



Branford Early Learning Center Parent Handbook

Address: 16 Birch Road

Branford, CT 06405

Phone: (203) 488-4512

Email: amorales.belc@gmail.com

Website: www.belcinc.org

Facebook: BELCKIDS

NAEYC Accredited Center Preschool and Child Care Center

Dear Families,

At Branford Early Learning Center (BELC), your child will enter a caring learning environment. Our mission is to provide the children of working families with high-quality, affordable childcare and early childhood education. We concentrate on the whole child—their academic growth, social relationships, physical health and emotional well-being. We emphasize process over production learning. We learn through play-based educational and age-appropriate methods.

Because childcare is a group experience, your child will have to share toys and adult attention, possibly for the first time. Your child may cry when you leave at first due to the normal “new-experience jitters.” When he/she becomes secure and adjusts to the new routine, he/she will come to see the Center as a home away from home. A good early learning experience will enhance your child’s academic progress for the rest of his/her school career.

We are monitored by the State Office of Early Childhood (OEC), licensed by the Department of Public Health, and accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). You can rest assured that we will provide a safe, healthy environment as well as an opportunity for academic growth in a loving, caring environment. We have School Readiness Slots available for Preschool students that meet the criteria of School Readiness. All children will have access, with or without disabilities, to our school and the School Readiness Program. We offer a sliding fee scale, determined by the CT Office of Early Childhood (OEC). As a nonprofit organization, we manage all funding in compliance with grant and donor requirements, and a volunteer Board of Directors oversees the administration of the school.

We welcome your input, including sharing your family culture and your suggestions for improving our program. All children are enrolled in accordance with enrollment policy and without regard to race, color, national or ethnic origin, disability, or religious affiliation.

Welcome to BELC!



Table of Contents Page

MISSION STATEMENT.....	5
VISION STATEMENT / PHILOSOPHY.....	5
SMOKE-FREE POLICY.....	6
IDLING POLICY.....	6
HOURS OF OPERATION.....	6
CALENDAR	6
OPEN-DOOR POLICY.....	6
ADMINISTRATION & STAFF.....	7
FEEPOLICY/ HARDSHIP POLICY	7-8
CONFIDENTIALITY	8
ANNUAL PROGRAM EVALUATION.....	8
ENTRY & WITHDRAWAL.....	8-9
COMMUNICATIONS & COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE.....	9
ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE.....	9
ALTERNATIVE CARE POLICY	10
BUILDING PROCEDURES FOR SAFETY & SECURITY.....	10
SIGN-IN & SIGN-OUT PROTOCOL	10
LATE PICK-UP	11
HEALTH	11
MEDICINE.....	11
ILLNESS	12
ILLNESS POLICY.....	12
When is my child too sick to attend school?	12
PLAN FOR HEALTH EMERGENCY	13
FIRE.....	13
BITING.....	13
DISCIPLINE/BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICY.....	13-14
CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR.....	14
SUSPENSION/EXPULSION POLICY	15
PARENT-SCHOOL RELATIONSHIP.....	15
CLASSROOM PROCEDURES.....	16
Clothing:	16
Education:.....	16-17
Rest/Nap:	17
Toileting:	17
COMMITMENT TO TRANSITION:	17
TRANSITION ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN MOVING INTO KINDERGARTEN	17-18
ASSESSMENT AND INTENTIONAL TEACHING.....	18-19
ASSESSMENT COMMUNICATION INFORMATION	19
FAMILY/TEACHER CONFERENCES	19-20

IMPORTANCE OF PLAY.....	20
FAMILY SHARING PLAN.....	20
FIELD TRIPS.....	20
HAND WASHING PROCEDURE	21
ORAL HYGIENE POLICY	21
SAFE INFANT SLEEP POLICY.....	22-23
BELC ASSESSMENT PLAN	23
BREAST-MILK PROCEDURES	24-25
CURRICULUM.....	26
NUTRITION	26
CACFP Child Care Nutrition Requirements	27
BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS.....	27
ADDENDUM.....	28
Toileting Policy in Detail.....	28-29

MISSION and VISION STATEMENT / PHILOSOPHY

Branford Early Learning Center, Inc. (BELC) seeks to provide children of working parents with a caring learning environment in a safe, healthy setting. We concentrate on the whole child: nutritional well-being, physical and emotional health, social relationships, creativity, and academic growth.

Branford Early Learning Center, Inc., a Department of Social Services funded agency, provides the children of working parents with high-quality, low-cost childcare and early childhood education using developmentally appropriate practice. As a NAEYC accredited center, we concentrate on the whole child: nutritional well-being, physical and emotional health, social relationships, creativity, and academic growth. We support positive relationships among children, parents, and staff by realizing that parents are their child's first teacher, and we need to work together to provide the best future for "our" children.

By achieving these goals in a warm, caring environment, the Center allows parents to reach their goals of self-sufficiency with full confidence that their children are safe and well cared for, as well as receiving the best education possible.



SMOKE-FREE POLICY

We are a Smoke Free Environment. Please do not smoke on school grounds.

IDLING POLICY

For the safety and health of our children, idling vehicles are not allowed on the grounds of Branford Early Learning Center.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The school is open from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday-Friday. We request that all children be in by 9:00 a.m. Our 9:00 educational circle time is a very important learning component each day and we require all children to participate to best prepare them for the best educational future we can provide! We close at 5:30 p.m. Staff have other commitments after work, and it is not fair either to the teacher or to your child if you are late. The Center is closed for inclement weather or emergencies when the Branford school system is closed. When public schools have early dismissals because of bad weather, so will the Center. The Center will open as soon as possible on delayed opening days. Please watch WTNH for Branford School closings. You can also check our FACEBOOK page for closings. We are a year-round Center.

CALENDAR

The school is closed for the following holidays:

Martin Luther King Day

Presidents' Day

Good Friday

Memorial Day

Juneteenth

Independence Day

Labor Day

Columbus Day

Thanksgiving and the day after

Christmas Day

New Year's Day

The week between Christmas and New Year's

And other days as updated annually.

OPEN-DOOR POLICY

BELC has an open-door policy, meaning you may visit at any time during regular school hours. Please use the buzzer at the front door for entry or call (203) 488-4512.

ADMINISTRATION & STAFF

Our high program quality is in direct correlation to our staff's education and dedication to each child. Each head teacher at BELC has a degree in Early Childhood Education. Our assistant teachers have a CDA (Child Development Associate). Every teacher has attended Early Childhood College courses. Several staff members are bi-lingual. Continued Professional Development requirements are met through attendance at workshops, conferences and continuing Early Childhood Education courses, as well as weekly in-service meetings. The Director and staff discuss the curriculum and the education of each individual child. We work together to assure your child receives the best of education we have to give. Our staff has been trained in School Readiness literacy, curriculum, assessment and how to offer and implement support to our students and families through many workshops, classes, and seminars. We work closely with the public-school Kindergarten program, so our students will be ready for kindergarten in all ways. We provide transitional activities and provide evaluations to public schools at the time of kindergarten registration with parents' permission.

Our Board of Directors is composed of community members and parents. Please contact the Director if you are interested in contributing to the Board. The Executive Director and Assistant Director govern the day-to-day operations of the Center. Besides our director, the staff is composed of Head Teachers, Teacher Assistants and a Cook. We have specialty guest teachers for dance, music, and yoga.

FEE POLICY

BELC uses the current OEC Sliding fee scale. Fees are based on gross family income and family size. We require verification of income at enrollment, and once a year there-after. Acceptable documentation includes: a copy of your W2, a copy of your income tax form, or four weeks of consecutive current pay stubs as an acceptable source of income at enrollment and redetermination of your fee. The fee will be adjusted whenever there is a change in family income. It is the responsibility of the family to report changes. Parents will receive a copy of the parent fee when the child is enrolled and how your fee was determined, and after redetermination or changes in economic circumstances.

All fees will be collected monthly with the following **Fee Schedule:**

Option A: ACH Direct Withdrawal from your account, on Day 1 or Day 15 of month

Option B: Check submitted to Center Day 1 of month

A registration fee of \$1000.00 is required. A late fee of \$25.00 will be added to any tuition not paid by the 15th of the month and a fee of \$35 will be applied for all returned checks. If your fees are not paid, your child may be refused entry until the unpaid balance is remedied. Continued delinquent fees will result in permanent withdrawal from the center.

Full fee is charged no matter how many days attended in a particular month. There is no reduction for holidays or snow days. To account for months with five weeks, no adjustment is made for the weeks the Center is closed in August or December. Tax information is provided

upon request.

HARDSHIP POLICY

If you are having difficulty paying, or need assistance or an adjustment, please see the Director. A hardship may be due to, but not limited to:

Loss of employment; Divorce; Medical Bills; Death in the Family; Military Service Deployment

The Director will assess the situation and discuss options with the Board of Directors to reduce the fee, suspend the fee or postpone the fee as needed. The hardship case will be reviewed in 2 months, or as needed.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Branford Early Learning Center strives to protect everyone's right to privacy. Individual child intake forms, assessment information and medical information are secured in a lock file. Administration and teaching staff will have access to all records. Confidential and sensitive information concerning children and/or parents will not be shared with outside agencies without consent. Grantors or regulatory agencies will have access upon request. Records are available to the child's parents or guardian.

ANNUAL PROGRAM EVALUATION

Parents and staff are asked to provide The Center with feedback on our program through the annual NAEYC family and staff surveys. Results are shared with parents, staff, NAEYC and our Board of Directors. Our Board of Directors uses this information to assist the Center in setting goals for improvement. During staff development week, the information gained from the evaluations is used to set goals and improve policies and programming.

ENROLLMENT, ENTRY & WITHDRAWAL

Parents must be working or entered in a job training program or in college. The exception is special needs children or families. We are committed to children with special needs and will guide parents toward referrals. As part of our family literacy program, the Director will provide the resources to families in accessing adult education programs, job training, parenting classes, and public library services upon entry. All children are enrolled in accordance with enrollment policy and without regard to race, color, national or ethnic origin, disability, or religious affiliation.

You will receive a community guide upon enrollment that provides information about town agencies and resources. Please be aware that as an early education facility, we are not a babysitting

service and do not offer wrap around care. Attendance should reflect your working hours. Translators will be made available on request.

Infants must be 8 weeks old to begin in our Infant Toddler Room. Preschoolers must be at least 2.9 months old by September. Our 10 School Readiness slots ensure that all 3 and 4 years have access to our program. **A non-refundable registration fee of \$100.00 is required when you accept enrollment into Branford Early Learning Center.**

Before entry, we must have an initial application, a parent agreement, an emergency authorization form, a child and family information form, a Facebook and directory authorization form and a current physical form (ED 191). All immunizations must be up to date. We provide breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack as part of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). We require a food reimbursement form upon entry and updated yearly. All paperwork must be completed and given to the Director before the child is able to attend.

We ask that the parent and child spend some time at the center prior to entry. Even children who have been in a group setting before need time to become familiar with new people and a new environment. You are welcome to visit as long as you like with your child to assure his/her comfort with the program and our staff. We will take a photo of you and your child on his/her first day to help with the transition. We also recommend reading some first day of school books with your child before their first day. We have a vast library and would be happy to loan you a first day of school book, if needed.

All children are accepted into the program on a probationary basis. If the child has not adjusted to the program, or the child's behavior is unacceptable, the parent will be required to withdraw him/her from the program.

We need two weeks' notice before your child is withdrawn for other reasons. A child cannot be temporarily withdrawn from the program. In order to re-enroll, you must re-apply.

If a child is absent for two weeks without a valid explanation or if attendance is erratic for a month without a valid reason as evaluated by the Director, it will be deemed you no longer need care, and the child will be withdrawn from the program.

Excused absences can only extend for one month unless approved by the Director.

COMMUNICATIONS & COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

If you have a problem or concern about our program or your child, please feel free to talk to the Head Teacher, Teacher, or the Director at any time. We strive to build a relationship of mutual trust and respect between our families and our staff.

To discuss other issues, please remember that the main focus of our teachers must be the children. If you need to discuss a matter with a teacher, please ask them to call you at a time when they are not responsible for supervising children. If there is a classroom issue that you

would like to discuss, please see the Head Teacher first.

Should you not be able to resolve the issue, contact the Director and she will set up a meeting with all involved. We are committed to work with you as a team to resolve any problem you may have.

If a parent or supervising adult is in any way abusive to a staff member, the child will be withdrawn from the Center.

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

Please enter the parking lot circle from the entrance closest to the parking lot. All cars should stay to the right of the parking circle. Please do not leave young children in the car, as this is unsafe and against the law. For the safety and health of our children idling vehicles are not allowed on the grounds of Branford Early Learning Center. Cars are to be turned off while you are inside.

Once again, we ask that parents drop off their children before 9 a.m. All classes have breakfast at 8:30 a.m. All classes have their circle time morning meeting by 9 a.m. This is an important part of your child's day and learning is very concentrated during this time. Social and academic skills are encouraged and learned; language development is enhanced, as well as specific teaching units, introduced each day during circle time. It is essential for your child to be part of this time of learning each day.

Upon arrival, children must be signed in and before leaving they must be signed out. Please write your name or initials, rather than mom or dad.

Parents should pick up their children after work or school. If you are not working, you should pick up your child after lunch. Our staff hours have been scheduled with these arrangements in mind. Also, a ten-hour day is hard on young children, regardless of the quality of care provided.

People who pick up your child must be on the child's emergency list. People who are not on the list will not be allowed to pick up the child unless we have verbal confirmation from the parent. We will make every effort to contact you, but if this is impossible, your child will not be released until we have permission for him or her to leave. If we do not know the person, we require a photo ID.

As soon as you pick up your child, they become your responsibility. They must stay with you at all times and continue to follow our rules. Children are absolutely not allowed to leave the building without an adult.

If your child is not picked up by 6:30 p.m., he/she will be taken to the local police department, and you will be charged the accumulated late fee. According to State regulations, the incident will be reported to The Office of Early Childhood (OEC), and The Department of Health as well as DCF.

ALTERNATIVE CARE POLICY

Branford Early Learning Center. is open 50 weeks a year. In the event that BELC needs to close other than the traditional holidays, and families need alternative care, BELC has made arrangements with CDC and ABC Preschools in town to provide alternative care.

Parents will be informed of the Alternative Care Policy when they enroll their children, including information on the alternative care programs that they can access.

- Parents will be given at least a two-week prior written notice of the closing.
- Parents will be asked to sign a form for the child's file indicating a need for alternative care
- A plan for reimbursement for alternative care arrangements will be made between BELC and the alternate care provider, if needed.

BUILDING PROCEDURES FOR SAFETY & SECURITY

The safety of your children and staff members is our main priority. All children will be supervised by BELC staff members at all times - primarily by sight. Supervision for short intervals by sound is permissible, as long as teachers check frequently on children who are out of sight. For the safety of our students, we will be monitoring people coming in and out of our school. Consequently, our doors will be locked at all times from 7:30a.m. - 5:00p.m..

In order to enter the school during these times, you will have to ring the buzzer located at the front entrance of the school on the right-hand wall. The Director or a teacher will greet you, ask you for ID and then allow you to enter. Please be sure to hold your child's hand in the parking lot going to and from your car.

We have developed a plan in the event of a crisis. The BELC School crisis team reviews this plan on a regular basis so that new staff will be familiar with the crisis situation protocols. Fire drills are planned monthly, so the children are accustomed to the loud emergency noise and exiting the building quickly, quietly, and safely. Should there be a time when you are in the building during an emergency evacuation or an emergency lock-down, you are required to remain in the area that you are presently in and follow the directions from school personnel.

SIGN-IN & SIGN-OUT PROTOCOL

Children must be signed into the BELC preschool classroom at the beginning of the day and out of the classroom at the end of the day. At drop-off, they must be acknowledged by a BELC staff member before you are permitted to leave your child in our care.

As part of our NYAEC accreditation, we are legally required to record drop-offs and pickups with parent signatures at both events. Please be vigilant in following sign-in and sign-out

protocol. If it comes to our attention that a parent is not signing in, we will have to contact you for a meeting to address the policy and further escalation steps will be taken, if necessary.

LATE PICK-UP

Our school closes at 5:00p.m. If you are going to be late, you need to notify the Director (203) 488-4512. If you are late, a fee of \$5.00 for every portion of five minutes will be charged. Every attempt will be made to locate you with the information given on the enrollment forms. However, if your child is not picked up by 6:30, he/she will be taken to the local police department, and you will be charged the accumulated late fee. According to State regulations, this will be reported to The OEC and The Department of Health as well as DCF.

HEALTH

According to the OEC regulations, each child shall be examined by a physician within a year prior to admission, and shall have been successfully immunized against diphtheria, tetanus, polio, pertussis, measles, rubella, pneumococcal conjugate, HIB, Hep B, and varicella as per age requirement.

According to state regulations, all children must also have a flu shot between September and December 31st in order to attend BELC. Proof must be given to the Director and kept in the child's file. By State law, physicals are due yearly. Children will not be allowed to attend if their physical is not up to date. We work with a dental consultant for screenings in February and an eye exam completed by the Lion's Club in October. If you or your child is in need of medical treatment or insurance, the Director will provide you with information on how to apply for Husky Insurance.

MEDICINE

We do not administer medicine with the exception of those for asthma and life-threatening allergies or conditions. We will need required forms for these medications filled out by your doctor. The OEC may also require a special medication authorization form which we will need in order to give your child specific medication. The Director and school nurse will explain this procedure to parents of children that may need this special authorization.

All medications must be in their original child resistant safety container and clearly labeled with the child's name, name of prescription, date of prescription, and directions for use. All medications will be stored in a locked container and, if directed by a manufacturer, refrigerated, except for nonprescription medications, premeasured commercially prepared injectable medications (i.e., Epi-pens), glucagon and asthma inhalant medications. Non-prescription topical medications will be stored away from food and inaccessible to children. Parents must sign permission for the use of all non-prescription topical medications or staff will not be able to administer them (no

exceptions). All unused or expired medication shall be returned to the parent/guardian or disposed (in the presence of at least one witness) if it is not picked up within one week following the termination of the order. The Center shall keep a written record of the medications destroyed which shall be signed by both parties.

ILLNESS

Please do not send a sick child to the Center. Children who are sick must be kept out of school. Sick children who are sent to school will be sent home. Children who are not well enough to go outdoors should not be sent to school, since the entire group goes outdoors, and the teaching staff is not large enough to keep one child indoors while all others are outside.

If a child has a contagious disease, we must be notified immediately. If a child becomes ill during the day, he/she will be isolated from the other children and a parent or authorized person will be contacted.

ILLNESS POLICY

Children who become sick during the day must be picked up immediately.

When is my child too sick to attend school?

- STREP THROAT- may not return until on antibiotics for 24 hours. Cases of Mono must have a doctor's note to return to school.
- SEVERE COUGHING that affects a child's daily routine or severe sore throat over three days
- DIARRHEA/VOMITING/GASTROINTESTINAL INFECTION-exclusion until symptom free for 24 hours.
- SKIN INFECTION/IMPETIGO-exclusion until the child shows a positive response to antibiotic therapy (unless the impetigo affects a very small area, which can be completely and comfortably covered). An undiagnosed rash or skin condition (note from physician necessary for return.) ➤
- RINGWORM-exclusion until treated by doctor.
- PIN WORMS-exclusion until cleared up.
- HEADLICE - exclusion until morning after child has completed one treatment. All lice removal procedures must be followed (ask for further information).
- CONJUNCTIVITIS (PINK EYE)-exclusion until symptoms subside.
- CHICKENPOX-exclusion until all lesions have scabbed over.
- FIFTH'S DISEASE AND MIDDLE EAR INFECTION-do not require exclusion. ➤
- RESPIRATORY INFECTIONS-It's best to keep your child home in the early stages. We will not exclude children who feel well enough to attend and can participate fully in the day's activities. ➤
- FEVER under 101degrees - depends on how your child feels and whether he/she can participate in program. Over 101 degrees, exclusion until fever free for 24 hours.

**** PLEASE Report ALL illnesses, particularly: salmonella, all bacterial infections, hepatitis, meningitis, fifth disease (may be harmful to pregnant women), and chicken pox.**

PLAN FOR HEALTH EMERGENCY

In extreme emergency when treatment is needed:

- Teacher in charge of the classroom will contact 911 for an ambulance; or
- He/she will contact parent or authorized adult
- He/she will take medical records and treatment consent and accompany child to the hospital •
Your pediatrician will be contacted to notify him/her of the emergency
- OEC must be notified within 24 hours of the incident if the child is admitted to the hospital. (1-860-509-8045)

If immediate treatment is not needed:

- A teacher will administer first aid
- Parent or authorized adult will be contacted
- Parent or authorized adult will transport child to a pediatrician or hospital.
- If no one can be reached, the Director or teacher in charge will call the pediatrician to ask how to proceed. Please make sure that your emergency form is current with correct phone numbers and persons authorized to pick up your child.

FIRE

- Children will be led out of and away from the building
- Teacher or Director will check each room including bathrooms
- Teachers will take out roll books and emergency books
- Teachers will take a headcount to make sure that everyone got out of the building and is safe •
Teachers will walk children to the fire station on Pine Orchard Rd through the backyard if the weather is bad.
- Call the fire department using the emergency number 911.
- If necessary, the children will be transported to CDC by school bus, and you will be notified.

BITING

Biting occasionally happens in childcare settings. It is a common developmental behavior for young children. That said, it is our goal to always protect all our children. The child will be redirected, as per our discipline policy, and the parent will be notified by incident/accident report or a phone call that a biting has occurred. The staff will not discuss with either parent the identity of the other child involved. This is considered to be confidential. Biting will be addressed, and a plan will be put into action to protect all children in the center.

DISCIPLINE/BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICY

The goal of discipline is to help the child develop inner controls so that he/she may move toward appropriate social behavior. Modeling positive guidance, setting clear limits and using Redirection is part of our ongoing process to acknowledge children's feelings as well as help them develop their own problem-solving skills and conflict resolutions. By having clear rules, a comfortable environment, keeping the children happy and busy, as well as reinforcing positive behavior, we try to minimize the need for discipline.

The Policy for discipline when needed is:

- ✓ Redirection
- ✓ Discussion
- ✓ Peer problem solving
- ✓ Removal from the situation so the child may calm down and reflect
- ✓ The child is encouraged to go back to play or group when they are ready
- ✓ Staff will continually supervise child during disciplinary actions

Staff shall not be physically or psychologically abusive, neglectful, or use corporal, physical, humiliating, or frightening punishment under any circumstances. Physical punishment and verbal humiliation are forbidden. No child will be coerced or physically restrained unless it is necessary to protect the safety or health of the child or others, using the least restrictive methods, as appropriate. We require parents to abide by these guidelines while on school property. Children must still obey school rules while parents are with them. They must stay with parents at all times after they have been signed out.

CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR

If the Center recommends counseling for a child, the parent must make an appointment within two weeks. The child must then be seen within a month, or they will be asked to leave the program. If your child is out of control, or if your child is being physically abusive to other children or staff members, you will be called and must immediately pick up your child. Please speak to the Director if you need any help with social services of any kind or if you need help with any child rearing issues. We have an extensive library and resource center and will be happy to help in any way we can.

Although we do not encourage suspension and will do everything possible for the benefit of the child, we also must protect all our children. Exclusionary measures are not considered until all other interventions have been exhausted, and there is agreement that exclusion is in the best interest of the child. Our procedure will be following our discipline policy, working with the student teacher and parents, putting outside agency help in place, with the permission of the parents, and then a decision will be made in conjunction with the OEC rules.

If exclusionary measures must be taken, the program offers assistance to the family in accessing

services and an alternative placement.

Policy acknowledges that it complies with federal and state civil rights laws.

SUSPENSION/EXPULSION POLICY

Some examples of situations when it may be necessary to remove a child or to suspend a child's enrollment are:

- ✓ A child is a danger to him/herself, other children attending the center, center employees, or anyone else at the center.
- ✓ Medical, psychological, or social service personnel working with the center determine that continued care at the center could be harmful to or not in the best interests of the child. ✓ The family declines to explore or secure outside support or behavioral resources which may help to address the child's needs, improve the behavior, and reduce the safety risks.

If exclusionary measures must be taken, the program offers assistance to the family in accessing services and an alternative placement.

Exclusionary measures are not considered until all other interventions have been exhausted, and there is agreement that exclusion is in the best interest of the child.

Policy acknowledges that it complies with federal and state civil rights laws (available on request).

PARENT-SCHOOL RELATIONSHIP

Parents are in daily contact with teachers and there is an ongoing dialogue regarding children's learning and development. Translators will be made available upon request. We use the Connecticut Preschool Framework and the Early Learning Developmental Standard Bridge to observe the children soon after entry, midyear, and at year's end to measure their growth and the effectiveness of our program. We use the Yale Child Study checklist for ongoing developmental milestones that help us with individual instruction and placement for your child. Additionally, twice a year, we do formal written evaluations combining the methods of measurement.

These evaluations are confidential and shared only among the child's classroom teachers, the child's parents, and the Director unless the parent gives permission to share information with an outside agency. The formal evaluations are kept in your child's file folder in the office. By licensing regulations, inspectors may check the children's files. We are committed to serve the needs of special needs children and will participate in a referral process with the Branford Public Schools System.

If observation or testing reveals issues which need addressing, parents are referred to Birth to Three, Early Years, Branford Counseling Center, or Clifford Beers Clinic, as appropriate. We have ongoing relationships with these agencies and work together to create the best plan of

action for the individual child. You may view our testing system and ask any questions of the Director upon request.

We appreciate any family input regarding your child and how we can best serve him/her, your family's cultural practices, or anything else that might make us a more effective program. We also can guide you to parenting support classes if possible or form a parenting group as needed. Please feel free to meet with the Director and discuss your ideas. Any problems or important communications should be discussed with the Head Teacher in your child's room. If this does not lead to a successful resolution, you should communicate with the Director. Parents are welcome to visit at any time. Please feel free to be part of our Parent Advisory Council. Please see the Director for details.

We make every attempt to work individually with each child. However, we are an institution devoted to group care, and it is difficult for us to deviate from the prescribed schedule for your child. For example, if you would like no nap period for your child, please be advised that we cannot offer such individual exceptions from the group norm.

CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

Clothing, Bedding, Shoes:

We work with many types of art materials (markers, paint, paste, clay, glue, play dough, crayons, glitter, and chalk) which can be messy. We also do gross motor activities on the floor and play outside. For these reasons, it is important that your child wear comfortable, washable clothes. Also, make sure that they can easily remove their pants to use the bathroom. Please do not send your child to school in anything that must be kept clean. A child who is apprehensive about getting dirty is a child who will not participate, and consequently, will not learn. It is necessary that all children have a complete extra set of clothes at the Center at all times. We provide a storage bag. Please replace the clothes as they are used, outgrown, or out of season. For infants, please provide several changes of clothing, 3 sets of bedding, disposable diapers, and wipes. Bedding for all children must be washed at least weekly. Please have children wear non-slippery shoes. Sneakers or rubber soles are best. All shoes must have backs. As we go out to play in cold weather, the children need appropriate winter clothing, including hats, mittens, and boots. Outdoor clothing should be marked with your child's name. In the summer, we go under the sprinkler on hot days. Please send a bathing suit, towel, and water shoes, all marked with your child's name. Absolutely no flip-flops.

Toys:

Since some toys are not appropriate in the school setting, we ask that you do not send toys from home with the exception of a small soft toy for naptime. Please do not bring in electronic toys or games. We are not responsible for toys from home that become lost or broken. Guns, war toys, and superheroes are not appropriate for sharing.

Education:

Your child's day will be a balance of structured learning, such as circle time and teacher directed activities, and free choice in our learning areas - science, literacy, housekeeping, fine motor

manipulatives, math, computer, blocks, and art materials. They will have story time, music, dance, Spanish, sign language, and drama. Each month will focus on a different theme. They will get to make choices and learn to develop relationships with other people. We use elements of the Reggio Emilia philosophy, learning through art in a beautiful environment with the support of our families and community; a project approach, studying what is interesting to our children; and

the Connecticut Early Learning Developmental Standards (ELDS), providing structure and an assurance that all areas of fundamentals are met. For our infants and younger toddlers, we provide a language rich environment with close caregiver relationships and plenty of stimulation with books, toys, music, large motor movement, and activities that are age appropriate. The director will provide further information about our education philosophy, our educational programs, and our curriculum upon request.

Rest/Nap:

For preschoolers and toddlers, please bring in a soft toy, a small pillow and blanket marked with the child's name. Familiar things from home provide comfort at nap time. Nap time is required for all children; however, they may lay quietly on their cot and rest.

Toileting:

Ideally, BELC children will be potty-trained by the age of three. However, we understand that children develop in different ways and on different timelines. We have procedures in place that allow us to work with parents in support of diaper training efforts towards having BELC children fully potty trained and no longer diaper dependent. Toileting policy in addendum.

COMMITMENT TO TRANSITION:

To sustain our mission and vision statements, BELC strives to maintain high quality, developmentally appropriate practices for our children. To do this, we recognize that children form attachments with teachers. We encourage keeping infants with their teachers for 18 months and toddlers together with their teaching staff for nine months or longer. Depending on enrollment and the time of enrollment, toddlers may be moved to the 3-year-old room if it is developmentally and age appropriate.

All children will have transitions into their new classroom over a period of several months. We have a transition policy in place to make the transition smooth for the child, the parent, and the teachers. If at any time the transition is not the best practice for the child, teachers, the Director, and parents will discuss our next or continued course of action.

To minimize the number of class and staff transitions that child experience during the day, as well as during the year, teaching staff are assigned to specific classes. This enables children and teachers to become comfortable with each other and their routine. It is also a strong goal of BELC that all teachers know and interact with all children.

TRANSITION ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN MOVING FROM BELC INTO

KINDERGARTEN

We post in our newsletter, classrooms, and in parents' mailboxes upcoming events for the children leaving our center and going into kindergarten. We encourage all parents to attend with their child. With parents' permission, we send evaluations of students to their new school. Transition includes a collaboration between the staff, the Director and the School Readiness Liaison for support and we meet with the Kindergarten Teachers if possible or through Zoom. A kindergarten teacher is also on the School Readiness Council and is available as needed. Open House held at each elementary school in early May where parents meet the principals for an informational session and the children break up into classrooms for an activity. During this time, the children are informally observed and assessed.

Children receive backpacks filled with worksheets and supplies and a message from the kindergarten teachers on a CD that they can watch at home.

Meet and greet in August for incoming Kindergarten students. Students can meet their teachers, see the classroom, and take a short bus ride. Parents can meet the teachers and the support staff. Open House is also held at the beginning of the schoolyear for all students

ASSESSMENT AND INTENTIONAL TEACHING

Branford Early Learning Center uses the Connecticut Preschool Assessment Framework (CT PAF) based on the Connecticut Preschool Curriculum Framework. The assessment tools of the CTPAF tie in directly with the philosophy, objectives and curriculum of the center which are based on the CT Preschool Framework, and the CT Early Learning and Development Standards (CT ELDS). As a part of the cycle of intentional teaching, an assessment tool aligned to the CT ELDS is used to determine how children are progressing across these domains of development. Until a new assessment is available, the continued use of the Connecticut Preschool Assessment Framework (CT PAF) is recommended.

The crosswalk of both documents allows programs to continue using this assessment tool, while also using the CT ELDS to plan curriculum, learning experiences, teaching strategies and supports for children. The general consistency between the CT Preschool Assessment Framework and the CT Early Learning and Development Standards allows teachers to assess how well children are learning the developmentally appropriate tasks we teach.

The curriculum is used for assessing 3- to 5-year-old children in their classrooms. These curriculum and assessment framework provide a system for using standards in both planning curriculum and assessing children's progress. The CTPAF/CT/ELDS/DOTS enable teachers to plan and implement curriculum that addresses specific learning standards and to observe and assess children's progress in achieving these standards. The teachers use the curriculum we developed based on the CTPAF/CT ELDS/DOTS to ensure the best for the whole child, cognitively, socially, emotionally, physically, and creatively.

<https://www.ct.gov/oec/lib/oec/earlycare/elds/ctelds.pdf>

The teachers use intentional teaching by observation, assessing, planning the lessons, following

up with another observation and assessment. An evaluation is then written for the parent showing the progress or areas that need to be addressed.

The primary purposes of the Connecticut Preschool Assessment Framework are to:

- ✓ Observe and monitor each child's progress related to curricular goals and performance standards.
- ✓ Support curriculum development and planning that promote children's learning and development by teachers and families.
- ✓ Organize and mutually share information between families and program staff members.
- ✓ Share information with receiving teachers to support effective transitions.

All Teachers are required to take CT ELDS/DOTS assessment classes through ACES/SCHOOL READINES/College, Thrive, or Charts a Course. Teachers and the Director discuss the assessment process and how the evaluations are done with the director before conducting an assessment.

ASSESSMENT COMMUNICATION INFORMATION

Teachers assess children three times a year. The first assessment is done in October as a basic screening to detect possible developmental, behavioral, environmental, or physical difficulty. An evaluation is done in December and given to the parent; another evaluation is done in June. The teachers ask to meet with the parents three times a year to discuss the child's progress and goals. After each evaluation is given to parents, the teachers will put out a signup sheet for parents to schedule a conference to discuss their child's progress and goals to be met for the future. Teachers welcome parents' input for goals as well as their educational objectives for their child.

Teachers are also available daily to discuss the child's progress if the parent does not feel the need to sign up for a conference. If the teacher or Director deems that an issue needs to be discussed, they will ask the parent to meet, and the necessary steps will be taken to ensure the best possible progression towards that goal for the child. This may include additional screening, etc. done by teacher, Director or outside agency.

The parents are also able to ask for a meeting or conference to communicate about assessment information concerning their child (or any issue) with the teacher and/or the Director at any time. The Director is also available at all times to meet with teachers, parents, or both to discuss the educational assessment or well-being of all students.

FAMILY/TEACHER CONFERENCES

While teachers are encouraged to complete assessments three times per year (November, February, and May), parent/teacher conferences will be held three times per year during the months of December, March, and June. During these parent/ teacher conferences, parents will have the opportunity to view and discuss the assessment tool and results with their child's teacher in a confidential setting that encourages open communication and constructive, proactive sharing and discussion. It is important to understand that the goal of our parent/teacher

conferences is not to focus on what a child may not yet be experiencing or demonstrating to the staff. Instead, it is an opportunity to highlight their strengths and successes, to share their interests and passions, and to set new goals together as partners in the learning process! There are two forms we use to help guide your conversations and engage in partner-focused goal setting between the teacher and the family. They are the “Narrative Summary” forms and the “Family Conference” forms. We also provide a “Goals for my Child” form for parents to fill out. Families may have a photocopy of the assessment. Originals go into the child’s folder.

IMPORTANCE OF PLAY

- ✓ Play helps children learn about the characteristics and properties of people, animals, and objects
- ✓ Play enhances cognitive development
- ✓ Play enhances social development
- ✓ Play enhances emotional growth
- ✓ Play improves motor skills
- ✓ Play may facilitate the gradual process by which the child becomes independent of parents Play allows children to exercise control
- ✓ Play develops creativity
- ✓ Play develops a sense of competence and adequacy
- ✓ Play provides relaxation and pleasure
- ✓ Play reinforces and generalizes instructional activities
- ✓ Play expends excess energy
- ✓ Play helps create new patterns of thinking and doing
- ✓ Play allows children to test their own skills
- ✓ Play develops problem-solving skills Play increases self esteem

FAMILY SHARING PLAN

Our family sharing plan requires that one family member donates an hour of time a year volunteering at the Center. We appreciate any family input regarding your child and how we can best serve him/her, your family's cultural practices, or anything else that might make us a more effective program. You can help in our schoolyard habitat or at a fix-up day, share a project, read books, and accompany us on a field trip. Ask a teacher for more ideas or please feel free to meet with the Director and discuss your ideas.

FIELD TRIPS

We occasionally go on field trips using First Student Transportation. Children must be at least 3 years old to participate. You will sign a permission slip with details of the trip on it before every field trip.

We request parent chaperones. Staff and bus drivers are equipped with cell phones, a 2-way radio, and first aid kits. If there is a problem with the bus, another will be sent to replace it. We

also use our schoolyard habitat for walking. We do special events on site, such as concerts, and weekly classes such as dance and music. We also have monthly yoga class.

HAND WASHING PROCEDURE

Hand-washing follows as stated below:

- ✓ USE LIQUID SOAP AND RUNNING WATER
- ✓ LATHER HANDS, SCRUB WRISTS, BACKS OF HANDS, UNDER FINGERNAILS, AND BETWEEN FINGERS.
- ✓ SCRUB VIGOROUSLY FOR AT LEAST 20 SECONDS; RINSE THOROUGHLY.
- ✓ DRY HANDS WITH PAPER TOWELS
- ✓ USE PAPER TOWEL TO TURN OFF WATER.

PLEASE NOTE: Hand washing is to be taught to the children and monitored. There are a variety of posters to use as teaching tools

WHEN TO WASH HANDS 5.A.09 - Use liquid soap and running water, follow hand washing procedure

CHILDREN:

Upon Entering

Immediately before eating

Before a diaper change

After using the bathroom or having a diaper changed

After playing outside and handling pets

When visiting infant toddler (or another room)

After handling body fluids

When hands are visibly soiled STAFF:

Upon Entering

Immediately before handling food, preparing bottles, or feeding children

Before meals and snacks, or preparing or serving meals, or after handling raw food that needs to be cooked.

After using the bathroom, before and after assisting a child in the bathroom or diaper change

After having contact with a child's bodily fluid or one's own

After handling pets

Before and after cleaning any surface or the water table

When hands are visibly soiled

After handling or cleaning garbage

Before and after administering medication

ORAL HYGIENE POLICY

The center provides toothbrushes for children aged 2 and up. Toothbrushes are labeled with the child's name and stored upright and not touching. We do not use toothpaste. Toothbrushes are replaced when worn. The sink is disinfected before and after the group brushes. Teeth are brushed after lunch daily under teacher supervision.

SAFE INFANT SLEEP POLICY

Providing infants with a safe place to grow and learn is very important. For this reason, Branford Early Learning Center, Inc. has created a policy on safe sleep practices for infants up to 1-year old.

We follow the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Consumer Product Safety Commission to provide a safe sleep environment and reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). SIDS is “the sudden death of an infant under 1 year of age, which remains unexplained after a thorough investigation.” The staff, substitute staff, and volunteers at Branford Early Learning Center, Inc. follow the AAP safe sleep policy.

Sleep Position:

- ✓ Infants will be placed flat on their backs to sleep every time unless there is a physician, practitioner, or clinician signed sleep position medical waiver up to date on file. In the case of a waiver, a waiver notice will be posted at the infant’s crib without identifying medical information. The full waiver will be kept in the infant’s file.
- ✓ Infants will not be placed on their side for sleep.
- ✓ Devices such as wedges, or infant positioners will not be used since such devices are not proven to reduce the risk of SIDS.
- ✓ Infants who use pacifiers will be offered their pacifier when they are placed to sleep, and it will not be put back in should the pacifier fall out once they fall asleep.
- ✓ Pacifiers will be cleaned between each use, checked for tears, and will not be coated in any sweet or other solution.
- ✓ The infant’s head must be uncovered at all times
- ✓ Parents are asked to provide replacement pacifiers on a regular basis.
- ✓ While infants will always be placed on their backs to sleep, when an infant can easily turn over from back to front and front to back, they can remain in whatever position they prefer to sleep.

Sleep Environment:

- ✓ Our program will use Consumer Product Safety Commission guidelines for safety-approved cribs and firm mattresses.
- ✓ Crib slats will be less than 2 3/8” apart
- ✓ Infants will not be left in bed with drop side down
- ✓ Playpen weave will be less than 1/4”
- ✓ Consumer Product Safety Commission safety-approved cradles and bassinets may also be used for sleeping if the infant meets the weight and height requirements.
- ✓ Infants will not be placed to sleep on any standard bed, waterbeds, couches, air mattresses, or on other soft surfaces.
- ✓ Only one infant will be placed to sleep in each crib. Siblings, including twins and triplets, will be placed in separate cribs.
- ✓ The crib will have a firm, tight-fitting mattress covered by a fitted sheet and will be free from blankets, loose bedding, toys, and other soft objects (i.e., pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, stuffed toys, etc.)
- ✓ The infant’s head must be uncovered at all times
- ✓ To avoid overheating, the temperature of the rooms where infants sleep will be checked and will be kept at a level that is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult.
- ✓ Sleep clothing, such as sleepers, sleep sacks, and wearable blankets, may be used as alternatives

to blankets.

- ✓ Bibs and pacifiers will not be tied around an infant's neck or clipped on to an infant's clothing during sleep.
- ✓ Smoking will not be allowed in or near Branford Early Learning Center.

Supervision:

- ✓ When infants are in their cribs, they will be within sight and hearing of staff at all times.
- ✓ A staff member will visibly check on the sleeping infants frequently.
- ✓ When an infant is awake, they will have supervised "tummy time." This will help babies strengthen their muscles and develop normally.
- ✓ Infants will spend limited time in car seats, swings, and bouncer/infant seats when they are awake.
- ✓ No soft toys will be allowed in swings. If children fall asleep while in a swing or chair they will be moved to a crib within a reasonable (few minutes) timeframe.

Training:

- ✓ All staff, substitute staff, and volunteers at Branford Early Learning Center will be trained on safe sleep policies and practices.
- ✓ Safe sleep practices will be reviewed with all staff, substitute staff, and volunteers each year. In addition, training specific to these policies will be given before any individual is allowed to care for infants.
- ✓ Documentation that staff, substitutes, and volunteers have read and understand these policies will be kept in each individual's file.
- ✓ All staff, substitutes, and volunteers at Branford Early Learning Center will be trained on first aid for unresponsive infants as well as what to do when they have a question or need assistance before they are allowed to care for infants.

When The Policy Applies:

This policy applies to all staff, substitute staff, parents, and volunteers when they place an infant to sleep in Branford Early Learning Center.

BELC ASSESSMENT PLAN

Assessments are used to support children's learning and are conducted using a variety of methods, such as observations, checklists, rating scales, and individually administered tests. Assessments are individual. A group assessment is also done for planning purposes as needed. Child assessment plans describe the purposes of assessments and procedures, and how the results of assessments are to be used.

Each Teacher will have a BELC Assessment Plan for teachers in his/her classroom for reference. The Director will discuss the assessment plan at Intake and yearly as needed. All new hires will receive a copy of the BELC Assessment Plan and the necessary forms and instructions to assess the children (3 times per year).

The child assessment plan identifies children's interests, needs, and describes their developmental progress and learning skills through interactions with children. Additionally,

having conversations, such as, asking open-ended questions about how children view the world around them, what specific questions and interests they have, help teachers to modify the curriculum.

The assessment plan is used to develop curriculum improvement or to plan program improvement.

Teachers may learn from assessments how they need to adapt their teaching practices or their learning environments.

Teachers align curriculum and teaching practices by having weekly lesson plan meetings, or more often if needed.

Assessments (both daily and at conference times) are a means to communicate with families. When indicated, the results of a child assessment may lead to a referral for diagnostic assessment.

Teachers will assess the children that they know and are familiar with.

Child assessments are confidential and shall be placed in the child's file folder. These are observable by teachers, parents and state agencies as needed.

Families are encouraged to and may contribute to the assessment process; Enrollment questionnaires, on-going discussions, concerns with teachers or Director, and goal setting are ways parents are involved with our assessment process. Families are given a copy of the curriculum that the assessment tool will review and will also receive a copy of their child's assessment.

BREAST-MILK PROCEDURES

- Expressed human milk should be placed in a clean and sanitary bottle with a nipple that fits tightly, or into an equivalently clean and sanitary sealed container to prevent spilling during transport to home or to the facility. Only cleaned and sanitized bottles, or their equivalent, and nipples should be used in feeding. The bottle or container should be properly labeled with the infant's full name and the date and time the milk was expressed. The bottle or container should immediately be stored in the refrigerator on arrival.
- The mother's own expressed milk should only be used for her own infant. Likewise, infant formula should not be used for a breastfed infant without the mother's written permission. • Non-frozen human milk should be transported and stored in the containers to be used to feed the infant, identified with a label which will not come off in water or handling, bearing the date of collection and child's full name. The filled, labeled containers of human milk should be kept refrigerated. Human milk containers with significant amount of contents remaining (greater than one ounce) may be returned to the mother at the end of the day as long as the child has not fed directly from the bottle.
 - Frozen human milk may be transported and stored in single use plastic bags and placed in freezer Human milk should be defrosted in the refrigerator if frozen, and then heated under warm running water so that the temperature does not exceed 98.6°F. If there is insufficient time to defrost the milk in the refrigerator before warming it, then it may be defrosted in a container of running cool tap water. Some infants will not take their mother's milk unless it is warmed to body temperature, around 98.6°F. The caregiver/teacher should check for the infant's full name and the date on the bottle so that the oldest milk is used first. After warming, bottles should be mixed gently (not shaken), and the temperature of the milk tested before feeding. Staff must discard any unfinished and unrefrigerated formula or breast milk after one hour. (5B.7)

- Expressed human milk that presents a threat to an infant, such as human milk that is in an unsanitary bottle, is curdled, smells rotten, and/or has not been stored following the storage guidelines of the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine as shown later in this standard, should be returned to the mother.
- Some children around six months to a year of age may be developmentally ready to feed themselves and may want to drink from a cup. The transition from bottle to cup can come at a time when a child's fine motor skills allow use of a cup. The caregiver/teacher should use a clean small cup without cracks or chips and should help the child to lift and tilt the cup to avoid spillage and leftover fluid. The caregiver/teacher and mother should work together on cup feeding of human milk to ensure the child is receiving adequate nourishment and to avoid having a large amount of human milk remaining at the end of feeding. Two to three ounces of human milk can be placed in a clean cup and additional milk can be offered as needed. Small amounts of human milk (about an ounce) can be discarded.
- Labels for containers of human milk should be resistant to loss of the name and date/time when washing and handling. This is especially important when the frozen bottle is thawed in running tap water. There may be several bottles from different mothers being thawed and warmed at the same time in the same place.
- By following this standard, the staff is able, when necessary, to prepare human milk and feed an infant safely, thereby reducing the risk of inaccuracy or feeding the infant unsanitary or incorrect human milk. Written guidance for both staff and parents/guardians should be available to determine when milk provided by parents/guardians will not be served. Human milk cannot be served if it does not meet the requirements for sanitary and safe milk.
- Excessive shaking of human milk may damage some of the cellular components that are valuable to the infant.
- It is difficult to maintain 0°F consistently in a freezer compartment of a refrigerator or freezer, so caregivers/teachers should carefully monitor, with daily log sheets, temperature of freezers used to store human milk using an appropriate working thermometer. Human milk contains components that are damaged by excessive heating during or after thawing from the frozen state (1). Currently, there is nothing in the research literature that states that feedings must be warmed at all prior to feeding. Frozen milk should never be thawed in a microwave oven as 1) uneven hot spots in the milk may cause burns in the infant and 2) excessive heat may destroy beneficial components of the milk.
- By following safe preparation and storage techniques, nursing mothers and caregivers/teachers of breastfed infants and children can maintain the high quality of expressed human milk and the health of the infant.

CURRICULUM

Curriculum upon request. One posted in each classroom.

NUTRITION

We are a peanut-free zone.

Breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack are provided to all children without cost. We participate in the CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program) which insures our meals and portions are healthy. A weekly menu is posted in all classrooms, the front hallway and in the lunchroom.

Child Care Nutrition is Supported by the Food Program. All children must be registered for the CACFP program unless medically necessary

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is a federal program that promotes healthy meals and snacks to children in childcare programs. As part of the CACFP, BELC serves meals and snacks that meet specific guidelines and record children's attendance at meals and snacks. In return childcare providers are reimbursed a set amount per meal or snack. Providers also receive visits/ inspections several times a year, up-to-date information about feeding young children, a monthly newsletter, and various other support materials. The childcare food program plays a vital role in improving the quality of childcare and helping children get a healthy start in life.

Meal and snack times are planned so that no child will go more than three hours without being offered food. Scheduled mealtimes are 8:30a.m.-10:00a.m., 11:15a.m. -12:15p.m., and 2:30p.m.-3:00p.m.. Accommodations for food allergies will be made on a case-by-case basis. If the allergy is not severe or life-threatening, reasonable substitutions will be made to the menu. If the allergy is severe and life threatening, the specified foods will not be served. In the case of an allergy so severe that it is dangerous for the child to come into contact with small amounts of the food or breathe in its odor BELC will take reasonable precautions to prevent an allergic reaction, with the understanding that complete protection is not possible. Food allergies are posted in the kitchen and in each room.

BELC Accommodates Special Diets

If your child has religious or lifestyle dietary restrictions BELC will make reasonable adjustments to the menu in order to accommodate his/her needs. For example, a vegetarian child may be offered meatless spaghetti sauce while the other children have meat sauce. If your child is not able to follow the CACFP childcare nutrition guidelines due to special dietary needs, BELC is required to have a written doctor's order to follow.

Child Weekly Menus Promote Child Care Nutrition

The weekly menus have been reviewed by our CACFP representative from the State of Connecticut, our registered dietician/nutritionist, the Director, food Manager and cook. Each meal is planned with optimal nutrition in mind. Each menu is designed to provide a wide variety of foods that are different in color, shape, size, and texture. Menus include a wide variety of foods, including those that are the children's favorites, new or unfamiliar, culturally diverse, and seasonally appropriate. In addition, menus are planned with children's ages and developmental abilities in mind. A five-week rotation of menus changes seasonally to provide the children with a balance of variety and familiarity.

CACFP Child Care Nutrition Requirements

Children two and older receive meals and snacks based on the minimum components listed below. Children under the age of two have separate requirements, based on age and development.

Breakfast Lunch Snacks (any two):

1% or Skim Milk 1% or Skim Milk 1% or Skim Milk Grains or Bread Meat or Alternative Protein
Meat or Alternative

Fruit or Vegetable Grains or Bread Grains or Bread Fruits and Vegetables Fruit or Vegetable

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

As birthdays are special times, we ask that you do something special here to celebrate. We prefer you do a special project, game with the children, or have a guest performer entertain. If you prefer food, it must be a healthy snack and you must check with the Director first. **NO CUPCAKES OR SWEETS ARE ALLOWED**. You may bring in fruit, mini bagels with cream cheese, smoothies, or fruit yogurt. Children love special napkins or plates. If your child is having a birthday party outside the center, and not all of the children in the room are invited, we ask that you do not leave invitations in our mailboxes, as this leads to hurt feelings.

TOILETING POLICY

- Families and teachers will work together to discuss toileting progression when children are ready in the Toddler Room.
- Children will be introduced to the toileting process when they show an interest and or the parents and teachers feel the children has the capability to remain dry during nap or during the night. • All children can use the bathroom when needed. Teachers will encourage children to use the bathroom regularly (i.e., before going to the playground, before lunch, after rest, etc.) and will check a child still in diapers or pull-ups at least every hour and as needed to see if they need changing.
- Any child soiled or wet will be made more comfortable using the school's diapering procedure. Soiled items will be sent home daily, and a replacement set should be sent to school the next day. The school has a limited supply of spare clothing. Any clothing supplied by the school must be laundered before being returned.
- Children who are toilet training must be wearing clothing that they can pull off and on easily by themselves. Families of children who are toilet training will receive information daily regarding their progress. All families will provide a complete change of clothes for their child to be stored at the school.
- Clothing or sleeping things soiled by any bodily fluid will be placed in a plastic bag, sealed, labeled, and stored apart from other items to be sent home.
- Toilet training will never be coerced and will be done in accordance with a family's request and will be consistent with the child's physical and emotional abilities.
- All children will be allowed to use the bathroom when needed.
- Children will be supervised during toileting but allowed as much privacy as is appropriate. • No child will be punished for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet.
- Children must wash their hands with soap and running water after toileting and before snacks,

meals, or meal preparation.

- All teachers must wash their own hands after assisting a child with diapering/toileting. Individual paper towels will be used to dry hands.
 - Disposable gloves will be used whenever cleaning feces, urine, blood, or vomit. •
- Contaminated areas will be cleaned and sanitized with bleach to water solution approved disinfectant solution.