

a bright beginning

school for young children

Parent Handbook

WHO WE ARE

A Bright Beginning has been providing quality care and education for local families since 1998.

OUR VISION

At A Bright Beginning, we believe that respect for the child is the cornerstone on which all other principles rest. Building relationships with children through caring, warm, and sensitive interactions allows them to feel secure. We focus on building self-esteem through positive re-enforcement and encouraging independence skills. We value the importance of getting to know each individual child and using their interests and learning styles to design the physical environment as well as the daily age-appropriate curriculum. Children are given the opportunity to play and explore in classrooms designed to foster growth and learning. Open parent communication is an integral part of our program. An active partnership between home and school is necessary to support optimum emotional and physical growth and development.

As a team, we are accountable to each other; we listen, we are proactive, we share ideas, we grow together. We communicate with honesty, integrity, and courage.

Our commitment to children:

- To provide a warm, loving, safe, home-like environment.
- To provide creative and stimulating learning experiences, both spontaneous and structured, which will enhance growth and development.
- To offer a format designed to maintain and strengthen natural curiosity and enthusiasm for learning.

Our commitment to parents:

- To offer flexible hours of operation and part-time care to help parents balance the demands of work and family.
- To show respect to parents and support their decisions regarding the care of their children.
- To provide parents with the opportunity to have an active role in the school and a cooperative relationship with the staff.
- To extend additional resources of early childhood professionals who will serve to enhance and expand parent/child relationships by providing education and information about child development and parenting strategies.

Curriculum

A play-based curriculum, as outlined in the Massachusetts Infant Toddler and Preschool Guidelines, emphasizes learning through hands-on exploration, social interaction, and imaginative play. This approach recognizes that young children learn best when actively engaged in meaningful experiences. Please see the links to the guidelines below.

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/massachusetts-early-learning-guidelines-for-infants-and-toddlers/download>

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/preschool-and-kindergarten-standards-in-social-emotional-development-and-approaches-to-play-and-learning>

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/guidelines-for-preschool-learning-experiences>

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/pre-k-science-technology-and-engineering-standards>

1. **Child-Directed Learning:** Children are encouraged to follow their interests and initiate their own play activities. Educators facilitate this by providing a stimulating environment with a variety of materials and opportunities for exploration.
2. **Learning through Play:** Play is seen as the primary vehicle for learning across all developmental domains, including cognitive, social-emotional, language, and physical development. Through play, children develop problem-solving skills, creativity, and self-regulation.
3. **Scaffolding and Support:** Educators offer guidance and support to enhance children's play experiences. They observe children's interests and abilities, provide appropriate materials, ask open-ended questions, and scaffold learning by building on children's current skills and knowledge.

4. **Social Interaction:** Play-based curriculum encourages peer interaction and collaboration. Children learn important social skills such as sharing, taking turns, and resolving conflicts through play with their peers.
5. **Incorporating the Environment:** The learning environment is carefully designed to promote exploration and discovery. It includes open-ended materials, natural elements, and flexible spaces that can be adapted to children's interests and needs.
6. **Integration of Content Areas:** Play-based learning integrates various content areas such as math, science, literacy, and the arts into meaningful play experiences. For example, children might explore mathematical concepts through building blocks, conduct science experiments on the sensory table, or develop language skills through dramatic play.
7. **Individualized Learning:** The curriculum respects each child's unique developmental trajectory and learning style. Educators observe children closely, document their progress, and adjust the curriculum to meet individual needs and interests.

Goals and Objectives

For the Child:

- To provide developmentally appropriate activities and environments
- To plan the curriculum around the strengths and interests of the children
- To individualize the program to meet the needs of each and every child
- To enhance self-esteem through positive reinforcement
- To encourage independence skills
- To develop skills in the areas of social/emotional, physical and cognitive
- To provide a safe, warm, homelike environment
- To provide consistency

For the Parents:

- To keep the communication open
- To provide you with written and verbal information daily
- To keep you informed in Early Childhood practices
- To keep you informed on your child's development
- To form a partnership with you

For the Community:

- To meet the community's needs for an early childhood education facility
- To contribute to the growth and development of future citizens
- To provide an environment that exhibit anti-bias attitudes and beliefs

Characteristics of children served: 7.06 (1) Non-Discrimination

A Bright Beginning services all children between the ages of 4 weeks and 7 years.

We provide service to children and their families regardless of race, religion, cultural heritage, political beliefs, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or marital status.

Admission Procedures

Any parent interested in enrolling their child should first call to make an appointment with the Director. At the scheduled meeting, parents will be provided with a statement of purpose, services provided, procedures for parent conferences, visits, and input into the center's policies, procedures relating to children's records, and procedures for emergency care. Parents will then be allowed to visit the classroom. After a short observation, parents will return to the office for any questions they may have. Before leaving, they will be given the forms necessary for admission. The forms must be returned on or before the start of school.

Services Provided

A Bright Beginning is open year-round Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

A Bright Beginning provides Infant, Toddler, Preschool, and After Kindergarten care. The environment is designed to nurture the child's desire to learn, explore and create. Our space and equipment are designed to meet the developmental needs of all children enrolled in our school. The teachers at ABB strive to meet the individual needs of each child including but not limited to stimulating activities, nourishment, and sleep/rest.

Each child is required to bring:

- A lunch from home which must include a thermos or juice box and any utensils necessary, along with an ice pack.
- Formula (breast milk) bottles as well as jars of baby food must be labeled with the child's name. (a freezer is available for labeled and dated breast milk)

For those children in diapers:

- A supply of disposable diapers must be kept in their cubby, children must also bring in one box of disposable wipes per month.
- *(We do not have the facilities to properly clean and store soiled cloth wipes.)*

For those children in the beginning stages of toilet training:

- An ample supply of underwear and clothes, that the children themselves can manipulate, must be kept on hand.

All children at ABB will need an extra set of seasonable appropriate clothes (this should include underwear, if necessary, for their cubbies). Please dress your child in play clothes that can withstand active and sometimes messy play.

The school provides a mid-morning and mid-afternoon snack daily.

7.24 (5) Extended Rest, Quiet Activity or Sleep Period

The length of this period shall be appropriate to the needs of the children. Children shall be allowed the amount of rest, quiet activity (provided if unable to sleep), or sleep needed.

Children in our Infant Rooms

Must bring in a fitted crib sheet and a sleep sack (if applicable) which must be taken home and washed weekly.

Children in our Toddler Rooms

Must bring in a sleep mat or sleeping bag which must be taken home and washed weekly.

Children in our Preschool Program

Must bring a sleeping bag which will be sent home weekly to be washed.

Health Care Management

To protect your child and his/her classmates, it is important that everyone cooperates with the school and adheres to the health policies. Please schedule a doctor's appointment if there are questions regarding the signs and symptoms of illness. A doctor's note regarding suspicious signs or symptoms can help us identify these symptoms if they arise on any other children, and therefore notify families. Unfortunately, ABB does not have space to care for mildly ill children. Children in attendance need to be able to participate in the planned daily schedule. The teachers are able to consult with a physician who is our licensed health care consultant as authorized by the State of Massachusetts. Our health care policies have been developed with the guidelines set forth by the state as well as those established by the physician and director of ABB. When your child is sent home due to illness suspected or confirmed, you will need to fill out the Record of Illness form provided by your child's teacher. This will help clarify the reason(s) for being sent home and conditions for returning

to school. An entire copy of our detailed Health Care Policy is located in the Director's office.

Toilet Training

Parents and the classroom teacher shall meet to discuss expectations, procedures, and methods at the beginning of toilet training.

We like to see readiness signs before going into underwear. (Please ask us for a packet on potty training that we have put together for you.)

We have much to offer in the way of help and support. We will work with the parents to help make this stage as smooth as possible.

In accordance with licensing rules; we will never punish, humiliate or verbally abuse a child for soiling, wetting or not using the toilet. We will allow children to go to the toilet as often as needed. We will not hurry a child in his/her toileting and ensure privacy. We will see that the child washes his/her hands with liquid soap and running water after using the toilet. We will double bag and seal any clothing soiled by any bodily fluids and keep it from other items. We ask that parents keep a complete change of clothing on hand. We also have a school supply of clothes for emergencies.

Exiting the Building and Parking Lot Procedures

Once you have exited the classroom with your child or children, the sole responsibility for the child, and his or her health and safety, becomes the parents. We do not allow the children to go into other classrooms unattended or open any gates/doors that allow them out of the building or play area. We must ask that when you assume responsibility for your child, you also enforce these policies. Once exiting the building with your child or children, please remember that the ABB parking lot is very busy at drop off and pick-up times. Children are never permitted in the parking lot, or on the ramp that leads to the parking lot, unless directly accompanied by a parent or guardian. Please note, you must check in with the teacher to let them know you are leaving the center with your child.

Fee Schedule

A separate tuition schedule is enclosed in your packet.

Toys

Toys from home may not be brought to school. If a child has a special blanket or stuffed animal (please limit one) that they use for naptime, it is OK to be brought to school.

Birthdays

Parents are welcome to send in special treats, please consult with the director beforehand. (Please read labels for ingredients that contain or may contain nut/treenuts).

Keeping in mind the feelings of all the children, an exchange of gifts and invitations must not take place at school.

Snow Days

In the event of a snow day school closure, parents will be notified by email no later than 630am. Also, there will be a message on the school vmail system.

Transportation

ABB does not provide transportation to and from the program. ABB does not participate in field trips.

Attendance

If your child will be absent, please call by 8:30 a.m. and or send a Brightwheel message, so that we know not to expect your child. If your child has an appointment, please notify your child's teacher that he/she will be late. No credit or refund will be given for a child's absence on a scheduled day; this includes illness, weather, holidays, and professional development half days.

Vacation

After being enrolled for one year, families will be given one tuition free vacation week (equal to the number of days you are enrolled per week). Notification of your week must be submitted to the Director at least two weeks in advance.

Parent Involvement

We encourage parents to visit their child's classroom while their child is present. The school has an Open-Door policy. Breast feeding mothers are welcome to come in and feed their children.

Parent Input

Parental input into development of the school's policies and programs is encouraged. Parents are encouraged to ask questions and stay informed of the curriculum and special events in the classroom.

Reports to Parents

Conference forms will be distributed every three months for infants (children under 15 months and children with disabilities).

Conferences will be held every six months for children between the ages of 6 weeks and 7 years. Written reports will be available. One copy is for the child's file and one for the parents to keep.

During the conferences the teachers and parents will discuss the child's development and review goals that have been set.

Evacuation Procedures

In the event of a fire, natural disaster, or other situation requiring evacuation from ABB Too Danvers, within the neighborhood the children will be transported to North Shore Medical Building, and for a more widespread disaster, the children will be transported to Danvers High School by Salter Bus Company. From ABB Rowley within the neighborhood, the children will be transported to Winfreys Fudge, and for a more widespread disaster, the children will be transported to Pine Grove School by Salter Bus Company. The director will contact local authorities to find out if an evacuation is warranted.

The disaster kits which include emergency contact numbers for each child, phone numbers for fire, police and poison control, emergency medical treatment consent forms, special medications needed by the children, and first aid kits will accompany staff in the event of any evacuation. Parents will be notified by cell phone of the evacuation.

Accurate attendance will be always kept. The children will be counted before leaving the building, once again when outside, and once again when they arrive at the designated destination.

In the event of the evacuation of the entire town of Danvers we will evacuate to ABB Rowley.

In the event of the evacuation of the entire town of Rowley we will evacuate to ABB in Danvers.

Primary and Secondary escape routes are posted in every classroom at each exit.

Evacuation/Fire Drills are conducted monthly.

Remaining in the Building during Emergencies

In the event that it is an emergency where it would be safer to remain in the building the following precautions will be taken for power outage, loss of heat or water:

Emergency battery lighting is currently installed in the building.

We keep 2 Five Gallon Jugs of bottled water on hand in the event of water loss.

We keep blankets and sleeping bags on site in the event of loss of heat.

Our smoke detectors are hard wired with battery backups.

In the event of a tornado at ABB Too in Danvers, we will relocate to the middle of the building by the childrens bathrooms. At ABB in Rowley, we will move to the basement.

In the event of an earthquake requiring the shut off of gas, water, and electricity the staff has been made aware of the location.

Plan for Missing Children

Our staff will keep accurate attendance at all times. We will do headcounts before leaving the classroom, when arriving at our destination, before returning to classroom and once back in classroom.

If it is determined that a child is missing, the Director will be notified immediately and will call 911. Teachers will remain in their classrooms. The Director will search the inside and outside of the building. If the child is not on the premises, the Director will immediately call the parent of the missing child.

The staff and director will work with local authorities to determine the whereabouts of the child.

Lock Down Policies ABB Danvers

The onsite Director, or Teacher appointed in charge, if the Director is out of the building, is responsible for calling the lockdown. The Director will immediately notify each classroom that the school is on lockdown and call 911. We will lock all doors, pull all curtains, and turn lights off. Parents will be notified through Brightwheel and email. All children and staff will be moved away from windows and doors to their designated areas, which are as follows: Young Infants will go into Young Toddler classroom, Older Infants will go to into Young Toddler classroom, young toddlers and older toddlers will stay in their classrooms. Pre-K will go into the Preschool 2 classroom and Preschool 1 will go into Older Toddler classroom. Our main doors regularly remain locked throughout the day (9am to 4:30pm). Each Lead Teacher is responsible for taking their groups to the designated areas. Once in the designated lockdown areas, headcounts will be completed. When we have been notified that there is no threat, and when lockdown is over, the Director will notify each classroom so that students can return to their rooms. Parents will be notified through Brightwheel and email. In addition, there are flashlights on site, as well as battery backup emergency lighting in the building. We have backup formula, an abundance of snack supplies, and several bins full of materials to engage the children in the event of a lock down situation.

Lock Down Policies ABB Rowley

The onsite Director or Teacher appointed in charge, if the Director is out of the building, is responsible for calling for a lock down. The Director will immediately notify each classroom that the school is on lock down. The Director will call 911. We will lock all doors. Parents will be notified by Brightwheel and email. All children and staff will move to the basement. Each Lead Teacher is responsible for taking their groups to the designated lockdown areas where headcounts will be done. When we have been notified that there is no threat, and when lockdown is over, the Director will notify each classroom so that students can return to their rooms. Parents will be notified through Brightwheel and email. There are flashlights on site, as well as battery backup emergency lighting in the building. We have backup formula, an abundance of snack supplies, and several bins full of materials to engage the children in the event of a lock down situation.

Infant Sleep Regulations

ABB will notify all Parents upon enrollment of our SIDS risk reduction practices, sleep positioning policies, and arrangements for sleeping all infants on their backs.

ABB places all infants twelve months of age or younger on his/her back for sleeping, unless the child's health care professional orders otherwise.

Children younger than six months of age at the time of enrollment are under direct visual supervision at all times, including while napping, during the first six weeks they are in care.

No child under 12 months of age shall be placed in a crib containing pillows, comforters, stuffed animals, or other soft, padded materials.

The cribs at ABB have slats that are no more than 2-3/8 inches apart, and have firm, properly fitted mattresses with clean coverings and no places for head entrapment.

If an Infant has a physician's order to place child in a position other than his/her back, the order will be kept in the child's file as well as posted by the crib.

ABB includes SIDS reduction practices (including placing infants on their backs) in all new staff orientations.

Policies

1. A non-refundable registration fee of \$75.00 must be paid at the time of registration for the 1st year of school. Each year thereafter, the fee is \$50.00. If a child withdraws from the program and re-enters at a later date, a new fee must be paid. Also, a non-refundable deposit of one week's tuition (discounts not applied) must be paid at the time of registration and will be applied to the child's first week of attendance. If the child does not start attending ABB within 14 calendar days from the predetermined start date, full tuition will be required to hold the space.
2. The school is open Monday through Friday 7:30am-5:30pm. We close promptly at 5:30 pm. Any child in school after 5:30 pm will be considered a late pick-up. Our first concern with late pick-up is the child's feeling of abandonment. Also, our teachers have obligations outside of ABB. Fees for late pick-up and early drop-off: First 15 minutes \$50.00, every minute thereafter \$1.00 per minute.
3. Frequent late pick-up of your child (5 times) without prior notification to the teachers will result in a mandated report to the Department of Social Services.
4. We will not release a child to anyone we suspect is under the influence of any kind of drug or alcohol. Since we have no sophisticated methods for detecting impairment we must err on the side of caution. The teachers will assist in finding a safe way home for the child. If we cannot find a safe way home for the child (other authorized pickup), we will contact the local police department for assistance.
5. Families with 2 or more children enrolled a minimum of 3 full days per week will receive a 10% discount off the lesser weekly tuition charge.
6. Termination from our program must be given in writing two weeks in advance.
7. Tuition must be paid on the first day of the month (monthly payers) or first day of week (weekly payers). Monthly tuition paid after the 1st of the month is

considered late and subject to a late fee of \$25.00. The cost of any legal action resulting from non-payment will be added to the outstanding balance.

8. No credit or refunds will be given for a child's absence on a scheduled day (includes sickness, weather event, holidays, and professional dev half days).

9. There will be a \$25.00 service charge for any check that must be re-deposited by our bank for any reason, this charge also applies to checks returned to ABB as NSF.

The school will be closed on the following days:

New Years Day

MLK Day

Presidents Day

Memorial Day

Juneteenth

Independence Day

Labor Day

Columbus Day

Veterans Day

Thanksgiving – Thursday and Friday

Christmas – 12pm closure on December 24th, closed December 25th and 26th

In addition to the above, ABB closes the Friday preceding Labor Day for Fall Prep. Holidays that fall on weekends, we will be closed either the preceding Friday or the following Monday. Teacher prep day meetings will be held bi-monthly on a predetermined day and typically start at 12:30pm.

EEC as Licensing Authority

Early Education and Care is the licensing authority for ABB and ABBtoo. EEC can be contacted with any questions regarding the program's regulatory compliance history.

The EEC office is located at:

360 Merrimack Street, Building 9, Third Floor

Lawrence, MA 01843

Phone: 978-681-9684

Fax: 978-689-7618

Procedures for Referrals

If a teacher has a concern regarding a child, they will notify the Director. The Director will then document the information. The parents will be notified about the concerns regarding their child and a meeting will be scheduled with the child's teacher, the parents and the Director. During the meeting, the suggestions regarding getting the child an assessment will be made. Parents will receive documentation of observations made by the teacher. Follow-up meetings will be scheduled. Children under three years of age will be serviced by Early Intervention. Children over three years of age are serviced by Chapter 766, which means that it is the responsibility of the school system in which the child resides to evaluate and if necessary, provide services. ABB will require written parental consent before making a referral. The school will also refer for services including but not limited to appropriate social, mental health, educational, and medical services including dental checkups, vision, and hearing screening.

7.05 (8) Procedures for Termination and Suspension Policy:

When any child is terminated from the program, whether it is initiated by the school or the family, the child as well as the other children must be prepared. The manner in which this is done will be consistent with the child's ability to understand.

- ABB will refer children for evaluation diagnostic or therapeutic services (see Procedures for Referrals)
- ABB will pursue options for supportive services to the program including consultation and educator training

Closure is very important for children (those remaining in school as well as those leaving). It is important that they understand as much as possible about the events that are taking place. Every teacher at the school will be notified of the changes that will take place so that they may handle all questions from the children in an appropriate manner. Our first concern is the child. We want to ensure that their transition from the school is an easy one. Possible reasons for termination initiated by ABB (including but not limited to):

- Non-payment of tuition
- When the actions of a child compromise the safety of the environment
- When the child is abusive or combative towards a teacher or another child
- When a parent or another person associated with the child engages in threatening behavior and/or fails to cooperate with ABB in the best interest of the child

Typically, the school will only initiate dismissal or suspension of a student based on behavioral reasons as a last resort. The procedure for termination based on the child's behavior will typically include the following (though not necessarily in this order):

- Notification to parents of the current incident (verbal & written)
- Conference with parents, teacher, and director to set up an individualized behavior management plan to eliminate the inappropriate behavior
- Documentation by teacher to track the progress of the behavioral plan
- Follow-up conferences

Termination (if necessary) in certain cases, ABB may omit some of the steps above. These situations include but are not limited to, instances in which a parent is unwilling or unable to partner with ABB on a behavioral plan, does not pay tuition, or is otherwise uncooperative or disrespectful.

7.05 (2) Administration of Medication

In order for teachers to administer medication, the following procedures will be followed, no exceptions will be made.

NON-PRESCRIPTION: TOPICAL

Nonprescription ointments (diaper area) and sunscreens can only be applied to a child when we have received written authorization for the child's parent(s)/guardian.

The teachers will not apply topical nonprescription medications to open wounds, rashes, or broken skin. Scrapes and scratches will be washed thoroughly with anti-bacterial soap, warm water, and a paper towel.

An injury report will document the procedures followed and the parents will be notified.

Medications

Prescription and nonprescription medications can and will only be given when we receive a written order signed by the child's physician as well as the parent(s)/guardian. Attempts will be made to notify the parent(s) when the nonprescription meds are administered.

- All medications must come to school in the original containers.
 - *Medication not in its original container will not be administered.*
- Prescription labels serve as written authorization from the physician. Parental authorization forms will be provided as needed.
- Unused meds will be disposed of or returned to parents.
- If a child has never had medication before the first dose, the medication must be given at home.

*Attach a written order signed by your child's physician in regards to the administration of prescription and non-prescription medication. The order must include dosage and time of day.

7.10 (1) Child Guidance Policies

1. No corporal punishment, including spanking.
2. No cruel or severe punishment, humiliation, verbal abuse, physical abuse, neglect or abusive treatment.
3. No denial of food as punishment.
4. No force feeding of children.
5. No punishment for soiling, wetting or not using the toilet.

ABB will not confine a child to a swing, highchair, crib, playpen, or any other piece of equipment for an extended period of time in lieu of supervision.

ABB does not use time out as a form of child guidance.

Irrational fears are common throughout childhood. These fears include those of being unloved, of being abandoned or separated from a parent, of being alone or helpless and of bodily injury. Discipline measures should never involve using these fears.

Discipline should be viewed as a means to help children gain control over their behavior. Limits should be defined by the adult, taking into consideration the developmental level of the child. NO's will be eliminated from the environment by preparing a safe classroom in which the children can explore freely with the limits set by the ground rules. The ground rules are formulated to help the child learn cooperation, compassion, and a sense of social responsibility.

Behavior Management techniques will be kind and positive. Positive comments are more effective than negative. Teachers will be aware of the overall situation and redirect behaviors before they become an issue. Helper behavior as well as discussing ways of solving conflicts with the child are examples of techniques which may be used. These skills help the child to build self-control.

Discipline should be consistent and based on an understanding of the individual needs and development of the child. We hope to direct discipline towards the goal of maximizing the growth and development of the child and to protect the group as a whole. Methods of discipline fail when they are not consistent. Inconsistency creates anxiety and tension.

7.05 (1) (a) Health Care Policy

(2) Procedures for Illness and Emergencies

Method of Transportation: in an emergency due to accident or injury, the child will be transported by ambulance to the nearest hospital or hospital designated by the parent. If the injury is minor, parents will be notified immediately, and they may decide what action they prefer to take. All conversations will be documented.

Notification of Parents

In the file are the parents' work and home numbers as well as the emergency contacts. Parents will be contacted immediately regarding any emergency involving their child. They will be informed of the type of emergency and where they should go to assume responsibility of their child.

Procedures when Parents Can Not be Reached

In each child's file there will be a list of emergency contacts. These numbers will be called when we are unable to contact the child's parent or guardian.

Emergency Procedures for Field Trips

Field trips are not taken, no transportation is provided.

(3) Procedures for Using & Maintaining First Aid Supplies

A first aid kit will be always kept in each classroom. There will also be a kit prepared for the teachers to take outside to the play area. The director will be responsible for keeping the kits always stocked. The kit will always contain; band aids, bandage compresses, triangular bandages, gauze pads, gauze roller bandages, adhesive tape, tweezers, ice pack, disposable gloves, and a thermometer.

First aid will be administered by the teacher in charge of each classroom. The entire staff is required to gain a certification in Basic First Aid and Infant/Child CPR.

***The Program's entire Health Care Policy is located in the Directors office. If you would like to read the policy in full, please see the Director.*

Procedures for Identifying and Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect

As mandated reporters, the entire staff at A Bright Beginning will follow the procedures set forth by the Essex County Child Abuse Project regarding identifying and reporting suspected abuse or neglect of children.

Parents and teachers will be given a copy of the schools' policy and procedures regarding the aforementioned issues.

It is the policy of ABB to report all suspected or alleged incidents of child abuse or neglect to the Department of Early Education and Care and the Department of Social Services immediately by telephone and a follow up in writing within 24 hours. This will contain the information as reported by telephone and offer the full cooperation of the school and its staff during the investigation of the reported incident. In addition, the following steps will be taken:

1. Upon notification of suspected abuse or neglect that involves a staff member of the school, the staff person is to be suspended immediately without pay, pending the results of the investigation conducted by the Department of Early Education and Care and The Department of Social Services. If the report is found to be unsubstantiated through the investigation by EEC and DSS, the staff member will be reinstated at their same position and wages will be paid for the time of suspension.
2. Any staff person that observes or suspects abuse or neglect in the school must report to the Director immediately and follow up with a written report of the incident.

PARENT INFORMATION, RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Chapter 28, Section 10 of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts mandates to the Department of Early Education and Care the legal responsibility of promulgating rules and regulations governing the operation of day care centers (including nursery school).

The licensee (program owner) is required to inform all parents of specific information about their rights and responsibilities at the time of admission of their child to the center. Section 7.04 of 102CMR 7.00, the regulations which govern day centers, contains more information.

Parental Rights

Right to Visit

You have a right to make unannounced visits to your child's room while your child is present.

Parent Input

The program must have a procedure for allowing your input in the development of center policy and procedure. The program must allow you to make suggestions, but it is up to the program to decide whether they will be implemented.

Conferences

You have a right to request an individual conference with the program's staff. The licensee has the responsibility to make the staff available.

Meeting prior to admittance

The licensee shall assure that the administrator or his/her designee meets with you prior to admitting your child to the center.

At the meeting, the licensee (in addition to the information contained in this fact sheet), must provide you with: the center's written statements of purpose, type of services provided, referral policy, behavior management policy, termination and suspension policy, a list of suggested nutritious foods you could send for snacks and meals, the policy for identifying and reporting child abuse and neglect, the transportation plan, a copy of the health care policy (if you request), procedure for administration of medication, procedures for providing emergency health care and the illness exclusion policy, and a copy of the fee schedule. All this information may be contained in the Parent Handbook.

You should also be given the opportunity to visit the center's classrooms either at the time of the meeting or prior to the enrollment of your child.

Progress Reports

At least every six months, you should either meet with your child's teacher to discuss your child's progress or receive a written progress report of your child's activities and participation in the center. This report must become part of your child's center record. If your child is an infant or is a child with disabilities, you should receive a written progress report every three months. Center staff must bring any problems or

significant developments, particularly if they regard infants, to your attention as soon as they arise.

Your Child's Records

Information contained in your child's records is privileged and confidential. The center's staff may not distribute or release information in your child's record to anyone not directly related to implementing the program plan for your child without your written consent. You must be notified if your child's record is subpoenaed.

Access to the records

You should be able to have access to your child's records. The center must provide access within two business days, unless they have your permission to take longer. You must be allowed to view your child's entire record. The center must have procedures regarding access, duplication, and dissemination of children's records. They must maintain a written log which identifies anyone who has had access to or has received any information from the record. This log is available only to you and the people responsible for maintaining the center's records.

Amending the record

You have the right to add information, comments on data or any other relevant materials to your child's record; you also have the right to request deletion or amendments of any information contained in your child's record. Such request shall be made in accordance with the procedures described below:

1. If you are of the opinion that adding information is not sufficient to explain, clarify or correct objectionable material in your child's record, you have the right to have a conference with the licensee to make your objections known.
2. The licensee shall, within one week after the conference, give you a decision in writing stating the reason or reasons for the decision. If his/her decision is in your favor, he/she shall immediately take the necessary steps to put the decision into effect.

Charge for copies

The licensee shall not charge an unreasonable fee for copies of any information contained in your child's record.

Transfer of the record

Upon your written request, when your child is no longer in care, the licensee can give you your child's record or transfer it to any other person that you identify. The center should ask you to sign a form verifying that you have received the record.

Responsibilities of the Program

Providing information to the Department of Early Education and Care

The program must make available any information requested by the EEC to determine compliance with any EEC regulations governing the program, by providing access to its facilities, records, staff, and references.

Reporting abuse or neglect

All center staff are mandated reporters. They are required by law to report suspected abuse or neglect to either the Department of Social Services or the licensee program administrator. The licensee must have written policies and procedures for reporting and must provide the written policy to you upon enrollment.

Notification of injury

The licensee must notify you immediately of any injury which requires emergency care. The licensee must also notify you in writing, within 24 hours, if any first aid is administered to your child.

Availability of EEC regulations

The program must maintain a copy of the regulations, 102CMR 7.00: Standards for the Licensure or Approval of Group Day Care and School Age Child Care Programs, on the premises of the center and must make them available to any person upon request. If you have a question about any of the regulations, ask the center to provide them.

7.05 Required Policies

7.05 (1) HEALTH CARE

Criteria regarding signs and symptoms of illness which would determine if your child should be kept at home, when they will be sent home from school, and when they will be able to return to school. If your child is sick and we have to send them home, please ensure that an authorized adult can pick up your child within an hour of the phone call.

The Record of Illness form that you receive from your child's teacher will explain why your child is being sent home and when they are able to return. The following list are some examples of when children should be kept home and or will be sent home.

- Fever 101....must be fever free for 24 hours without the use of medication
- Severe Diarrhea...must be 24 hours from last episode
- Severe Coughing...doctor's note or 24 hours on antibiotic
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes...doctor's note or 24 hours on antibiotics
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)...doctor's note or 24 hours on antibiotics
- Sore throat or trouble swallowing
- Infected skin patches
- Headache/stiff neck
- Vomiting....must be 24 hours from last episode
- Loss of appetite, unusual behavior, cranky, less active, general discomfort, just seems unwell
- Contagious Illness...chicken pox, mumps, German measles, scarlet fever, impetigo, whooping cough, Covid-19. (ABB will provide individual information regarding these illnesses)

IN ORDER TO PROTECT YOUR CHILD AND HIS/HER CLASSMATES, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU COOPERATE WITH THE SCHOOL AND ADHERE TO THE HEALTH CARE POLICIES.

Grievance / Compliant Policy

We have an open-door policy regarding the Director's office as well as the classrooms at ABB. If you ever have a question or a concern about anything, please come into the office and speak directly to the Director.

Your complaint will be documented in writing by the Director. The Director will ask for your input regarding a solution to the complaint. After the issue has been resolved (it is our policy to resolve all issues IMMEDIATELY), you will be notified verbally or in writing regarding the steps that were deemed necessary to handle the specific issue.

Again, it is our philosophy to keep communication open between the teaching staff, parents and the administration.

PEANUT/TREE NUT FREE ENVIRONMENT POLICY

A Bright Beginning has made the decision to institute a mandatory Peanut/Tree Nut Free Environment policy, which became effective November 3, 2003. Below are required guidelines we have implemented to become Peanut/Tree Nut Free.

1. Please ensure that if your child eats peanut butter before entering ABB, they have washed their hands before coming into the school.
2. Please read all labels pertaining to the contents of your child's lunch and refrain from sending anything that contains, may contain or manufactured on equipment with peanuts or tree nuts. If you are sending your child in with soy butter sandwiches, please label it so the teachers do not mistake it for peanut butter. (If you would like, we can provide you with information on how to read labels for a peanut/tree nut free diet.
3. Snack programs will become strictly voluntary. If you wish to bring a snack for the class, you must bring in the label if it is store bought, and a list of ingredients used if it is homemade.
4. Although it is the parent's responsibility not to send any foods containing peanuts or tree nuts to school, the Teachers will also endeavor to double check labels to ensure that we are providing a safe environment. Any questions regarding the policy should be directed to the Director. The school intends to make every effort to assist parents in transitioning to a Peanut/Tree nut free environment. However, failure to follow these guidelines will be counseled, and if serious or persistent, will result in remedial measures.

Brightwheel Policy

ABB uses the Childcare Management Software and App Brightwheel (<https://mybrightwheel.com>) for communicating with parents, sharing photos and videos, logging daily information, attendance, and billing.

The child's authorized contact will be invited to join the appropriate classroom. Brightwheel will be used for scanning your child in and out of school, paying tuition, sending messages regarding your child, receiving information regarding your child's day and pictures/videos of your child enjoying school!

Please note: The teachers will attempt to keep the logging of daily schedules in real time however they will always attend to children's needs before updating Brightwheel. Teachers and Directors are only responsible for answering BW questions/inquiries during school hours and we will not message parents outside of school hours.

a bright beginning

school for young children

Please Return to A Bright Beginning

Dear Parents,

As Parents/Guardians of a child/children attending A Bright Beginning School, I hereby acknowledge receipt of the Parent Handbook. I have read and understand its contents. I also understand that the handbook outlines the expectations and responsibilities of parent/guardian, students and staff at A Bright Beginning. I agree to support A Bright Beginning in enforcing the policies and regulations stated in the handbook.

Signature: _____ Date: _____