resources that can get you started on the process of finding a Medical Home, acquiring health and dental care insurance, and/or receiving health screenings. We can connect you to our many resources and our caring staff will walk you through the process.

PARENT/STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

We encourage parents to discuss their concerns with a teacher or director, whenever questions or problems arise. We encourage parental involvement with the center by:

- Inviting parents to participate in social activities held by the center
- Inviting parents to visit the center and share skills/interests with children
- Inviting parents to accompany us on field trips when possible
- Publishing classroom newsletters that include curriculum and center news
- Providing the opportunity to participate in parent-teacher conferences to discuss your child's developmental progress
- Community events pertaining to children and families will be posted in the entrance of the school. School reminders will be written on the parent board

Please keep us informed of special circumstances in your family that may be upsetting to your child. We can help a child deal with his or her worries and fears with marital problems, a death in the family, changes in living situations, etc. if we know that this is happening. If you have questions, problems, concerns, or suggestions please feel free to approach the director or your child's teacher. We are here to help and we do have access to referral or resource information that you may need.

TRANSITIONING CHILDREN TO WITHIN BRIGHT MINDS AND TO KINDERGARTEN POLICY

We want every child to feel welcomed in their classroom. Each child is unique and will respond to change and new experiences in his/her own way. Some children are more resilient and open to change. Some children feel comfortable in a new setting right away and others may take significant time, even weeks, to adjust to a new classroom, routines, schedule and teachers.

Teachers must take their cues from each child and respond to interests and needs. Parents are welcome and encouraged to assist their child in this transition. The family may have had other changes that have precipitated the placement of the child into our program such as: relocation, new job, medical issues, new baby, etc. When children are moving from one classroom to another, they are leaving the comfort of secure attachments to the current teachers and must form relationships with the new teachers. This takes time and patience; nurturing adults and predictable routines will help the children with transition.

Some suggestions in assisting the transition process are: parents and other adult family members are encouraged to spend time in the classroom especially at arrival and departure times sharing activities that the child enjoys such as: reading a book together, doing a puzzle, playing in an area of the room, or just watching the other children for a few minutes in a calm manner. We encourage families to bring family photos that can be posted in the room or in the child's cubby. We also encourage in the beginning for each child to have one comfort object from home such as a small blanket or small stuffed animal. This comfort object will be offered to the child if he or she becomes distressed.

MEETING WITH FAMILIES REGARDING TRANSITIONS

We conduct parent-teacher/Director transition meeting for children new to our program, for children transitioning to a new classroom within our program, and for children transitioning between Pre-k and Kindergarten. During the transition meeting, transition procedures to meet

each child's need will be planned out. Specifics of the transition process will vary as needed from child to child.

For our children going to public school kindergarten class in fall, we highly recommend our families to visit the kindergarten class with the child before they start their journey at Kindergarten. We have children going to so many different neighborhood schools for kindergarten that taking them all to their new school for field trip may not be possible for us. This family visit before classes start will be a great help for transition from Bright Minds to Kindergarten.

CONTINUITY OF CARE AND EDUCATION POLICY

We aim to ensure the continuity of education and care of all children attending the service in the absence of their family members and/or primary care givers. Our service will strive to ensure that all children feel comfortable and secure whilst being educated and care for at the service. To these ends we take the following steps:

- We employ permanent floating educators so that casual staff are not required to be called in. This ensures the children and parents know all the staff in the center and who will be caring for their child.
- If we employ casual educators, or where volunteers and work experience students are present at the service, these persons will be engaged in an induction process that familiarizes them with the service environment and any needs of children.
- The service policies and procedures, an educator handbook and description of their roles and responsibilities at the service will be available to the abovementioned persons.
- We will seek to make use of the same casual staff where possible. This will ensure that casual educators are able to familiarize themselves with the service environment, expectations, and routine and children and their families.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Bright Minds will make a Quality Improvement Plan, that will address goals, timelines and outcomes. QIP will be a running document that will track quality improvement plans and goals for Bright Minds. A summary of each year's goals will be shared with the stakeholders, staff and families enrolled in the program. The document will be shared in a folder in the lobby as well as our website. Revised copy will also be posted in Main Lobby on Notice Board. This plan will be revised annually.

OUTDOOR PLAY/INCLEMENT & EXCESSIVELY HOT WEATHER

Children are given the opportunity to play outdoors once in the morning and once in the afternoon. Each outside experience lasts no longer than 45 minutes. On a normal day between 10:00 am and 3:00 pm, children are not allowed to remain in the sun for more than 20 minutes. After 20 minutes, children must play in the shaded area. In case of inclement or excessively hot weather the duration of their outside time will be shortened. They will be monitored closely by the staff to avoid any injury or discomfort. It is expected that they come to the center with the proper clothing to allow them to comfortably play outside. If it is snowing or raining heavily; inside gross motor activities will be made available.

SUMMER PROGRAM

We believe school-age children deserve a special, outdoors oriented summer experience. Our

summer camp takes them out of the center many times a week, and they get to do more in a summer than many of us ever dreamed of as children. Because we supply everything the children need on these field trip experiences, we ask that you do not send extra money with them. There may be an occasional trip where we will ask you to contribute a small amount and will always inform you of this in advance as to what the money will be used for. Please check with the Director for the current summer schedule and check the rate card for costs.

FIELD TRIPS

We feel that many of the finest experiences we can provide can take place outside the confines of the center. Field trips are taken regularly, and when taken require your signed transportation permission slip in our files. Notices of the field trip will contain goals for the trip, so each has a purpose, and records of each trip are kept in our files. Attendance records and emergency cards accompany the children on their various field experiences. Attendance is taken before leaving the center and checked with the field trip roster. Teachers continually check to make sure that all children are accounted for during their field experience. Attendance is also taken again before returning to the center. If a child arrives at the center after the group has left, that child will be placed with the group at the center that most closely matches the child's age.

In the unlikely event that your child becomes lost or separated from the group on a field trip we will remain in the area until your child is found. You and the proper authorities will be called if we are unable to find your child after 15 minutes. Occasionally a field trip will require a small fee to cover admission to the event, and you will be informed well in advance of the cost.

HOURS AND HOLIDAYS

Bright Minds Children Academy is open from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. We may be closed the day before or the day after a designated holiday if the holiday falls on a Tuesday or Thursday. Our opening on these days will depend on enrollment and need. Needs shall be determined by a sign-up sheet placed on the reception area table.

We will also be closed if area School Districts declare a snow day due to heavy snowfall and impassable roads.

We observe the following holidays:

- **New Year's Day**
- **Memorial Day**
- **Independence Day**
- **Labor Day**
- **Thanksgiving**
- **Christmas Day**

Full tuition is due for the weeks in which these holidays or extra center closures occur.

STATE LICENSING

Bright Minds Children Academy is licensed by the State of Colorado as a Large Day Care Center. Continuous inspections by the state, health and fire licensing offices monitor our operations. We meet or exceed all minimum requirements for the type of care and education we provide and post

our state license in the front office where it can be easily viewed.

PROCEDURE FOR FILING A COMPLAINT/NOTIFICATION

You may, on occasion, wish to discuss a concern or complaint. Please feel free to talk to the director to discuss your concerns. We will make every effort to resolve any issue to your satisfaction. If you feel that your complaint has not been resolved, you may call the Social Services Dept. to file a formal complaint at the following address:

Colorado Dept. of Human Services 1575 Sherman Street, Denver, CO 80203, Phone number:
303.866.5700

PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Most licensed facilities make every effort to provide a safe and healthy environment for children. Unfortunately, on rare occasions, an incident of physical or sexual abuse may occur. If you believe that your child has been abused, you should seek immediate assistance from your county department of social services. The contact information to report child abuse in your county is:

Arapahoe County of Department of Human Services Ph: (303) 636-1750

MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS AND EMERGENCIES

To be prepared for any emergency, we will ask that with enrollment forms you sign an authorization for emergency medical treatment. We want to be sure that nothing stands in the way of treating your child should an emergency arise. We have staff members trained in CPR and First Aid. We will make every effort to contact you and the doctor you have chosen to treat your child. If we can't reach you, we will make sure that your child receives any necessary treatment until you are contacted. Immunization forms must be kept current, and the state requires a yearly physical for all children enrolled who are under the age of 7. For those who are over 7 years the required physical is once every 3 years.

IMMUNIZATIONS FOR CHILDREN

Immunizations are required of all children attending child care in the state of Colorado. You must show proof of the appropriate immunizations BEFORE your child can attend the Center. We must have a written plan of action signed by your child's physician if the immunizations are not meeting the Texas Minimum State Vaccine Requirements for Child-Care Facilities.

Exception:

Exceptions for under and non-immunization requirements must meet criteria specified by the Department of Health and Human Services rules (relating to Exclusions from Compliance). You must contact the local health department to find out what you must provide to us in lieu of the immunization record.

All children must have a Health Statement signed by their physician and submitted within the first thirty days of enrollment.

INJURIES AND ACCIDENTS

First aid kits are kept in each classroom and on all outside playgrounds. All non-emergency accidents will be documented on an accident report. It will be given to the parent for their review and signature, at which time the parent can take a copy home. Another copy will be kept in the child's file. In case of injuries and accidents we have staff members trained in CPR and First Aid. We will make every effort to contact you and the doctor you have chosen to treat your child. If we can't reach you, we will make sure that your child receives any necessary treatment until you are contacted.

EMERGENCY AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS STEPS

In case of an unlikely emergency or disaster, Bright Minds has a comprehensive set of policies and procedures in place to address the situations appropriately. We have an offsite evacuation plan if the emergency requires such a step and our offsite emergency location is:

New Beginnings Cathedral Of Worship
14485 E Evans Ave, Aurora, CO 80014

Parents will be updated by signs on the front door informing them of the emergency and steps to reunite them with their primary care giver. The parents will also have the ability to sign up for our emergency text system as well.

ILLNESS AND MEDICINE

Children who are ill are not to be brought to the center. The following are examples of children who are ill:

- A temperature of 99 degrees F. or higher
- Vomiting or diarrhea has occurred more than once in the past 24 hours
- A contagious disease such as chicken pox, strep throat or pink eye
- An unidentified rash
- Has not been on a prescribed medication for at least 24 hours or continues to have symptoms of illness
- Has a constant, thick, colored nasal discharge

We expect your child will be healthy and free of fever or infection for at least 24 hours when you return him/her to us after they've dealt with one of the many childhood diseases. If your child becomes ill while in our care, we will move them to an isolation area while we contact you to pick them up. The Director will determine if your child is too ill to stay at the center, and the emergency phone numbers you have provided on the registration form will be used to contact you or someone you have designated. Our prime considerations are the safety of your child and the rest of the children at the center.

Any information about communicable illness will be communicated to CDPHE via our Nurse.

MEDICINE ADMINISTRATION

As per the Colorado Nurse Practice Act, we will administer medication to a child only if a parent or guardian has specifically requested such action and there is a reason to administer the medication when the child is at school. A written order from an individual who is licensed to prescribe

medications must be on file in order to administer medications. Medication is given legally only by trained school personnel that have participated in the required Medication Administration Training and to whom a registered nurse has delegated the task of medication administration. Neither the school nurse nor her designee is permitted to administer medication unless:

1. The medication is in the original properly labeled container. If it is a prescription medicine, the student's name, name of the drug, dosage, time for administering, and name of health care provider and current date is printed on the container.
2. Written orders from the student's health care provider are on file in the school stating:
 - a. Student's name
 - b. Name of drug
 - c. Dosage
 - d. Purpose of the medication
 - e. Time of day medication is to be given
 - f. Anticipated number of days it needs to be given in school
 - g. Possible side effects
3. The parent/guardian provides written permission to the school to administer a prescription or over the counter medication.
4. School personnel keep an individual record of any medications administered by school personnel.
5. Medication is stored in a clean, locked cabinet or container.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation to and from school (school age program) and on field trips is provided. Your child will be transported by licensed drivers in either a center's leased/ owned vehicle or privately owned vehicles. There may be occasions where we will ask for parent volunteers to assist transporting children to and from field trips or other special activity. The center will make sure that all drivers are licensed and that all vehicles are mechanically safe and insured.

Children will always be strictly supervised at all time during transportation and drivers are aware of emergency procedures on the road. Children will have to wear the provided seat belts and car booster seats (if necessary). Children of 4 years+ are transported to and from school.

VIDEO/TV VIEWING

Television and video viewing is prohibited for children less than two (2) years of age. All television, recorded media, computer, tablet and media devices are prohibited during snack or meal times. All media that children are exposed to will not contain explicit language or topics.

For children two (2) years of age and older, television, recorded media and video time will be limited to thirty (30) minutes per week. For children two (2) years of age and older computer and tablet time will be limited to non-consecutive fifteen (15) minute increments not to exceed thirty (30) minutes per day.

For children two (2) years of age and older, television, recorded media, computer, tablet and media device time may only exceed thirty (30) minutes per week for a special occasion. There is no restriction for children using personal adaptive equipment.

ELECTRONIC TABLETS AND CELL PHONE USAGE POLICY

Use of electronic media players like iPhone, iPad, Android tablets and cellphones are strictly forbidden in the center. As we cannot control the content on these devices, and due to the potential high dollar value of these items, if the children are seen to be using these devices, they will be confiscated by the staff and given to the parent/guardian at the end of the day. Parents are strongly urged **NOT** to provide the children with electronic media during the time at the center.

MEALS AND SNACKS

Children under full-day care receive two nutritious snacks and a hot, nutritious lunch every day. Children with us part-time will receive snacks based on the time they are in the center. All meals and snacks are prepared to be tasty and are planned to meet the nutritional requirements of the child.

Children eat these meals and snacks in their rooms, with their teacher, and this time is used as an opportunity to teach children acceptable, social table manners. Sack lunches will be prepared for field trips that require the children to be away at mealtime. We believe that food is a valuable building block to healthy bodies, and nutrition helps only when it is consumed, so you'll find we go that extra mile to give the kids a good, solid meal and plenty to eat.

Part of the learning experience is eating and trying new foods. Food brought from home is distracting and often unfair to the other members of the group and will not be allowed. Allergies or special diets can be noted on the registration form. Every effort will be made to make the lunch and snack experience a positive one. Please discuss any special dietary needs with the Director.

Occasionally, the children may be away from the center at lunch time on a field trip in which case sack lunches are permissible. You will be informed by a notice placed on the bulletin board.

BIRTHDAYS

We will be happy to celebrate your child's birthday with you during lunch or afternoon snack time. Parents are invited to join us, and we ask that a special snack such as a cake or pie be prepared by the parent and brought into the center the morning of the celebration. We also ask that the celebration not include gifts or gift opening as that is best done at home in the home setting, and will prevent gifts from being lost or damaged.

CLEANLINESS

Bright Minds Children Academy gives priority to cleanliness and proper hygiene. Children are asked to wash their hands before eating and after using the bathroom. . Our staff cleans and disinfects the changing tables after each diaper change. All toys and equipment are properly disinfected on a regular basis. The kitchen is properly maintained and cleaned daily.

DIAPERING AND POTTY TRAINING

We will make no attempt to toilet train children until they are able to verbalize or otherwise indicate need, help manage their own clothing, and be able to access toileting facilities.

For each child who is learning to use a toilet, the child's individual developmental abilities and needs must be accommodated as stated in the written policies and procedures for the center.

Diapering procedures will be carried out in strict accordance with health department regulations. Should you feel your child is ready for potty training, please discuss the procedure you wish to follow with the director and toddler room staff.

SAFE SLEEP

At Bright Minds we comply with the safe sleep guidelines. This includes the steps that infants be placed on their backs to sleep in individual, safe cribs and restrict the use of soft bedding and other materials in infant rooms that could pose a suffocation hazard. All our child care staff has completed safe sleep training prior to working with infants and on an annual basis.

SECOND HAND SMOKE

Smoking is not allowed inside the child care facility or in the vehicles at the time of children pickup and drop offs. It is discourage for parents to enter the building with the smell of cigarette smoke on their clothing. Staff is not allowed to be in the infant classroom if they smell of cigarette smoke. Children who arrive at school smelling of cigarette smoke will be changed into spare clothing.

CLOTHING & PERSONAL BELONGINGS

PLEASE mark items of clothing that may become separated from your child. Gloves, coats hats, etc., should have the family name on them for easy identification. Frequently, items are brought to school without labels - sunscreen, diaper cream, backpacks, lunch boxes, water bottles, infant feeding bottles, sippy cups, medications, etc. PLEASE label them as well. A lost & found box is maintained in the office for your convenience. As you dress your child please remember that we have several 'creative play' activities, and your child may be painting, cooking, and playing outside or at the water tables. Every effort is made (aprons, etc.) to keep your child clean, but certain amount of splashing and markings on clothes is unavoidable.

Learning materials are provided to the children as part of your registration and supply fees. Therefore, there is no need to bring any personal items from home.

Toys and money should not be brought to the Center unless it is requested for a special occasion.

PHOTOGRAPHS

We will not post any personal information or photos of children on social media or advertisement without written parental consent.

SECURITY CAMERA ACCESS

At Bright Minds Children Academy we have a security camera system that is used to record and view daily activities. The camera system has no guarantees as to how long the recording is kept in the

system and it DOES get rewritten after a period (which is not defined by the vendor). Consequently, we have no guarantee of how long of period of recordings in the past we can access.

Parents do NOT have access to the security camera footage. Security camera footage, if available, is only viewable by the center's administration, and on their discretion, may be shared with the appropriate authorities.

FINANCIAL POLICIES

Upon registering your child, you will be asked to pay a \$40.00 registration fee. Should you withdraw your child, for more than two weeks, you will be asked to pay a re-enrollment fee of \$40.00 to re-enroll your child. Weekly charges are due and payable on Monday and are considered past due at noon Tuesday. A late charge of \$5.00 per day will be added on to the total due, and service may be terminated if payment is overdue more than one week.

To qualify for the monthly rates, payments must be received by the third of each month (or the Monday after if the third falls on a weekend). Tuition paid after the fifth shall be then charged at the weekly rates.

We must occasionally adjust our fee structure. You will receive notice in writing one month before any fee change. Families enrolling more than one child will receive a percentage discount on their total bill (see rate card for discount).

Since our staffing is based on enrollment, we cannot extend any credit for absences of any portion of any given week. If your child is gone a full week due to illness, we will give credit equal to 50% of your weekly tuition fees (or pro-rated monthly fees if paid in that manner).

An itemized fee schedule is available for review in the Director's office.

Should your child be away due to vacation for one or two weeks, you will not pay child care tuition for those weeks. We also need written notice of a vacation two weeks in advance.

Returned checks result in a \$ 25.00 charge

Other charges may arise for special services provided, or special field trips, etc. You will be fully informed of these charges in writing

PARENTS COVERED UNDER COLORADO CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (CCAP)

Please remember CCAP card swipe is the parent's responsibility. If the parent does not swipe (previous swipes are acceptable) and we cannot manually bill the county, the parents are responsible for the cost of the day(s) and we will expect the parents to pay for child care services.

LATE PICK UP

It is parents should know opening & closing time for the center. To encourage your promptness, we must ask for a \$1.00 per 1-minute late penalty if your child is picked up 5 minutes past the closing time. Weather delays and emergencies will be considered on a case by case basis.

If your child has not been picked up within 15 minutes of closing center time, we will attempt to call

the numbers on your emergency card. If we cannot reach you or anyone else on the card, we will notify the area police department, treat the case as an abandoned child, and they will take responsibility of the child from that point onwards. This call will take place at 45 minutes after the center's closing time.

FIRE ALARM SYSTEM

The Center is fully equipped with a Fire Alarm system. Exit routes are posted in each classroom in case of fire. We conduct fire drills regularly. Staff and children are familiar with the building evacuation procedures.

IDENTIFYING WHERE CHILDREN ARE AT ALL TIMES

Each teacher has a roster of children he/she is responsible for in his/her classroom. This roster indicates the number of children in the class. Each teacher will take a count of the children when going outside and when returning to the classroom to assure that all children are accounted for.

MISSING/LOST CHILDREN

Staff members will notify the director immediately when it is suspected that a child may be missing. Staff will look for the child for five minutes. If the child is not located, 911 will be called. After the police have been notified, the parents will be notified of the situation.

CHILD NOT PICKED UP

If a parent fails to pick up his/her child and/or contact the center, and the parent/caregiver or another authorized person cannot be reached within 30 minutes after closing time, center staff may release the child to the custody of child protective services or other local authorities.

ARRIVING LATE TO CENTER

Children are encouraged to come on time to the center (latest by 9:00) so that they can take part in the daily activities of the center. If the child comes in late however, we will integrate the child in the activity that is going on at that time. If the class is out on field trip, we may ask the parent to take their child to the activity or if age appropriate, relocate the child in one of the other class rooms.

UNAUTHORIZED PICKUPS

If an adult comes in to pick up a child who the staff does not recognize or is not on the pickup list, we will attempt to contact the parent on the phone number provided. If contacted and the parent gives the verbal authorization, we will ask for a picture ID and will make a copy of it and release the child(ren). If we cannot establish a contact the primary care giver or the person picking up does not have a photo ID, we will not release the child(ren).

VISITORS TO THE CENTER

All visitors are required to sign our visitor guest book at the front counter and check in with the staff/Director by having their identification checked.

CENTER CLOSING PROCEDURE

The closing staff member will walk through the entire facility at the end of the day to ensure no one has been left at the center. All doors and windows will be checked to see that they are closed and locked. All toilets are flushed, and water is turned off.