

Munchkinland Learning Center  
and Day Care, LLC.

448 B Middle Street  
W. Brownsville, PA

**Family Handbook**

[www.munchkinland.org](http://www.munchkinland.org)

Created September 2018/Revised January 2019

## Goals & Culture

*Welcome to the Munchkinland Family!!*

We provide a loving, supportive, safe and educational environment for families who need child care. It is our goal to offer programs that meet the needs of each child, from infants to pre-school, and beyond. We recognize how important a fun, caring, & supportive environment is to develop confidence & a life-long love of learning. Our curriculum is based on developmental theories and child-centered methodologies that help our children grow socially, emotionally, physically, and intellectually to meet their fullest potential.

## Purpose of this Handbook

This handbook has been prepared to inform families of the policies and procedures of Munchkinland Daycare and Learning Center. It is not all inclusive or intended to provide strict interpretations of our policies; rather, it offers an overview. This handbook is not a contract, expressed or implied, for child care.

## Non-Discrimination Policy

Munchkinland Learning and Daycare Center LLC does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, religion, or national or ethnic origin in admittance, education, or other administrative policies and extends to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally made available to students at the school.

## Enrollment

All forms must be completed prior to your child's first day. They are available in a packet from the facility, as well as on our website. These include:

- Signed Contract and Rate Agreement
- Emergency Contact/Parental Consent Form
- Child Health Assessment including a Physical Form and Shot Records
- Non-Prescription Medication Record
- Allergy form
- Sunscreen Permission Slip
- Photography and Video Release
- Social Media Permission Slip

There is a minimum of two days per week to secure your spot for care.

## Hours of Operation

Normal hours of operation are **Monday through Friday from 6am – 6pm**. Please note that a schedule must be filled out and turned in each week. Drop-ins are not accepted. You must adhere to your schedule. If your child is not attending on a scheduled day you must call 2 hours before arrival time, or you will be charged for the day. Your child must be picked up no later than our closing time of 6:00 pm. Picking up after the scheduled time will result in late charges.

**Pre-School and Pre-K hours are 9am – 2pm.** Children enrolled in these programs can choose 5 days, 3 days or 2 days per week schedules at the beginning of each school year. Additional child care needs can be scheduled as needed.

Meals: Breakfast (9am) Lunch (12pm) and a snack (3pm) are provided daily. Menus are available and posted in each building. You may choose to pack any or all meals for your child. Please be sure to label lunchbox or bag. We encourage you to pack items that are healthy and will help your child to maintain appropriate energy and alertness throughout the day.

## **Schedules**

Schedules are due for the next week no later than **Friday at 6pm**. You may turn in a written schedule or text it to 724-912-9124. You must notify the facility as soon as possible of any changes. Late changes or chronic non-notification may create extra charges on your bill. If your child is scheduled, you will be charged, regardless of attendance. We must be notified in advance of absences or changes.

## **Payment Procedures**

Please refer to your specific contract for rate information. All bills will be based on the schedule for the week and will be due that **Friday**. All bills must be paid in full or your schedule for the following week will be denied. There is a late charge of \$5.00 per day for bills paid after the due date.

Payments may be made in person at the facility or online. Please note that if you are paying by check the check must have the current date, no post-dated checks will be accepted. Repeated late fees and non-payment are grounds for termination of care. ***Disputes must be filed within 7 days of receipt of bill.***

NSF checks will be charged an additional fee as well as all fees incurred as a result of the returned check. In addition, you will then be required to pay in cash or online with a card for future payments.

## **Late Pick-up Fee**

Your scheduled hours are to be followed. If your child, or children, are not picked-up on time, you will be charged a late fee of **\$1.00 per minute, per child**. Giving notice of tardiness will not waive the fees. Late fees will be added to your bill. Habitual tardiness may be cause for termination.

## **Taxes**

You will be supplied with an end of the year statement for all fees paid during the year for tax purposes. Statements are ready in January, or when services have been terminated.

## **Illness**

*Under no circumstances is an ill child to be brought to our facility!* Please refer to the following as guidelines and use common sense before sending a child who is not feeling well. Please allow your child time to fully recover before returning them to our facility. Typically, this is at least 24 hours of being symptom free, without the aid of medications.

**Fever:** A child needs to be fever free for a **minimum of 24 hours** (without the aid of any medication) before returning to the facility. A fever is defined as: over 98.6 taken under the arm; 99.5 taken orally; over 100.4 taken rectally.

Diarrhea: runny or watery stool, or 2 or more loose stools within the previous 4 hours. (if condition is due to teething a doctor statement must be provided). Child should not return to school for a minimum of 24 hours symptom free.

Vomiting: Child should not return to school until the vomiting has subsided for a minimum of 24 hours.

Runny Nose: Do not bring your child with discharge of any color other than clear. Slight colds and allergies are not considered.

Eyes: Any form of watery matted and crusty eyes is not acceptable for care. If eyes are exceptionally red, or irritated please seek treatment prior to returning child to care.

Rashes: Any rash must be checked by a doctor and a note clearing the child from being contagious must accompany the child prior to returning to the facility.

If a child becomes ill while in our care, we will contact the parent immediately. We will care for the child with proper supervision and give extra attention to hand washing and sanitation practices.

Parents need to pick up children within 1 hour of notification. In the event of *severe* illness or injury, or if a parent fails to pick up their child within a reasonable amount of time, we may call for an ambulance at the parent's expense.

If a child is sent home sick from our program, they may not return until the child is symptom-free for 24-hours. You may need a statement from your health care provider stating when your child is no longer contagious.

## **Communication**

Open Communication with parents is very important to children's success. Munchkinland has multiple ways of communicating with parents. In some situations, parents may be asked to sign documents acknowledging that communication has taken place. Listed below are some of the ways that we may communicate with parents:

- flyers posted in the front entrances of buildings
- Through email notifications
- Written memos, letters and calendars placed in your child's family folders or mailboxes
- Social media site such as Facebook
- Verbal communication with the child's teachers and staff

Please note that you are able to schedule a meeting to discuss specific issues or concerns. Please call 724- 912-9124 to schedule a time with the appropriate person or persons for your child. Drop-off and Pick-up are not the appropriate time to discuss specifics.

## **Arrival and Departure**

Please be sure to follow our rules and use common sense when bringing and picking-up your child. Children are only to be released to parents, legal guardians and those listed on your contact form with prior notice to us. Everyone should have a photo ID ready when picking-up from our facility. We apologize for any perceived inconvenience, but this is purely for your child's safety and well-being.

There may be times when a child may be emotional, particularly during drop-off hours. It is normal, and we ask that you keep your goodbyes as brief as possible, with a few reassuring words.

Please be sure to sign the sheet each day for arrival and departure for your child. Failure to do so can result in erroneous records of attendance, and improper billing. If you do not sign in and out daily, you can expect to be billed for a full week, regardless of actual attendance.

## **Personal Belongings**

No toys or other such items should be brought from home, with the exception of a small “lovey” for nap time along with their blanket and pillow. All items must be clearly marked with your child’s name. Each child should have a change of clothing, season appropriate, clearly marked with their name. Pre-K and Pre-school children should keep a change of clothing in a plastic baggie, marked with their name, inside their bookbag. Soiled clothing will be sent home and a replacement should be brought in the next day. Special occasions i.e. picture day, field trip may call for specific clothing. Please be sure to dress your child appropriately for the occasion.

You are responsible for the following items: (\*age dependent)

- Diapers/pull-ups\*
- Wipes\*
- Diaper cream\*
- Full change of clothing (including socks)
- Blanket\*
- Bottles/Sippy cups\*

Please be sure that your child’s name is on all personal items and that all items are appropriate for the current season and activities of our facility.

## **Toilet Training**

This will be done in partnership with the family. Your child’s readiness is something that can be discussed with staff at the appropriate time. Please be sure to be mindful of clothing items your child wears during this training period. (elastic waistbands, loose fitting clothing without snaps and buttons are best). Your child should also have an extra set of clothing in addition to the one already required, just in case of an accident.

## **Naps & Quiet Time**

Children in Daycare will be required to lie down and nap/rest. Please be mindful of ringing the bell if you must be there to pick-up or drop-off your child during nap/quiet time. Infants will nap according to their schedules. Typically, children drop to 1 nap per day between 12 and 18 months.

## **General Behavior Rules**

Children will learn the rules and are expected to follow them. Failure to do so could mean termination of care at Munchkinland. These rules were designed to keep children safe at all times while at our facility.

- Any physical harm to another child is to be avoided. This includes: biting, scratching, hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, pinching or other such behaviors.
- Children are not permitted to lift or carry others.
- Respectful treatment of all property is expected. (you may be billed for damaged items)
- Obscene, derogatory or disrespectful language is not tolerated.

Each area may have additional rules for specific areas and activities such as classrooms, play and learning centers, and outside activities. Children are expected to follow all rules. Discipline will follow general guidelines, will be age-appropriate, and may include: redirection, intervention and discussion, problem solving actions, loss of privileges, removal from situation. All staff will handle discipline with loving kindness and will follow current best practices. Staff members are trained to use a positive method of discipline and guidance that encourages self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction. We praise and recognize good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior; reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements.

If there are chronic behavioral issues, there will be a meeting to discuss continuity of discipline. Please be aware that your child can be removed from care if problems persist or rise to the level of preventing normal activities and learning to occur, or if the behavior causes harm to another child.

### **Success**

There are several ways you can help us maintain the best possible learning atmosphere for your child to ensure they reach their fullest potential.

- Communicate any concerns regarding our program or your child immediately to staff.
- Pick up and read the notices and information left for you in your child's folder or mailbox, posted in the buildings, or in e-mail.
- Pick up your child's papers/projects daily. Their work is very important to them and provides another means of communication between parent and child and helps the parent share in the child's day.
- Please make *sure your child arrives on time*. Being late causes a disruption in the classroom schedule, which affects all of the children in the classroom.
- Please do not allow your child to bring gum, snacks or candy to the classroom.
- Check on your child's supply of extra clothing. Please take soiled clothing promptly replace upon return to the facility.
- You will have an opportunity to have a parent conference with your child's teachers. Updates on progress will be discussed during the conference, and additional information may be sent home periodically

### **Medical Emergencies**

In case of emergencies, necessary first aid will be administered, appropriate emergency calls will be made to police, paramedics, etc. Please note that your child may be transported if necessary. You will be contacted immediately in the case of an emergency. You are responsible for all costs of emergency transport and care, if needed.

### **Emergency Preparedness Plan**

There is a written evacuation plan on file. Drills for fire and other such evacuations are practiced with the children as appropriate. Fire safety is included in the curriculum as well. All buildings are inspected regularly for safety.

## **Child Abuse Reporting Laws and Requirements**

Munchkinland staff members are **REQUIRED** by Pennsylvania State law and licensing requirements to report immediately to the police or Child Protective Services (CPS) any instance when there is reason to **suspect** the occurrence of physical, sexual, or emotional child abuse, child neglect, or exploitation. Our staff receives annual training on recognizing and preventing abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse. We have made a commitment to help increase awareness and prevention techniques to employees through trainings, as well as to coordinate with community organizations on strategies to prevent abuse and neglect.

The staff may not notify parents when the police or CPS is called about possible child abuse, neglect, or exploitation, except on the recommendation of CPS or the police when they are called.

Some examples of abuse and neglect are: leaving a child in a vehicle unattended, not securing a child in a seat belt or booster seat, unexplained marks or bruises on opposite sides of the body, excessive or continued unexplained injuries or trauma, and child hygiene issues.

## **Termination of Services**

Fourteen (14) days written notice must be given for withdrawing a child from care. Payment is expected in full for the final two weeks, regardless of attendance.

Munchkinland reserves the right to give notice of immediate termination where extreme circumstances are present that effect the well-being other children or staff. See the Suspension/Expulsion section

Reasons for termination can include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to pay
- Failure to complete required forms
- Lack of parental cooperation
- Failure of child to adjust to facility
- Physical or verbal abuse
- Facility and/or staff are unable to meet child's needs
- Lack of compliance with policies and procedures
- False information provided by family, either in writing or verbally
- Violation of contract or parent handbook
- Parent/Provider Differences
- Child Behavior
- Knowingly bringing a sick child to daycare
- Consistently arriving late, consistently late for pick-up

## **Revisions to Handbook and Contract**

Munchkinland Learning and Daycare Center LLC. reserves the right to revise any section of the handbook without prior notice. We will send any updates or changes to all families when they occur.

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**Acknowledgement of Receipt for Family Handbook**

**(Facility Copy – Detach and retain for records)**

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Family Handbook. I understand that I am responsible for reading the information contained in the Handbook. I understand that the handbook is intended to provide a general overview of the policies and procedures. I acknowledge that nothing in this handbook is to be interpreted as a contract, expressed or implied, for childcare.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Signature of Parent/Guardian)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Date)