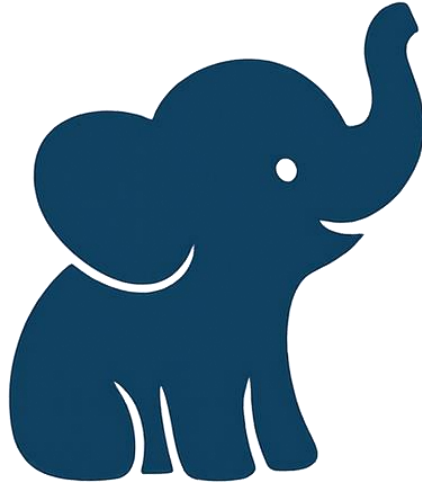




BRILLIANT KIDS

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Nurturing Bright Minds Into Big Futures

Family Handbook

Mission Statement

At Brilliant Kids Child Development, we aim to provide affordable quality care in a safe and healthy childcare setting where children are free to explore, learn, grow, and seek answers, while giving parents a peace of mind. Brilliant Kids Child Development focuses on the emotional, social, physical, and intellectual development of each individual child, while providing children with an educational environment suited to fit their individual needs.

Philosophy Statement

At Brilliant Kids Child Development, we are committed to allowing sufficient room for children to be their unique individual selves in a comfortable learning environment, while they are being prepared for the transition from home to childcare to school and beyond. Children will gain essential knowledge that teaches them self-respect and to also respect others. Adequate space is available within the facility for independence of self-expression within our safe and effective program setting, while also nurturing children's growth. Our fun and engaging developmentally appropriate practices provide children with the ability to excel in early childhood education and promote favorable learning and development outcomes expected by parents. Within our program we provide children with the freedom of self-expression; we believe this action to be effective in assisting children with developing critical problem-solving skills they will need to apply throughout life, therefore, each child is expected at their own rate, to develop confidence in helping and being kind to one another inside and outside the classroom. We are committed to the advancement of every child, while also striving to heighten intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development collectively, but most important individually.

Non-Discrimination Policy

We are committed to providing an inclusive, welcoming, and respectful environment for all children, families, and staff. We do not discriminate based on race, color, religion, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, marital status, family structure, or any other characteristic protected by law.

We believe that every child has the right to learn, play, and grow in a safe and supportive environment. All children and families will be treated with dignity and respect, and opportunities for participation in all center activities, programs, and services will be made available equitably.

Reasonable accommodations will be provided to ensure full access and participation for children with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and applicable state laws. Our staff members receive ongoing training on inclusion, cultural responsiveness, and anti-bias education to maintain a learning environment that honors diversity and fosters belonging for every child.

Staff Qualifications

we recognize that high-quality care begins with highly qualified, nurturing, and well-trained educators. All staff members are carefully selected based on their education, experience, and dedication to providing a safe, developmentally appropriate, and enriching environment for young children.

Lead Teachers:

Lead teachers must possess, at minimum, a **North Carolina Early Childhood Credential (ECC)** or higher degree in Early Childhood Education or a related field. Lead teachers are responsible for planning, implementing, and assessing classroom activities in alignment with the NC Foundations for Early Learning and Development.

Assistant Teachers and Support Staff:

Assistant teachers and other classroom staff must demonstrate a genuine interest in working with young children and a willingness to pursue continuing education in child development, classroom management, and best practices for early learning.

Required Certifications (All Staff):

All staff members are required to maintain current certifications in the following areas:

- **CPR and First Aid** (appropriate to the ages served)
- **ITS-SIDS (Infant/Toddler Safe Sleep)** training, if caring for children under 12 months
- **Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect (RRCAN)**
- **Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR)**
- **Bloodborne Pathogens** training
- **Medication Administration** (if applicable to assigned duties)

In addition, all staff must successfully complete a **criminal background check**, **health assessment**, and **TB screening** before beginning employment, as required by the North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE).

Brilliant Kids Child Development is committed to ongoing professional growth. Each staff member participates in **annual continuing education** to remain informed of current best practices in early childhood care, development, inclusion, and safety.

Staff-to-Child Ratios & Supervision Policy

We maintain staffing ratios and supervision practices that meet or exceed the requirements set by the **North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE)** to ensure the safety, well-being, and individualized attention of every child in our care.

Supervision Philosophy:

Children are to be always supervised indoors, outdoors, and during transitions, by sight and sound. Staff members are expected to maintain active supervision, meaning they position themselves strategically, engage with children directly, and remain alert and responsive to their needs. No child will ever be left unattended under any circumstance.

Hours and Days of Operation

Brilliant Kids Child Development is open **Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.**

Our daily schedule is designed to support working families while providing children with a consistent, structured, and nurturing environment.

Late Pick-Up Policy:

Children must be picked up by **6:00 p.m.** each day. A late fee will be charged for any child remaining after closing time. Repeated late pick-ups may result in a review of enrollment status.

Holiday & Provider Closures

The center will be closed on designated holidays and professional development days as outlined in the counties school calendar. In the event of inclement weather or emergencies, closure or delayed opening information will be communicated via text, email, and our social media platforms.

Enrollment

We welcome children of all backgrounds and abilities, ages **6 weeks through 8 years**, on a space-available basis. Enrollment is open year-round and will not be restricted based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, disability, or family structure.

To enroll a child, families must complete all required registration forms, including:

- **Enrollment Agreement**
- **Child Information & Emergency Contact Form**
- **Medical and Immunization Records** (updated and signed by a licensed physician)
- **Authorization for Emergency Medical Care**
- **Parent Handbook Acknowledgment Form**
- **Developmental History and Intake Form**

A **non-refundable registration fee** is due at the time of enrollment to reserve your child's space. Enrollment is confirmed once all required documentation and fees have been received and approved by the Center Director.

Waitlist Policy:

If no space is currently available, families may choose to be placed on the waiting list. Priority is given in the following order:

1. Currently enrolled families requesting schedule changes or additional days
2. Siblings of currently enrolled children
3. New families based on date of application submission

Withdrawal:

A **two-week written notice** is required for withdrawal from the program. Tuition and fees will continue to be charged through the notice period, whether the child attends. Failure to provide written notice will result in forfeiture of the deposit.

Re-enrollment:

Families wishing to re-enroll after withdrawal may do so based on availability and will be required to complete new paperwork and pay the registration fee.

Changes in Enrollment:

Any changes to a child's schedule, emergency contact information, or other details must be submitted in writing to the Director. Changes will take effect once approved and confirmed in writing.

Equal Opportunity Statement:

Brilliant Kids Child Development provides equal access to services and programs for all families and complies fully with federal, state, and local non-discrimination laws and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Transitions

We understand that transitions, whether between activities, classrooms, or developmental stages are significant moments in a child's growth. Our goal is to ensure each transition is

handled with sensitivity, communication, and consistency so that every child feels secure and supported throughout the process.

Daily Transitions:

Children experience multiple small transitions during the day (e.g., from playtime to circle time, meals, or outdoor play). Teachers prepare children for each transition using clear verbal cues, visual prompts, and songs to help them anticipate changes and adjust smoothly. Staff members maintain a calm and organized environment to minimize stress during these times.

Classroom Transitions (Age or Developmental Level):

When a child is ready to move to the next classroom based on **age, developmental milestones, and available space**, teachers and administrators will:

- Communicate with families **at least two weeks in advance** of the planned transition.
- Arrange **short visits** to the new classroom to help the child become familiar with new teachers, peers, and routines.
- Share information between current and future teachers about the child's developmental progress, learning style, and any special accommodations.
- Gradually increase the child's time in the new classroom to ensure a positive adjustment.

Transitions are based on each child's **individual readiness**, not just age. The final decision will be made collaboratively by teachers, the Center Director, and parents.

Transitions into and out of the Program:

For new children entering the program, families are encouraged to schedule an **orientation visit** before the first day of attendance. This allows the child to meet teachers, explore the classroom, and begin forming connections.

When a child is preparing to leave the program (e.g., entering kindergarten or moving away), teachers will help the child reflect, celebrate, and say goodbye in a positive, supportive way.

Staff Transitions:

We recognize that consistency of caregivers is critical to a child's sense of trust and security. If staffing changes occur, families will be notified in advance whenever possible, and efforts will be made to ensure a smooth introduction to new staff members.

Our Goal:

Brilliant Kids Child Development is dedicated to making every transition, big or small a positive, growth-centered experience that honors the child's emotional well-being and sense of belonging.

Tuition Fees and Payment Policy

Brilliant Kids Child Development is a privately owned and operated early learning center. Tuition and fees are used to support high-quality programming, qualified staff, nutritious meals, and safe, developmentally appropriate learning environments for all children.

Tuition Rates:

Tuition rates are established based on age group, classroom placement, and schedule (full-time or part-time). Current tuition rates are provided upon enrollment and are reviewed annually. Families will receive a **30-day written notice** prior to any rate change.

Payment Schedule:

Tuition is due **each Monday morning** (or the first scheduled day of attendance for the week) unless otherwise arranged in writing. Payments may be made weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly, depending on the family's chosen payment plan.

Accepted forms of payment include cash, check, money order, or electronic transfer (if available).

Late Payments:

Tuition not received by **Wednesday at 6:00 p.m.** of the payment week is considered late and subject to a **late fee of \$10 per day**.

If an account becomes more than **two weeks in arrears**, the child's enrollment may be temporarily suspended or terminated until the balance is paid in full or a written payment plan is approved by the Director.

Registration and Other Fees:

- **Registration Fee:** A non-refundable annual registration fee is required at the time of enrollment and each subsequent year to reserve a child's spot.
- **Late Pick-Up Fee:** Families arriving after **6:00 p.m.** will be charged a **late fee of \$1 per minute per child**. Repeated late pick-ups may result in termination of enrollment.
- **Returned Payment Fee:** A **\$35 fee** will be charged for any returned checks or declined electronic transactions. After two returned payments, the account will be placed on **money order or electronic payment only** status.
- **Special Event or Field Trip Fees:** Occasionally, additional fees may apply for optional events, field trips, or enrichment activities. These will always be communicated in advance.

Absences and Holidays:

Tuition is **not prorated or refunded** for absences, holidays, weather-related closures, or temporary illnesses. Your child's tuition secures their classroom space and staffing, regardless of attendance.

In cases of extended illness or family emergencies, the Director may review special circumstances individually.

Drop Off Policy

To ensure every child's safety and help the day begin and end smoothly, all families are expected to follow Brilliant Kids Child Development's arrival and departure procedures. Consistency builds trust, supports classroom flow, and helps children transition confidently between home and school.

Arrival Time:

- The center opens at **6:30 a.m.** each weekday.
- Children must be signed in **no earlier than 6:30 a.m.** and should arrive no later than **9:00 a.m.** unless prior arrangements are made with the Director.
- Late arrivals disrupt the morning routine and planned learning experiences. Families arriving after **9:00 a.m.** may be asked to wait until an appropriate transition time to minimize classroom disruption.
- A parent or authorized guardian must escort the child into the building and sign them in using the designated system (digital or paper). Children **may not** be dropped off at the door or left unattended.

Departure Time:

- The center closes promptly at **6:00 p.m.** All children must be picked up by this time.
- Parents or authorized guardians must sign their child out before leaving the premises.
- Children will only be released to individuals listed on the **authorized pick-up form**. Any new or temporary pick-up arrangements must be provided **in writing** and approved by the Director.
- Staff will request photo identification for anyone not familiar to them.
- Late pick-ups will result in a **\$1 per minute per child** late fee. Repeated late pick-ups may result in a review of enrollment status.

Daily Health Check:

Each morning, staff conduct a brief health screening as part of arrival. Any signs of illness or communicable conditions may require the child to remain home in accordance with the center's Health Policy.

Smooth Transitions:

We encourage brief, positive good-byes. Prolonged separations can increase anxiety for young children. Teachers are available to assist with comforting and redirecting your child into morning activities when needed.

Authorized Pick-Up:

Only individuals designated by the parent or guardian on the **Emergency Contact and Release Form** may pick up a child. Written authorization is required for any additions or temporary changes. Children will **not** be released to anyone under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or to anyone under the age of 16.

Late Pick-Up Protocol:

If a child has not been picked up by 6:00 p.m. and parents or emergency contacts cannot be reached, the staff will follow emergency procedures as outlined in the center's licensing regulations, which may include contacting local authorities after one hour.

Schedules and Routines

Our daily schedules are designed to provide children with a balance of structure and flexibility. Consistent routines help children feel safe, confident, and in control of their environment while allowing for creativity, exploration, and individual needs.

Purpose of Daily Routines:

A predictable schedule supports children's social-emotional security and helps them understand what to expect throughout the day. Each classroom follows a daily routine that includes opportunities for active play, quiet reflection, learning centers, meals, rest, and outdoor exploration. Teachers adapt schedules as needed to reflect the ages, abilities, and developmental needs of the children in their care.

Infant Routines:

Infants follow individualized schedules based on their feeding, sleeping, and developmental needs. Teachers communicate daily with families to ensure routines at home and in the center are consistent and responsive.

Toddler and Preschool Routines:

Toddlers and preschoolers participate in structured group activities balanced with choice-based play. Routines encourage independence, language development, and social cooperation. Transitions between activities are gradual and supported with songs, cues, and redirection.

Outdoor Play:

Children engage in outdoor activities twice daily (weather permitting). Outdoor play supports gross motor development, imagination, and sensory learning. In cases of extreme heat, cold, or inclement weather, children will engage in indoor gross motor activities.

Flexibility:

While consistency is key, teachers adjust routines as needed for special events, classroom projects, or the interests of the children. We believe learning happens best when curiosity and joy lead the day.

Meals and Nutrition

We believe that healthy eating habits begin in early childhood. We are committed to providing nutritious, balanced meals and snacks that fuel children's growth, learning, and energy throughout the day.

Meal Service:

The center provides **breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack** daily. All meals meet or exceed the **USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)** nutritional guidelines. Menus are planned to include a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, dairy, and protein sources. Water is always available to children throughout the day.

Meal Times:

- **Breakfast:** As children arrive.
- **Lunch:** 11:30 a.m.
- **Afternoon Snack:** 2:30 p.m.

Meal times are viewed as opportunities for learning, socialization, and developing self-help skills. Teachers sit with children, model positive eating behaviors, and encourage conversation and manners during meals.

Family-Provided Meals:

If a family chooses or is required to provide meals due to dietary, religious, or medical reasons, the food must meet CACFP standards and be labeled with the child's full name and date. Per DCDEE guidelines, all food from home must arrive ready to serve. Refrigeration or heating is available only when medically necessary and documented by a physician.

Food Allergies and Dietary Restrictions:

Parents must notify the center of any **food allergies or special dietary needs** in writing. A **Medical Action Plan** and documentation from the child's physician must be on file for any food-related allergy or restriction. Teachers will post allergy alerts in the classroom and kitchen area to ensure safe food handling for all children.

Prohibited Foods:

To ensure safety and compliance with nutrition standards, the following items are not permitted:

- Candy, gum, or soda
- Fast food or restaurant meals
- High-sugar or highly processed snacks
- Food that poses a choking hazard (e.g., whole grapes, hard candy, popcorn)

Celebrations and Special Events:

Families are welcome to celebrate birthdays or special occasions at the center. All food

items brought for group sharing must be **store-bought, labeled, and sealed** in their original packaging to comply with health regulations. Non-food celebrations (stickers, books, or small trinkets) are encouraged as healthy alternatives.

Infant Feeding:

Infant feeding schedules are individualized according to each baby's needs. Families must supply **formula, breast milk, and baby food** clearly labeled with the infant's full name and date. Bottles must be pre-mixed and ready to serve. Staff follow strict sanitation and safe storage procedures.

Nutrition Education:

Brilliant Kids Child Development integrates nutrition awareness into the curriculum by teaching children about healthy food choices, gardening, and where food comes from in developmentally appropriate ways.

Discipline Policy

We believe that guidance is a process of teaching children to manage their feelings, make positive choices, and develop respect for themselves and others. Our approach to discipline is **positive, proactive, and developmentally appropriate**, focusing on redirection, modeling, and problem-solving rather than punishment.

Philosophy of Guidance:

We view challenging behavior as an opportunity for teaching. Children learn best when they feel safe, understood, and respected. Our staff uses encouragement, empathy, and consistent expectations to help children build self-control and confidence in making responsible decisions.

Guidance Techniques Used:

Teachers and staff members use the following strategies to guide behavior:

- Establishing **clear, consistent, and age-appropriate expectations**
- Offering **choices** to promote independence and decision-making
- Using **positive reinforcement** to encourage desired behaviors
- Redirecting inappropriate behavior toward acceptable alternatives
- Helping children **name and express their emotions** appropriately
- Modeling problem-solving, empathy, and cooperation
- Providing **logical and natural consequences** that relate directly to behavior
- Using calm-down techniques, breathing, or quiet spaces to help children self-regulate

Prohibited Practices:

Brilliant Kids Child Development maintains a zero-tolerance policy for any form of corporal punishment or inappropriate discipline. Staff will **never**:

- Use physical punishment such as spanking, shaking, hitting, or pinching
- Yell, shame, ridicule, threaten, or humiliate a child
- Withhold food, rest, or bathroom privileges as punishment
- Isolate a child from supervision
- Allow one child to discipline another

Behavior Support and Intervention:

If a child exhibit repeated challenging behaviors that disrupt learning or safety, the teacher and Director will:

1. Observe and document behaviors to identify possible triggers or patterns.
2. Communicate with the family to share observations and develop consistent strategies between home and school.
3. Implement individualized supports or positive behavior plans, as needed.
4. If concerns persist, collaborate with early intervention specialists, behavioral consultants, or other appropriate professionals (with parental consent).

Our goal is to **work in partnership with families** to help children develop social-emotional skills, resilience, and self-regulation, not to punish or exclude.

Clothing

Children learn best when they can move, explore, and play freely. Please dress your child in **comfortable, weather-appropriate clothing** that can get messy during art, outdoor play, and sensory activities.

- Closed-toe shoes with rubber soles are required for safety.
- Each child must have a **complete change of clothing** (including socks and underwear) always kept at the center.
- Label all clothing, jackets, blankets, and personal items with your child's full name.
- Seasonal clothing should be updated as the weather changes.

The center is not responsible for lost or unmarked items.

Toilet Training

Toilet training is a natural developmental process that happens at each child's individual pace. Teachers and families work together to ensure consistency between home and school.

- Children should show signs of readiness such as staying dry, communicating needs, and showing interest in the toilet.

- Parents must provide an adequate supply of **training pants, pull-ups, wipes, and extra clothing** during this phase.
- Teachers will never force a child to use the toilet or punish for accidents.
- Positive encouragement and patience are always used.

Toys From Home

To prevent loss and maintain focus on classroom learning, toys from home should remain at home. The center provides age-appropriate materials that encourage creativity and social development.

Exceptions include:

- **Comfort items** (blanket, small stuffed animal) for nap time.
 - **Show and Tell** days, as designated by the teacher.
- Please label any items brought from home and understand the center cannot be responsible for damage or loss.

Parent Participation & Involvement Plan

We view parents as essential partners in their child's education. Family involvement strengthens children's success and builds a supportive community.

Opportunities for involvement include:

- Classroom volunteer days and special events
- Family conferences and goal-setting meetings
- Curriculum projects or sharing special skills or cultural traditions
- Family nights and parent workshops

Parents are welcome to visit the center at any time during operating hours. For the safety of all children, all visitors must **sign in at the front desk** and follow confidentiality and supervision policies.

Termination

Brilliant Kids Child Development reserves the right to terminate enrollment if:

- Tuition remains unpaid beyond two weeks.
- A family repeatedly violates center policies.
- The child's needs exceed the program's ability to provide safe, appropriate care.
- Safety of the child or others is at risk.

Prior to termination, staff and administration will make every effort to work with families to resolve issues and offer resources or referrals as appropriate.

Emergency Contacts

Every family must maintain at least **two emergency contacts** other than parents/guardians who can pick up the child in case of emergency.

All contact information must remain current. Written updates are required whenever phone numbers, addresses, or authorized pick-up persons change.

Sick Policy

To protect the health of all children and staff, sick children may not attend the center. Children must stay home if they have:

- Fever of 100.4°F or higher
- Vomiting or diarrhea within the last 24 hours
- Undiagnosed rash, contagious illness, or eye infection
- Persistent coughing, lethargy, or signs of being unwell

Children may return after being **symptom-free for 24 hours without medication** or with a **doctor's note** clearing them to return. If a child becomes ill during the day, parents will be called to pick up the child within **two hours** of notification.

Medication Policies

Medications will only be administered with a **completed Medication Authorization Form** signed by a parent and physician (if required).

- All medications must be in the original container with the **child's name, dosage, and expiration date** clearly labeled.
- Staff will not administer the first dose of a new medication at the center.
- Over-the-counter products such as diaper cream or sunscreen require written parental permission.
- Staff members trained in medication administration will record all doses given.

Bottles, Cups & Diapers/Pull-Ups

Families of infants and toddlers must provide daily supplies labeled with the child's full name:

- **Bottles** must be pre-mixed and dated.
- **Sippy cups** and personal feeding items must be sanitized daily.
- **Diapers, pull-ups, and wipes** must be supplied and replenished regularly.
- Teachers will notify parents when supplies are low.

All bottles and feeding materials will be handled in accordance with DCDEE sanitation and safe storage guidelines.

Updating Information

Families are required to **immediately update** any changes in:

- Contact numbers or addresses
- Employment information
- Emergency contacts
- Medical information or allergies
- Authorized pick-up persons

Accurate records are vital for your child's safety and for maintaining compliance with state regulations.

Reporting Child Abuse & Maltreatment Policy

All staff at Brilliant Kids Child Development are **mandated reporters** under North Carolina law.

If any staff member has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is being abused, neglected, or maltreated, they are legally required to report it to the **Department of Social Services (DSS)** immediately.

Reports are made confidentially and without fear of retaliation.

Our duty is to **protect children and support families** by partnering with community resources when concerns arise.

Staff receive annual training in recognizing and reporting child abuse and neglect as part of our ongoing professional development.