Blossoming Minds

Parent Handbook

2026

Parent Handbook

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Preface

As a licensed Ontario child care Centre, we incorporate and follow:

ELECT curriculum (Early Learning for Every Child Today

Minister of Education Policy Statement on Programming and Pedagogy

How Does Learning Happen Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years

Blossoming Minds Learning Centre Inc. (BMLC) offers full-time, licensed child care for children between the ages of 3 months to 6 years. As educators, we believe that early childhood development is the foundation for all future behavior, learning and health. We know that the young brain is at its prime for growth of all kinds. We are committed to providing an environment, rich in experiences, which facilitates this. Music, inquiry- based learning, hands on experiences, and learning through play are central to our programming. Physical activity is a crucial component of learning for young children, both through structured activities such as dance, and free play. Pretend play, yoga and meditation activities are all part of helping children to develop self-regulation.

1. Program Statement

Influenced by the Reggio Emilia school of thought, we believe that there are three teachers of our children; the parent, the teacher, and the environment.

The Parent

parent participation in the life of the school is an essential component of the educational experience. Families are actively involved in meetings, school activities and events, such as student-led conferences or education seminars that cover topics on early literacy, play and social skills.

Collaboration

Children, teachers, families, and the community need to work together. Group work is essential in advancing cognitive development. Children are encouraged to dialogue, critique, compare, negotiate, hypothesize, and problem solve through group work. Collaboration among home, school and the community to support the learning of the child is highly emphasized.

The Concept of the Capable Child

Each child is understood to be competent, inventive, and full of ideas and they deserve our respect as the unique individuals they are. We are committed to providing child-initiated and adult supported experiences.

Environment as a Teacher

Children should learn by interacting with the world around them. Blossoming Minds Learning Centre is a friendly and inviting learning place. Classrooms reflect the natural environment. The walls are white or soft yellow to make the classroom a calm environment that allows the focus to be on the documentation of the children's learning processes. Both the indoors and the outdoors are used as learning spaces, incorporating active play, rest, and quiet time into the day.

To see our full program statement, please see Appendix A

2. Prohibited Practices

Blossoming Minds will not permit, with respect to a child receiving child care at BMLC or at a premises where it oversees the provision of childcare

- Corporal punishment of the child
- Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent
- Locking the exits of the child care Centre or home child care premises for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures
- Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth
- Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding
- Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will
- Sexual abuse, sexual misconduct, or engaging in a prescribed sexual act, as those terms are defined in the Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007

O. Reg. 126/16, s. 34.

3. Serious Occurrences

BMLC staff have the responsibility to report serious occurrence incidents to the Ministry of Education Childcare Quality Assurance and Licensing within 24 hours and post within the Centre information regarding the incident on a Serious Notification Form for 10 days. A Serious Occurrence Incident can include incidents that may require third party medical attention, disasters on premises, concerns over operations of the program and others.

Duty to Report

All staff at BMLC has a legal obligation to report any suspicions of child abuse to the Children's Aid Society.

4. Privacy Policy

Privacy of Information

All staff and volunteers understand that they will have access to confidential information about children and families. They agree to keep this information in strictest of confidence. Before sharing information about the children with outside agencies or schools, staff will obtain parental consent. All documentation of consent to share information will be kept on site in the child's file.

5. Hours Of Operation

Regular Hours: BMLC is open from Monday to Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m

Annual Closures

Please refer to the list of closures for the current year that are posted on the main page of our website and Parent boards.

6. Late Procedure & Payment

Our Centre closes at 6:00 p.m. After that time, a parent is considered to be late and a late fee will be charged; payable in cash to the staff member on duty. Please remember that staff need to be able to leave the Centre at 6:00 p.m. so you must be out the door with your child at 6:00 p.m. not entering the door at 6:00 p.m.

1-5 minutes late = $10.00 and $1.00 per minute thereafter.

If a parent is frequently late, a meeting will be arranged with the Executive Director(s).

For those parents who have more than one child in the centre, please note that all of your children must be picked up by 6:00 pm. Because you are in the building by 6:00pm and picking up child “A” from one room, does not mean that you are on time to pick up child “B” from another room.

If you are going to be late, please try to call the centre to let the staff know when they may expect you.

We do understand that sometimes circumstances beyond your control prevent you from arriving at the centre on time, however we would like to see that everybody gets to leave the centre by 6:00 pm.

7. Waitlist Policy

Due to high volume, when the waitlist goes beyond 600 names, we may close it temporarily.

There is no fee to place your name on our wait list. Once a formal request has been made to be placed on the wait list (by filling out the form located on our website) parents will receive a confirmation by email.

It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to contact Blossoming Minds Learning Centre. to confirm their spot on the wait list every 6 months. This MUST be done by email. If this is not done, your name will be removed from the list.

Priority spots are determined based on:

Full-time enrolled children- openings in rooms are first reserved for movement between rooms of children presently enrolled. Once all children have been moved between rooms, openings are offered in the following order:

- Siblings of already enrolled children
- Catchment Area- children who will be attending our partnered schools have preference for openings (Earl Haig and Earl Beatty)
- Registration date.

(For the Before and After School Program, priority will be given to currently enrolled students who have siblings currently enrolled at Blossoming Minds.)

We have one master wait list, which goes by order of your registration date. When we have openings, we go down our list **in order** and look for a match for the opening. We look for date of birth of child and our prospective openings for a match – we then look to see the date you requested. If the date is a fairly close match, we will offer you the placement even if it is sooner or later than you requested (sooner by approximately a month, later by age suitability).

If the placement is for the month you request and you turn down the placement, **we will remove your name from the list**. We do require a prompt response, so making sure your phone and email info is up-to-date is crucial, as people do register on many wait lists. **If we cannot reach you, we will remove your name from the list.**

To ascertain your child's place on the waitlist, simply email us and we will be happy to give you the required information. The wait list will be made available to those affected by it while maintaining the confidentiality and privacy of others on the list.

A non-refundable deposit of two full months' fees (based on the posted CWELCC fees) is needed to secure your spot once a date for enrollment has been offered. The deposit is non-refundable, but will only be used for the last 2 months of fees, when notice of two calendar months, prior to the first of the month, has been given. Payment of the deposit indicates your acceptance of our deposit policy.

In the case of withdrawal from the program, we ask for written notice of two calendar months to be given, prior to the first of the month.

In the case a child is demitted for reasons outlined in our policies, the deposit will not be refunded.

8. Fees, Enrolment, & CWELCC

BMLC has opted in to the CWELCC system as of November 1, 2022. We were approved in December 2022.

CWELCC defines fees as either “base fees” or “non-base fees’ which are optional fees such as late fees. Non base fees are not covered by CWELCC and not eligible for rebate. Blossoming Minds non-base fees are our late fee and our additional fob fee.

Our monthly base fees are as follows:

Infant	$478.50
Toddler	$478.50
Preschool	$478.50
Before & After School	$375.64
Kinder Summer Program (Full Time)	$478.50

Monthly fees are posted on our website. Emailed notice of any fee increases will be given to all parents with at least 30 days notice.

Fees are to be paid on the first of each month through the Lillio app. Please note that there are no refunds for illness, days not used, vacations, holidays or other absences from the program. Fees are subject to change.

When a confirmed date is given for enrollment, a **non-refundable** deposit of two full month’s fees (based on the posted CWLECC fees) is required to guarantee a space. The security deposit will be applied to your last months of care when you withdraw from the Centre giving the required notice.

The Before & After school program differs from our other programs as it is closely aligned with the school year. Enrolment in our JK/SK program constitutes a commitment for the academic year (signed contract). If enrolment must be terminated for any reason before the academic year is over, parents are financially responsible for the remaining tuition until the vacancy is filled.

A deposit of two month's fees (based on the posted summer program CWLECC fees), which will be applied to the last two months of the school year only, is charged upon confirmation of a placement (please see registration form for this program for more details). This **deposit is non- refundable**. In the event enrolment is terminated, we will do our best to fill the open spot but there is no guarantee that a vacancy can be filled.

In all cases, deposits are non-refundable.

Fees are to be paid on the 1st day of the month, through the Lillio app. Cash will not be accepted as a payment fee.

All payments returned from a financial institution will be subject to a processing fee as determined by Blossoming Minds Learning Centre. If the processing fee is not reimbursed with a money order or certified cheque, within 20 business days, the child's care may be suspended.

A receipt of payment is available on the Lillio app after the year end for income tax purposes.

Refunds will not be made for statutory holidays or any absent days (including vacations or illness). Before & After School Program parents are responsible for paying their monthly fees if their child does not attend over March break. Refunds will not be made for missed days that result from the inability of the Centre to open (or early closure of the Centre) due to circumstances beyond the control of Blossoming Minds Learning Centre Inc. (including, but are not limited to, natural disasters, emergency situations, inclement weather, and/or other health and safety concerns).

A late payment fee of $10.00 per day will be charged if payment is not received by the 4th day of the month.

The conditions of this agreement provide protection for parents as well as for our program. In order to assure that we can provide these services, it is essential that the program be financially stable. Salaries and overhead expenses cannot be reduced because of absentee losses. This contract is a commitment that you will financially support the enrolment space guaranteed for your child. Failure to meet your financial commitment may result in termination of child care services.

9. Late Payment

Regular scheduled fees are due by the first of each month. A reminder will be sent through Lillio on the 2nd of the month. If by the 4th of the month any regular fees have not been received, a fee of $10 per day overdue will be charged.

Continual or extreme late payment of fees may result in dismissal. Your deposit is forfeited in this case.

Tax Receipts

Income tax receipts are issued at the end of each calendar year. Receipt for the deposit paid ahead of enrollment is issued in the year that the deposit is applied to the last month's fee.

10. Admission & Discharge

The following are requested upon enrolment

- Name
- Address
- Telephone number of family doctor
- Updated immunization
- List of allergies

After enrolment, records checked annually and updated as required

Immunization Policy

All children seeking admission into our program will be required to be fully immunized in accordance with Public Health's childhood vaccination schedule. Blossoming Minds Learning Centre does not accept the Statement of exemption, for enrollment purposes. Parents must provide updated Immunization records before starting with Blossoming Minds Learning Centre and once enrolled, records must be updated within a reasonable time frame. All records must be from a medical officer of health. Any immunizations that are not updated with Blossoming Minds Learning Centre may cause termination of care.

Discharge

Signed, written notice of permanent withdrawal by you must be given at least two calendar months in advance, prior to the 1st of the month. If the required notice is not received, full program fees will be charged, and the deposit will not be refunded. The Before and After school program registration form should be consulted for specific details of withdrawal from that program.

The provision of our service is conditional upon compliance of both you and your child to our Code of Behaviour. Behaviour which poses a safety hazard may result in immediate withdrawal, as well as loss of deposit.

Should the Directors of the program, determine that a child cannot adjust to the program, or if the parent has not upheld the contract, the child will be withdrawn and this agreement will be terminated.

The process of termination for all children may include any of the following steps:

- Documentation of incidents
- Child sent home from the Centre
- Meeting with appropriate parties
- Counselling and/or consultation with outside agencies
- Suspension
- Removal from the program

Depending on the circumstances, Blossoming Minds reserves the right not to refund the deposit.

11. Code of Behaviour

The safety of all children is our primary concern. The following expectations are necessary to promote a happy, comfortable, safe atmosphere.

The child, as is age appropriate, and the parents at all times including online/social media shall:

- Be courteous to others
- Use acceptable language
- Conduct themselves in a manner which allows others to feel safe from verbal and physical abuse
- Respect the privacy and confidentiality of all staff and children
- Resolve conflict in a peaceful manner
- Respect the building and equipment as well as the personal property of others
- Show personal respect for all individuals through behaviour and language.

12. Movement Between Rooms

Children will move rooms according to the following:

- As is age appropriate
- As space allows in the next room
- As is developmentally appropriate

BMLC's policy is to move children through the Centre in such a way as to provide for a smooth transition. Most movement will take place during the months of July, August, and September, unless space is available and the child is ready for the next program.

Age Group	Age Range	Ratio of Staff to Children	Maximum number of children in group
Infant	Younger than 18 months	3:10	10
Toddler	18 to 30 months	1:5	15
Preschool	30 months to 6 years	1:8	24
Kindergarten	44 months to 7 years	1:13	26

13. Illness

In order to prevent the spread of illness between children, or to the staff, we ask that you keep your child at home when they have a fever or show signs of illness.

When your child exhibits signs of illness or develops a temperature of 38 C (100.4 F) (or a lower temperature with other signs of illness, ie. must be well enough to participate in all aspects of the program INCLUDING outdoor play), the supervisor/designate will call you to pick up your child.

Your child must be symptom free for a period of 24 hours (fever free without medication) and episode free for diarrhea or vomiting in order to return to BMLC.

We strongly recommend seeking medical attention to ensure your child is well enough to return to BMLC. We reserve the right to request a doctor's note/attestations form in certain circumstances where we feel it is warranted for the health precautions of staff and other children.

Childhood Illnesses

BMLC follows all of the regulations of Toronto Public Health when dealing with communicable diseases.

The following are some of the more common childhood illnesses and the policies of our Centre for their treatment:

Blossoming Minds Learning Centre follows all of the regulations of Toronto Public Health when dealing with communicable diseases.

The following are some of the more common childhood illnesses and the policies of our Centre for their treatment:

Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye) The child will be excluded from care if discharge is thick and yellow or green. The child must be treated with prescription antibiotic drops for 24 hours and the eyes must be clear of discharge before returning to the Centre. A doctor's / pharmacist's confirmation of diagnosis is needed upon return.

Common Cold The child may attend as long as there is no fever and the child feels well enough to participate in all aspects of the program.

Coxsackie Virus (Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease) After confirmed diagnosis, the child may return to the Centre if they are fever free and feel well enough to participate. It is recommended children with mouth sores and/or open blisters on their body should be excluded until symptoms resolve to reduce the spread of infection to other children.

Diarrhea and/or Vomiting After 2 episodes of diarrhea or 1 episode of vomiting (or discretion of staff, ie explosive episode or pain, etc.) a child must be picked up and remain home for 48 hrs. (diarrhea/vomiting and medication-free)

Fever If a child develops a fever of 38 C (100.4 F) or higher, the child must be picked up and be fever free for 24 hrs. (without fever-reducing medication) before returning to the Centre.

Fifth Disease (Slapped Cheeks Syndrome) After confirmed diagnosis by Doctor, the child may return if fever free and able to participate in all aspects of the program**.**

Lice / Nits If a child has a confirmed case of head lice, the child may not return to the Centre until they are lice and or nit free.

Pertussis (Whooping Cough Bacteria) The child must remain at home under antibiotic treatment for 5 days of the 14 day course or 3 weeks if untreated.

Ringworm The child may return after appropriate medication has been taken or used for at least 24 hours.

Roseola After confirmed diagnosis by Doctor, the child may return if they are free of fever and able to participate fully.

Scabies The child may return 24 hours after therapeutic lotion is applied.

Thrush (oral infection) The child may attend if they feel well enough to participate.

Strep Throat / Scarlet Fever / Impetigo After confirmed diagnosis by a Doctor, a child must be fever free and treated with antibiotics for 24 hours before returning. All of the above are strains of Streptococcal bacteria.

Vomiting If a child vomits, the child must be picked up and remain home for 48 hours, vomiting-free and medication-free.

Diseases and infections not listed will be assessed by your child's physician and/or Public Health Services to determine an appropriate course of action

14. Medication

Non-Prescription Medication (Cough Syrup, Tempra, Tylenol, Cortisone cream etc.)

BMLC is not permitted to administer any medication to the children in their care that is not a current prescription. If a child requires a medication that is non-prescription, the authorization from a physician in the form of a doctor's note accompanied by the completion of the form called "*Permission to administer Prescribed/Non-Prescription Medication"* by the parent is required or the physician may fill out the form and sign it.

The following items do <u>not</u> constitute drugs or medication as follows:

- Sunscreen
- Moisturizing skin lotion
- Lip balm
- Insect repellant
- Hand sanitizer
- Diaper cream

These items fall under the umbrella form each parent is to complete and sign upon enrollment.

Prescription Medication (Penicillin, Amoxicillin, etc.)

The bottle of medication must be in its original container with its dispensing script and be clearly marked with:

- The child's name
- The name of the medication
- The date prescribed
- The amount to administer
- Time of dosage

The "*Permission to administer Prescribed/Non-Prescription Medication"* must be completed by the parent and signed prior to administration. Medication must be stored in a locked container, either in the classroom or in the kitchen fridge. Administration of medication must be logged.

BMLC does not administer holistic or homeopathic remedies under any circumstances.

Emergency Medication (Epi-pens, inhalers, epilepsy meds, diabetes meds, etc.)

There are children with severe allergies/medical conditions that require emergency medication to be present with them at all times.

While it is the responsibility of parents to administer medication to their child, BMLC is prepared to agree to undertake this responsibility on the following conditions:

- The use of medication is prescribed by a physician
- It is necessary that the medication must be taken during child care centre hours
- The child's parent/ guardian is not reasonably able to administer the medication

A medical plan must be fully completed and signed by a parent/guardian by before the medication can be administered. BMLC does not have any health professionals to administer medication. The emergency medication will always be stored in a pouch, out of reach of children and accompany the child at all times. A copy of the medical plan is to be kept with the medication at all times.

The medication must be in the original prescription container with the child's name, name of the medication, dosage, frequency, and physicians name.

The medication must be current and not expired. It is the responsibility of the parent/ guardian to ensure that the medication is current and that all medical information about the child, and where the staff at BMLC may reach the parent/guardian, is up-to-date.

It should be noted that the BMLC Board of Directors and staff will be absolved from any legal liability related to the administration of this medication and will not be held responsible for any illness or injury to your child relating to or resulting from the administration of the medication.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

In the event of an emergency if the parent/guardian can not be reached, an emergency contact (who must also be listed on the release form) will be contacted.

Parents will be notified by email in the Lillio app (as is possible); emergency contacts may also be called if necessary (may not pick up child unless on the release)

IN THE EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT OR EMERGENCY

Emergencies (injuries, critical illness, etc.)

The child care Director, Administration or program staff will follow guidelines below in the event of an emergency:

- Attend to the sick or injured person
- Protect the victim from further discomfort or injury
- Call 911
- Document calls related to the incident once all risks are over, medical assistance has arrived, or child has been taken for treatment, then contact the Director at once. If the Director is unavailable, the Designate should be contacted

General Emergency Practices

Costs incurred for emergency treatment of a child will be the responsibility of the parent.

Times, events, and telephone calls will also be recorded chronologically.

Emergency numbers are located in the day care office.

Parents will be contacted immediately by the Director, Supervisor, or Administration.

The Director, Supervisor, or Administration will contact the appropriate government agencies and file the appropriate forms (accident report, serious occurrence etc.) within 24 hours of the incident occurring.

15. Anaphylaxis

Parents/guardians of children that have been diagnosed with an anaphylactic allergy have the responsibility to provide a detailed individual emergency plan for their child and to train all BMLC staff, students and volunteers on their child's emergency plan prior to the first day of care. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to inform BMLC staff of a child's allergy at the time of registration and provide an annual update of any allergy changes. It is recommended to have two Epipens kept at the Centre (stored in a labeled pouch in Emergency backpack at all times).

16. Emergency Protocols

Please be advised that Blossoming Minds Learning Centre has an Emergency Management and Procedure Policy. This is available upon request.

The parents/guardians must provide an emergency contact person's name, address, and telephone number.

An emergency contact person must be informed that they are the contact person and may be asked to pick-up the child in the event of an emergency, accident or illness when the parents cannot be reached. If picking up, the emergency contact person must be listed on the Child Release Form.

A contact person must be available during the hours that the child is at the Centre. Contact persons and their personal information must be updated as required.

17. Centre Closures

Annual Closures

Please refer to the list of closures for the current year that are posted on the main page of our website and on parent boards

Closures Due to Weather

If the Toronto District School Board closes the schools due to inclement weather, BMLC will also be closed. We ask parents to listen to the radio for announcements. We will send an alert through Lillio with notice of any closures due to conditions such as weather or other circumstances beyond our control.

18. Preventing Unauthorized Access

BMLC is a locked facility. Parents and staff are issued a fob with an individualized PIN number. Only parents listed, people listed on the Release Form, and authorized individuals, are allowed in the facility.

BMLC is under video surveillance 24 hours a day. The cameras are located in all classrooms, the front and back of the building, the playground, and all entries.

19. Safe Arrival & Dismissal

This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under **Ontario Regulation 137/15** for policies and procedures regarding the safe arrival and dismissal of children in care.

Children should arrive at Blossoming Minds, no later than 10 am.

If your child will be absent, or late from childcare due to appointments, sickness, holidays, etc., you must notify the Centre by email, in person, or phone, by 10 am. If reporting a late (after 10 a.m.) you must indicate an arrival time. If you are delayed, please notify us.

Continued failure to notify Blossoming Minds of absences or lates, can result in dismissal.

Upon Arrival in the Morning

Room staff will greet each child and discuss with parents any matter pertaining to the child's health. Such discussions may include the following:

- Well-being
- Changes in routine
- New job for parent
- Symptoms of illness
- Illness at home
- medication administered at home
- Medication required at the Centre (fill out Medication Form if applicable)

Where a child has not arrived in care as expected:

Where a child does not arrive at the Centre, and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off (e.g., left a voice message, email, or advised the closing staff at pick-up), the staff in the classroom must inform the Centre Supervisor or Designate.

- The Centre Supervisor or Designate will contact the parent/guardian by 11:00 a.m. by email to inform them that the child is absent
- No further action will be taken.

Where a child has not been picked up by closing time:

Staff shall ensure that the child is given a snack and activity, while they await their pick-up.

One staff shall stay with the child, while a second staff proceeds with calling the parent/guardian to advise that the child is still in care.

If the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the child, the staff shall contact any other emergency contacts on the child’s enrolment form.

Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized individual listed on the child's file (e.g., the emergency contacts) by 6:30 p.m. the staff shall proceed with contacting the local Children's Aid Society. Staff shall follow the CAS's direction with respect to next steps.

Additional Instructions Only for Before & After School Program

If Kinder children are to be regularly dropped to school in the morning, parents are to provide a one-time email. This email, which will be documented in the child's file, should indicate that the child will be dropped off directly to school and not to BMLC in the mornings. BMLC will then not be following up with an email for safe arrival each day for those children.

If a Kinder child will be absent on any day, parent must notify BMLC prior to 10 a.m. If Kinder child is at school and sent home sick at any time in the day, parent must notify BMLC right away. If, when BMLC staff arrive at the school at pick up time, child is not there, staff will notify Admin and parent(s) will be called to verify.

20. Outdoor Play

All children in attendance for six hours or more in a day, play outdoors for at least two hours daily, weather permitting.

Children will have two-hour of outdoor programming daily except during inclement weather which is defined as temperatures below -15 degrees Celsius (actual temperature or due to wind chill), temperatures higher than 30 degrees Celsius, or at the discretion of the Director, heavy rain/blizzard, sleet/hail, heavy winds or as indicated by posted humidex warnings, wind chill or other severe weather warnings (such as smog alert or heat alert).

If outdoor play is not possible due to inclement weather conditions as described above, an inside alternate gross motor play activity will take place.

Please ensure that adequate clothing is available so that your child can participate comfortably in all outdoor activities.

For sun safety, BMLC will adhere to Toronto Public Health guidelines which stipulate precautions that caregivers can take to protect children from overexposure to sun. The following precautions are in place at BMLC:

- Sun block will be applied to children prior to their time outdoors
- Children will be provided with water to drink during their time outdoors
- While outdoors, shaded areas of play will be provided for the children

21. Field Trips

The children may go for walks in the local community. These excursions are considered part of the daily program and will not include motor transportation. No private vehicles, other than the case of a parent/guardian transporting his/her own child, will be used for transportation of any child in any program provided by the Centre. An authorization form, in the registration package, acknowledges parental permission for a child to leave the premises for neighbourhood walks and visits to local parks.

On field trips where transportation is required, parents will be notified in advance as to the details of the scheduled field trip excursion and written parental authorization forms will be distributed and must be signed and returned to BMLC in order for your child to participate. Parents are encouraged to accompany his/her child on field trips.

During all trips and walks, the individual ratios of each program will be maintained for all children.

22. Sanitary Practices

BMLC is responsible to support the health and wellbeing of children, comply with health related requirements and reduce illness spreading from person to person, and respond to any health problems that may arise. By ensuring that all parents and staff strictly follow our health policies, we are ensuring the best possible environment for each child. The employees of Blossoming Minds Learning Centre shall abide by the regulations set out by Toronto Public Health and The Child Care and Early Years Act.

Cleaning Instructions and Procedures are posted where necessary, and communicated appropriately to all staff. Staff members should understand the importance of illness prevention in day-to-day practices. These practices include proper hand washing, diapering, and toileting and food preparation. These practices will limit the spread of bacteria and viruses and will promote a healthy child care environment.

General Hygiene

Blossoming Minds Learning Centre will make every effort to ensure that your children are kept clean during the day. The children will wash their hands and face before and after meals, and as needed. Children in diapers will be changed regularly and as needed.

You are asked to keep your child's cubby well stocked with spare clothing, so that staff may change your child as needed. **Please label your child's clothing**. Clothing which becomes soiled during the day will be placed in a plastic bag in the cubby. Parents are to ensure that it is taken home each evening.

In the event that the child needs to be changed, and no spare clothing is available, the staff will contact the parent, and the parent may be asked to pick up the child.

Parents are encouraged to bring their child to the Centre in clean form. In the event that the general cleanliness and hygiene of a child is in question, staff will inform the program Supervisor or Director, who may contact the parents, or in extreme cases, the Children's Aid Society.

Linen and blankets are laundered weekly, or as needed, at the Centre.

A conscious effort must be made to ensure that personal items are not shared.

Staff and parents monitor that children's hats, coats etc. are stored separately and that the hook or cubby used for storage of these items are clearly labeled with the child's name.

Hazard Mitigation

BMLC ensures that all hazards, ie bleach, oxivir TB, Purexall, laundry soap, etc. is kept out of reach of children and/or locked away at all times.

23. Smoking

No person shall smoke or vape anywhere in BMLC , including the playground or anywhere on BMLC property, whether children are present or not.

24. Booster Seats & Child Restraint for Vehicles

If in an emergency situation a child is required to be transported from the centre in a taxi, when possible staff will secure the child using an age and size appropriate booster or car seat.

25. Volunteers & Student Placements

BMLC may have volunteers and/or students working within the organization along with the staff throughout the year. At all times, volunteers and placement students must be under the direction and supervision of BMLC staff unless the student is also an employee of BMLC who is allowed to be alone with children.

Every child who is in attendance at BMLC must be supervised by an adult (must be 18 years of age or older) at all times. **No child or children will be supervised by someone who is not an employee of BMLC.** Students who are not employees, and/or volunteers may not be left alone with any child or group of children at any time. The only exception is if the parent of a child is also a volunteer then they may be alone but with only their own child. Volunteers are not considered or counted in staffing ratios.

Only employees over the age of 18 of BMLC will have direct unsupervised access to children.

26. Parent Concerns & Issues

Policy

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our child care centre and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing with our program. As supported by our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, child care providers and staff, and foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children. Our staff are available to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction.

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by BMLC and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties and as quickly as possible.

Issues/concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally, or in writing upon request. The level of detail provided to the parent/guardian will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within 2 business day(s). The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

Investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial and respectful to parties involved.

Confidentiality

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff, students and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society).

Conduct

BMLC maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated from any party.

If at any point a parent/guardian, provider or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the supervisor and/or licensee.

Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a child

Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, is required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact the Toronto Children's Aid Society (CAS) directly. Their phone number is (416) 924-4640.

Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to CAS as per the “Duty to Report” requirement under the Child and Family Services Act.

For more information, visit
http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaid/reportingabuse/index.aspx

Procedures

<table>
<tr><th>Nature of Issue or Concern</th><th>Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:</th><th>Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:</th></tr>
<tr><td>Program Room-Related

E.g: schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.</td><td>Raise the issue or concern to

The classroom staff directly, Director, Supervisor, or Administration</td><td rowspan="4">Address the Issue/concern at the time it is raised

-or-

Arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within 2 business days.

Document the issues/concerns in detail. Documentation should include:

● The date and time the issue/concern was received
● The name of the person who received the issue/concern
● The name of the person reporting the issue/concern
● The details of the issue/concern
● Any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral

Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.

Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within 2 business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing.

Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.</td></tr>
<tr><td>General, Centre or Operations Related

E.g: child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.</td><td>Raise the issue or concern to

The Director, Supervisor, or Administration</td></tr>
<tr><td>Staff, Duty parent, Director, Supervisor, or Administration Related</td><td>Raise the issue or concern to

The individual directly, Director, Supervisor, or Administration

All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, duty parents, etc. that puts a child’s health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Student and Volunteer-Related</td><td>Raise the issue or concern to

The staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student, Director, Supervisor, or Administration

All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that puts a child’s health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</td></tr>
</table>

Escalation of Issues or Concerns

Where parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may escalate the issue or concern verbally or in writing to the Ministry of Education.

Issues/concerns related to compliance with requirements set out in the *Child Care and Early Years Act., 2014* and Ontario Regulation 137/15 should be reported to the Ministry of Education's Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch.

Issues/concerns may also be reported to other relevant regulatory bodies (e.g. local public health department, police department, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Labour, fire department, College of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario College of Teachers, College of Social Workers etc.) where appropriate.

Contacts

Krista Dahlgren or Maggie Moser

info@blossoming.ca

416-546-9830

Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care Help Desk

childcareontario@ontario.ca

1-877-510-5333

27. Biting

Biting incidents can occur among young children in childcare centres during play or if they become upset. Most bites do not break the skin and are unlikely to cause infection. In addition, the risk of Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C or HIV transmission in childcare centres is extremely low.

Policy

Blossoming Minds is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for children, families, and staff. Blossoming Minds will take every reasonable precaution to prevent biting from occurring. Biting is a common, age-appropriate behaviour of infants and toddlers.

This policy acts as a guide and all biting incidents are considered serious and will be assessed on an individual basis.

Procedure

If the skin was not broken:

- Clean the wound with soap and water, apply a cold compress, and comfort the child who was bitten
- An accident report will be completed without any identifying information (of the biter)
- Parents of the child who bit will be notified (verbal communication or through the Lillio app)

If the skin was broken:

- Observe both children to see if there is any blood involved
- If there is blood, allow the wound to bleed gently without squeezing
- Clean the wound carefully with soap and water, and apply first aid as necessary
- Contact the parents/guardians of those involved in the incident,preferably within two hours of the occurrence and advise them to contact their health care provider regarding post-exposure advice.
- If either child has Hepatitis B, C, or HIV report the incident to Toronto Public Health as soon as possible and ensure confidentiality of the children and parents is respected
- An accident report will be completed for the child who was bitten without any identifying information of the biter

Additional Information

- Staff will work with both children and families to implement strategies to reduce the likelihood of further biting incidents. (this may include books, tips, shadowing etc.)
- If a pattern of biting incidents develops, the Supervisor will meet with the staff and families to discuss further strategies. Continued biting, non age-appropriate, could result in dismissal.

- If biting occurs in the preschool or kindergarten programs, the same guidelines as above apply. However, an incident report will be written and provided to the parent of the child who bit and will be kept in the child's file.
- Privacy and confidentiality of all children and families are to be always maintained.

28. Appendix A

Program Statement

Influenced by the Reggio Emilia school of thought, we believe that there are three teachers of our children: the parent, the teacher and the environment.

The Parent Parent participation in the life of the school is an essential component of the educational experience. Families are actively involved in meetings, school activities and events, such as student-led conferences or education seminars that cover topics on early literacy, play and social skills.

Collaboration: Children, teachers, families, and the community need to work together. Group work is essential in advancing cognitive development. Children are encouraged to dialogue, critique, compare, negotiate, hypothesize, and problem solve through group work. Collaboration among home, school and the community to support the learning of the child is highly emphasized.

The Concept of the Capable Child: Each child is understood to be competent, inventive, and full of ideas and they deserve our respect as the unique individual they are. We are committed to providing child-initiated and adult supported experiences.

Environment as Teacher: Children should learn by interacting with the world around them. Blossoming Minds Learning Centre is a friendly and inviting learning place. Classrooms reflect the natural environment. The walls are white or soft yellow to make the classroom a calm environment that allows the focus to be on the documentation of the children's learning processes. Both the indoors and the outdoors are used as learning spaces, incorporating active play, rest, and quiet time into the day.

GOALS AND APPROACHES:

We strive to provide an environment which:

- Promotes the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children: Some procedures in place at BMLC include safe supervision of children at all times; child protection procedures and training; sanitation and disinfection procedures; and catered meals provided by Real Food for Real Kids following the Canada Food Guide; communicable disease prevention; emergency procedures; Standard First Aid and CPR training for all staff
- Support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, child care providers and staff. BMLC educators build a foundation of trust with children by being available, responsive, and caring. Focus on a respectful and inclusive environment is a priority for BMLC. We recognize the individual needs of the children receiving care. We recognize the individual needs of families and appreciate their input
- Encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate: BMLC staff role model respectful and inclusive behavior; small group experiences with adult attention help support the child’s learning of self-regulation and problem solving for conflict resolution; flexibility of programming allows staff to

respond to the needs of the child in the moment; Staff encourage positive interaction between staff, child and families

- Foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry: program plans are flexible and provide opportunities for the learning environment to support the interests of the children; we provide a wide variety and ample selection of toys, equipment and materials to expand the children's experiences and development; we strive to provide open ended experiences based on the Reggio philosophy,; we provide numerous opportunities for families to learn about and understand our Reggio approach (provocations set up in the "nook" in the hall for children and parents to experience together, books displays, etc.)
- Provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences: following the lead of the child our educators create a learning environment which fosters the child's sense of competence and creativity; the learning environment is set up with a wide variety of activities in a thoughtful manner based on the observed interests of the children, as well as designed to expand their knowledge, and creating new interests. Observations are shared with families on an ongoing basis
- Plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported: BMLC creates a homelike environment with natural materials and calm colours; play is allowed to expand from one area to another as children are free to explore different areas of learning; Staff model inclusive behavior so that all children feel accepted and celebrated
- Incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, into the day, and give consideration to the individual needs of the children (based on observations and feedback from families) receiving child care: BMLC educators plan a daily schedule which incorporates indoor and outdoor learning which meets the needs of the children, taking into account the age, developmental needs and levels, and energy levels and interests of the children; outdoor play continues in all types of weather conditions unless there is a weather watch warning in effect; programming is flexible to meet the varied needs of individual children- for example, quiet activities are provided for children who do not wish to nap during a scheduled nap time
- Foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children: parents and staff communicate on a daily basis through verbal and written reports of documentation reflections and observations
- Involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and staff: BMLC is located within a very close knit community. We participate in community activities (eg. East Lynn Farmers Market), create relationships with our local schools' principals and teachers, network within our community and seek out learning opportunities for our children(eg. Story time at our local library, visits to the art store on our block, etc.)
- Support staff in continuous professional learning: Staff are guided through ongoing feedback and support from their supervisor; regular staff meetings, on-site sessions with consultants (e.g. Reggio methods, First Aid); materials provided for staff for self-guided learning; and staff are supported in attending professional development opportunities
- In order to document and review the effectiveness of our goals, BMLC encourages all of its staff to engage in reflective practice. We incorporate feedback from families as part of this process. Goals are reviewed though weekly discussion among educators in program

planning and staff meetings in which we examine how well we are meeting our goals. Documentation is ongoing