**Tiny Town Children’s Center Inc.**

**1226 State Rd. Plymouth, MA 02360**

**508 224 7769**

**Parent Handbook 2025-2026**

**Dear Parent,**

Congratulations on choosing licensed Large Group and School Age child care! As a licensed provider, I want to commend you for making such an important decision for your child and your family. The Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) and I invite you to partner with us to ensure a high-quality child care environment.

This parent handbook and enrollment packet outline the policies and procedures that guide the care of your child, along with the information I am required to provide upon enrolling your child in my care. The handbook will also introduce you to key EEC standards that help create a safe, healthy, and educational child care experience.

I encourage you to maintain an open dialogue with me, as communication between parents and educators is the foundation of a strong working relationship and a positive child care experience for your child.

Before completing your child care enrollment form, please take a moment to carefully read through the information in this parent handbook.

Thank you for choosing us, and I look forward to working with you and your child.

Sincerely,

*Stacia Buckmann*

*Owner/Program Administrator*

**Welcome to Tiny Town Children’s Center**
Located in the heart of the village of Manomet in Plymouth, MA, Tiny Town Children’s Center has been filling its walls with laughter, toys, crafts, and books since 1985. Our mission has always been to nurture children and families with care and joy, and our reach extends far beyond our town to families around the world.

Originally owned and directed by the late, beloved Mrs. Toni Powers, Tiny Town is now under the direction of her granddaughter, Mrs. Stacia Buckmann. A dedicated member of the Tiny Town family since her teenage years, Stacia earned her Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education in Inclusive Settings from the University of Massachusetts Boston in 2016. In 2018, she proudly stepped into the role of Director, carrying forward Mrs. Powers’ legacy of compassion, dedication, and high-quality education.

“Miss Stacia” has upheld many of the cherished traditions of Tiny Town while also embracing new practices and traditions that ensure we stay aligned with the needs of today’s diverse learners. With a child-centered approach and a commitment to flexibility, she works to provide an environment where all children can thrive. Stacia is also a proud wife and mother, and she believes that family is at the heart of fostering confident, lifelong learners.

**A Legacy of Love and Learning**
Tiny Town Children’s Center is more than just a daycare—it’s an extension of your home and family. We provide a relaxed, inclusive setting designed to meet the unique needs of each child and family. Every day, our children engage in activities tailored to their developmental milestones, with opportunities to succeed and grow. Our theme-based curriculum is hands-on, fun, and aligned with the Massachusetts Early Education Guidelines and Learning Standards, as well as the CDC's developmental milestones.

We are licensed by the Department of Early Education and Care to care for children Infant through School Age.

**Inclusive and Supportive Environment**
At Tiny Town, we proudly welcome families from all walks of life—regardless of faith, creed, or ethnicity. We embrace families of all shapes and sizes, understanding that every family is unique. We start by recognizing each child’s inherent worth and meet them where they are—cognitively, developmentally, physically, and emotionally.

Our dedicated team of teachers are knowledgeable, highly skilled, and deeply passionate about early childhood education. We believe that the teacher is the most influential component in the classroom and continuously support their professional growth. As parents, you are your child’s first teacher, and we are honored to walk alongside you on this journey by offering expert advice, referrals, and support.

**Mission Statement**
At Tiny Town, we warmly welcome families of all faiths, creeds, and ethnic backgrounds. We begin by recognizing each child as an individual of worth and value, and we tailor our environments, equipment, and materials to meet their unique developmental needs. We believe that every child’s physical, cognitive, and emotional growth is important, and we foster this growth in a safe, nurturing, and enriching environment.

Our mission is to create a space where children’s natural curiosity and desire to learn are encouraged and supported. We affirm that the teacher is the most influential figure in a child’s learning journey, and we encourage ongoing personal and professional growth for all educators. Our goal is to provide a happy, clean, and safe environment where children can thrive and explore.

**Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination Statement**
Tiny Town Children's Center is committed to providing equal opportunities for all children and families. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, gender, disability, toilet training abilities, cultural heritage, political beliefs, marital status, national origin, or sexual orientation. Every child and family is valued and respected.

**Philosophy**
Our philosophy is rooted in the belief that children learn best in a nurturing and secure environment, supported by strong partnerships between parents, teachers, and the children themselves. The goals of our center are:

* To ensure that children feel safe and secure
* To foster meaningful relationships with peers and adults
* To encourage the development of self-discipline and respect for others
* To improve both intellectual and physical skills
* To promote healthy self-esteem

We strive to create an environment where every child is encouraged to explore, grow, and reach their full potential.

**Services & Classrooms Offered**
Tiny Town Inc. is licensed for 39 children per day, serving children from infancy through school age. Our programs are designed to support the developmental needs of each child, ensuring a nurturing environment where learning thrives.

**Infant/Toddler Classroom**

**Ages:** Currently accepting infants closest to one year old to 2.9 years
**Staff to Child Ratio:** 4:1 or 2:9

This program is ideal for families seeking full-day care for their infant or toddler. We welcome babies as young as 6 months old, with occasional younger children accepted depending on group chemistry and staffing. The room is licensed for infants and toddlers up to 2.9 years old, with a focus on maintaining a staff of 3 teachers to provide the highest quality care in the mixed-age group.

We strive to meet each child where they are developmentally and aim to mirror the comforts of home, within the guidelines of state regulations. Our infant suite offers a balanced mix of structured and free play in a clean, safe, and welcoming environment. Activities are designed to promote language development, social interaction, and cognitive growth, including:

* Circle time with music, props, and games
* Sensory activities such as water play, finger painting, and open-ended crafts
* Outdoor and indoor large-motor play
* Climbing toys and fine-motor activities

Each activity is carefully planned with developmental intentions to support your child's growth. We also welcome discussions on parenting topics such as sleep routines, feeding, and emotional development. Toddlers will engage in age-appropriate activities, including music time, story reading, art, science exploration, and social-emotional learning, building confidence as they navigate new milestones.

**Preschool & Pre-Kindergarten Mixed-Age Classrooms**

**Ages:** 2 years 9 months to 6 years
**Staff to Child Ratio:** 1:10 or 2:20

This program is for children who are ready for a full-time preschool curriculum and full-day care. We have two classrooms: one for mixed-age preschoolers (up to 20 children) and one designed for children about to enter kindergarten (up to 10 children). Our mixed-age approach helps scaffold activities to be age-appropriate while still providing personalized attention based on development.

In this classroom, children will:

* Participate in science experiments, early math activities, and creative art projects
* Practice pre-writing and writing skills with various utensils
* Learn social-emotional skills such as making friends, respecting others, and problem-solving through play
* Develop school readiness, independence, and tolerance

Through caring relationships with their teachers, children will gain confidence in exploring new activities, mastering basic life skills, and building their language and cognitive abilities. The curriculum is designed to ensure that each child meets developmental milestones and is well-prepared for kindergarten.

**School-Age Program (Ages 5-7, Kindergarten +)**

Our school-age program offers before-and-after school care, as well as individualized learning activities for children aged 6-8. Children enrolled in this program will engage in age-appropriate activities that foster academic growth, social development, and personal interests.

**School Age Program** specifically designed for children **ages 5 through 7** who are enrolled at **Indian Brook Elementary School**.

**Program Highlights**

* **Ages Served:** 5–7 years old (Indian Brook Elementary students)
* **Transportation:** Children may get on and off the bus directly from Tiny Town
* **Care Options:**
	+ Before Care
	+ After Care
	+ Before & After Care
	+ Half-Day Care
	+ School Vacation Care
* **Drop-In Care:** Available if space and staffing allow (not guaranteed)

**Please Note:** This program will not be available on snow days, delayed openings, emergency early releases, or public school closure days not observed by Tiny Town.

**Payment Information**

* **Separate Program:** Operates independently from regular Tiny Town child care
* **Payment Method:** **Cash only**
* **Not Accepted:** Vouchers and Brightwheel payments

**Daily Rates**

* **Before Care Only:** $15
* **After Care Only:** $25
* **Before & After Care:** $35

**Half-Day Rates:**

* Enrolled: $40
* Drop-in: $45

**School Vacation Days:**

* Enrolled: $80
* Drop-in: $85

**Summer Program Note**

* Summer tuition will follow **regular Preschool/Pre-K rates**
* **Cash, checks, and Brightwheel payments** will be accepted
* Enrollment is **limited** and will be offered **only after all PS/PK spots are filled**

**Children in Age-Appropriate Classrooms:**

At times, children in age-appropriate classrooms may be combined to coordinate staffing, and children may also visit other classrooms to explore or if they may need a break. When preparing for a transition to a new classroom or program, educators must:

1. Collaborate and share information between each classroom or program with parental permission; and
2. Assist the child with the transition in a manner consistent with the child’s understanding.

The Multi-age Grouping ratios and group sizes (combining toddlers in a preschool classroom *for example*) specified in 606 CMR 7.10(4)(d) through (h) may be used by:

* **(b)** Large group and school-age child care programs during the initial two hours and final two hours of the program day, if:
	1. The program operates more than seven hours per day, and
	2. Educators meet the qualifications required of educators in large group and school-age child care programs;
* **(c)** Large group and school-age child care programs during the entire program day when approved by the Department.

**Developmental Placement Considerations for Children in the Program**

Developmental placement may be considered for children currently enrolled in the program as well as for new children entering the program. If a child is being considered for placement in a group outside their chronologically defined age group, several factors must be addressed to ensure a smooth transition. Only when all conditions are met can placement outside the typical age range be considered.

**Parent Consultation and Approval**

The program must consult with the child’s parent(s) to obtain approval for the placement and to allow them the opportunity to provide input. If the child is already enrolled, a meeting should be scheduled with the parent(s) to discuss the proposed developmental placement. This meeting must include the educator currently working with the child and the educator who will be responsible for the child after the transition.

The meeting with the parent(s) must be documented and maintained on file within the program. The documentation should include responses to the following questions:

1. What are the specific reasons for the proposed alternative group assignment? How do the child’s verbal, cognitive, social, emotional, gross motor, and fine motor skills differ from those typical of their chronological age group?
2. How will the child be able to effectively participate in the proposed group’s activities?
3. How will the staff and the group accommodate the child’s needs and behaviors?
4. What elements will be included in the transition plan to ensure collaboration and information sharing between classrooms or programs, and to support the child’s understanding of the transition?

**Classroom Environment and Equipment**

The program must ensure that the classroom environment and equipment are appropriate for the child’s developmental needs. For example, if an infant is placed in a toddler room or a toddler is placed in a preschool room, the equipment used by the group must be age-appropriate and safe for the child. Both indoor and outdoor equipment should be suitable for the entire group, and care should be taken that it does not pose any hazards to the child. Additionally, the building inspection certificate must confirm that the space is suitable for the age group being assigned. For instance, if a toddler is placed in a preschool classroom, the building inspection must show that the space is approved for I-2 or I-4 usage.

**Consistent Group Assignments and Staff Training**

Each child must be assigned to a consistent group with stable staffing. Staff members working with children outside their chronological age group must be trained to meet the specific needs of all children in the group. The age differences within the group should not be so extreme as to hinder any child’s growth and development. For example, while placing a toddler in a 3-year-old group may be appropriate, a 2-year-old may not be well-suited for a preschool group of 5-year-olds.

**Ongoing Documentation and Review**

If a child is placed in a group younger than their chronological age (e.g., a toddler placed in a preschool room), the program must document and maintain monthly reviews of the child’s adjustment to the group until the child reaches the minimum age for that group. Conversely, if the child is placed in a group older than their chronological age (e.g., a toddler placed in an infant room), the program must document and maintain monthly reviews of the child’s skill development, along with a transition plan. The transition plan must include details about when and how the child will be moved to a group that aligns with their chronological age.

**Directors & Staff**
At Tiny Town, we take pride in our highly educated and experienced staff, all of whom are dedicated early childhood educators and caregivers. Each team member meets the required educational qualifications and holds certification in early childhood education. In addition to the mandatory college coursework, all staff—regardless of their role—participate in ongoing professional development. We believe in the importance of continuous learning to stay attuned to the evolving needs of today’s young learners. Through annual training and studies, our team remains current on best practices, ensuring that we provide the highest level of care and education for your child.

**Tiny Town Inc. Security Procedures**

At Tiny Town, the safety and security of all children, families, and staff are of utmost importance. We have implemented a series of security measures to ensure that our environment remains secure and welcoming. Please take a moment to review the following procedures:

* **Locked Doors & Deadbolts:** All doors at Tiny Town are locked and deadbolted throughout the day to ensure controlled access to the building. Only authorized individuals are permitted entry.
* **Door Code Access:** We have a secure door code that provides access to the building through the front entrance hallway. This code is only shared with families, staff, and affiliated staff members. We ask that you **do not share this code** with individuals on your pick-up list, early intervention or ABA therapists. If anybody else needs to retrieve your child, please have them **knock or call the school** to be granted access. The code will be changed when a staff member/family leaves the center, and could be changed annually.
* **Ring Security Cameras:** To enhance security, we have Ring security cameras installed around the perimeter of the building (not inside classrooms or on the playground). These cameras monitor the area with live video, recordings, and audio for added safety.

**Hours/Days of Operation**
Tiny Town is open from **8:00 AM to 5:00 PM**, Monday through Friday, approximately 49 weeks a year. The center is closed in observance of the following state and federal holidays, as well as in alignment with the Plymouth Public School calendar. If a holiday falls on a Sunday or mid-week, we may close either the preceding Friday or the following Monday to observe the holiday. An annual calendar will be provided each year, though dates and times may be subject to change. All center closures are included in tuition.

**Holidays Observed**

* Labor Day
* Indigenous Peoples Day
* Veterans Day
* Thanksgiving
* Christmas
* New Year’s Eve/Day
* Martin Luther King Jr. Day
* Presidents Day
* Good Friday
* Patriots Day
* Memorial Day
* Juneteenth
* Independence Day

**Planned Annual Closures**

Tiny Town is closed **for three** planned weeks each year. These closures are announced at the beginning of the school year with the release of our annual calendar to help families plan ahead. Tuition is due for all closures. The typical closure periods are:

* **December** (Christmas/New Year’s break)
* **July** (Independence Day break)
* **August** (Labor Day break)
*Please note that these dates are subject to change based on the center’s needs.*

**Weather-Related Closures**

Tiny Town follows the Plymouth Public School System’s decisions regarding weather-related closures. If Plymouth Public Schools are closed, Tiny Town will also be closed. In the case of a delay, we will open at **10:00 AM**. Announcements regarding weather-related closures will be made on local news stations, the Plymouth Public Schools website, Facebook, and via Tiny Town’s Brightwheel app. Tiny Town reserves the right to make independent decisions regarding closures due to inclement weather. All weather-related closure decisions will be made by **7:00 AM** and communicated via Brightwheel.

*Please note, tuition is still required for weather-related closures.*

**Emergency Closing**

* **Facility Issues:** In the event of an emergency that prevents the center from operating—such as heating, power, water, or sewer issues—parents/guardians will be notified immediately to pick up their child. The center will remain closed until the issue is resolved. **Full tuition is still required** if an emergency closing occurs on your child’s scheduled day.
* **Natural Disasters, Pandemics, or Government Orders:** If the center must close due to a natural disaster, pandemic, structural damage, government-ordered shutdown, or other unforeseen circumstances that prevent us from knowing when we can reopen, we require **two weeks' worth of full tuition** to hold your child’s spot. This ensures that your child’s enrollment is guaranteed once we are able to reopen.
* **Health Closure Policy:** Should the center need to close for infection control purposes, parents will be notified promptly. The center will be thoroughly sanitized and disinfected before reopening. **Full tuition is still required** during health-related closures.
* **Communication and Emergency Contact Information:** Please monitor Brightwheel regularly for emergency updates and ensure that your contact information, as well as emergency contact information, is up-to-date. It is the responsibility of the parent/legal guardian to provide reliable phone numbers for immediate emergency contact. **Your child will not be enrolled at Tiny Town, Inc. unless you have backup care in place.** In the event of an emergency or illness, someone must be available to pick up your child if the parent(s) are unable to do so.
* **Tiny Town may need to open late or release children early due to and not limited to any of the above circumstances.**

**Enrollment Policy**

At Tiny Town, we require an intake tour with the parent/guardian and the child as part of the enrollment process. This allows you to visit the center, ask questions, observe your child in the prospective classroom, and assess whether Tiny Town, Inc. meets your needs and expectations. We accept children starting at 8 weeks old and are licensed for children up to 8 years old (ages of acceptance may vary). If, after meeting with the Director, you agree that Tiny Town is a good fit and there is space available for your child, **your child’s spot is not guaranteed** until all required fees and paperwork have been received. Until then, the spot is on a first-come, first-served basis. Please refer to our waitlist policy for details on holding a spot.

**Enrollment Fees & Required Paperwork**

* **Enrollment Fee:** A non-refundable enrollment fee of **$150.00** is required. This fee does **not** go towards tuition.
* **Re-registration Fee:** A re-registration fee of **$100.00** will be due each September to maintain your child’s enrollment for the upcoming school year.

**Required Paperwork for Enrollment**

To complete your child’s enrollment, the following paperwork must be submitted:

1. **Completed & signed/dated enrollment packet**
2. **Current physical exam** (within the past year) and a physician’s statement clearing your child from any restrictions in childcare
3. **Age-appropriate immunizations** (Tiny Town does **not** accept children who are not immunized, Tiny Town does not accept religious exemptions)
4. **Signed receipt** of the Parent Handbook, acknowledging that you’ve received and read it
5. **Completed and signed medication consents** by both a doctor and the parent/guardian (see the medical policy for more details on medications)

**Additional Paperwork (If Applicable):**

* **Individual Health Care Plans** (for chronic illnesses, asthma, allergies, special needs, or behavioral services)
* **IEPs, IFSPs, Behavioral Plans**, or intake information from Early Intervention
* **Custody agreements** or any court-related documents pertaining to the child’s situation
* **DCF involvement paperwork**
* **Voucher paperwork** (if applicable)

**Annual Renewal**

All forms and enrollment fee payments must be completed annually to maintain enrollment.

**Toilet Training**

Toilet training status is **not** a requirement for enrollment. However, if your child is not toilet trained, you may be charged the **Infant/Toddler classroom rate** if they are enrolled in the Preschool/Pre-K classroom.

**Waitlist Policy**

If you contact Tiny Town, tour the school, meet and speak with the owner/director, and there is an immediate opening in your child’s appropriate age group that you would like them to start within 2 weeks, no additional fees are required aside from the enrollment fee and required paperwork. However, your **first week’s tuition** will be expected before or on your child’s first day.

**Types of Waitlists**

We offer two types of waitlists:

1. **Waiting for a Potential Spot**
2. **Holding a Spot for Your Child**

**Waiting for a Potential Spot:**
This applies if you have contacted Tiny Town, toured the school, and we currently do not have a spot available in your child’s age group. Since availability can change quickly, we may end up with unexpected openings. This waitlist is on a **first-come, first-serve** basis.

**Requirements:**

* Contacted Tiny Town, toured the school, met and spoke with the administration.
* First-come, first-serve order (must have completed paperwork and paid fees).

Once you’ve toured, your information will be added to the list in order of receipt. We will make every effort to contact you should any spot become available for the appropriate age group. If you decline the spot, we will continue to the next person on the list. If your child is enrolled and attending, you will be given the opportunity to add or change days as additional spots become available.

**Please note:** A spot is **NOT guaranteed** in this case.

**Holding a Spot for Your Child:**
This applies if you have contacted Tiny Town, toured the school, met and spoken with the owner/director, and there is an opening available within 3 months that you wish to claim for your child.

**Requirements:**

* If your child is starting school **within 2 weeks**, only the registration fee is required.
* If your child is starting **later than 2 weeks** but within 3 months, a **$600 non-refundable holding fee per child** is required. This fee does not go towards tuition.
* If you are pregnant, you may tour the school, but a spot **will not be held** until your baby is born and you have confirmed your decision to enroll your infant in childcare.
* **All fees** (registration, holding, and any required paperwork) must be received **within 24 hours** of your tour date to guarantee the spot.
* If you choose not to take the spot, all fees are non-refundable.

**Please note:** Receipt of fees and completed paperwork guarantees your child’s spot.

**Tuition Policy**

**Pricing and Annual Adjustments:**

Tiny Town, Inc. may adjust pricing at any time during the school year with a minimum of 30 days' notice. We strive to provide families with ample time to adjust to any new pricing and will do our best to work with families financially. Childcare is a valuable service, and in order to maintain high-quality educators and keep up with operational costs, tuition may be raised annually every September.

**Annual Re-Enrollment Registration Fee:**

* **$100.00 non-refundable fee** due the first week of September each year (with the exception of those enrolled between January and August of the same year).
* Pricing may differ across the various programs offered at Tiny Town. Updated pricing details will be provided as a separate document at the beginning of each school year.

**Registration Fees:**

Before enrollment, the following must be completed and returned to the center:

1. An **enrollment application** and all required paperwork
2. A **non-refundable enrollment fee of $150.00** (payable by cash or check)
3. All **spot holding fees** if applicable

**Availability of a space** is determined based on the date that the completed application, required paperwork, and fees are received at the center.

Enrollment fees are expected to be paid **annually** at the beginning of each school year along with the required paperwork.

**Tuition Fees and Accepted Forms of Payment:**

Tuition bills can be paid on a **weekly**, **bi-weekly**, or **monthly** basis. Payments are due on or before **Monday** of each week, bi-weekly, or month.

**Accepted forms of payment** include:

* **Cash**
* **Check** or **Cashier’s Check**
* **Money Orders**
* **Debit/Credit Card** via the Brightwheel app (either as a one-time payment or through automatic payments, which is preferred)

Payments can be made as follows:

* **Checks** should be placed in the tuition box at the front entrance or handed directly to the Director or a staff member.
* **Cash payments** should be made directly to the Director or Lead Teacher in charge to receive a receipt.

A **$35.00 fee** will be charged for any returned checks or failed ETF payments.

**Brightwheel service fees** are passed on to parents for transactions made through the app.

**Payment Commitment and Policy:**

Payment of your child’s tuition is a **serious commitment**. It is important to stay current with your tuition payments. If tuition payments are not up-to-date, continued participation in the center may be denied unless satisfactory arrangements have been made with the **Director/Owner**.

If a difficult financial situation arises, please contact the **Owner/Director** immediately to discuss options.

Since tuition is based on an \***annual model\***, the yearly amount is divided into weekly or monthly installments. **Full payment** of tuition and fees is due even if your child is absent for any reason, including illness (your child’s or a family member’s), school cancellations/closures, inclement weather, holidays, vacations, etc.

**There is no credit** for absences, and there are **no make-up days**. If you wish to add a day to your child’s schedule (if space is available), full payment for both days will be required **ahead of time**.

**Late Pick-up Fees:**

We understand that sometimes emergencies or unforeseen circumstances may prevent you from picking up your child by closing time. If you are running late, please **call ahead** to inform us. A staff member will remain with your child until a parent or a trusted contact arrives to pick them up. Prompt communication and arranging a backup pick-up is expected before staff are required to stay late.

If you pick up your child **after closing time (5:00 P.M.)**, the following late pick-up fees will apply:

* **$1.00 per minute** for the first 10 minutes after 5:00 P.M.
* After **5:10 P.M.**, the late fee will increase to **$10.00 per minute** for every additional minute your child remains in our care.

**Payment for late fees must be made in cash** and will be given directly to the teacher or Director who has stayed after hours with your child, regardless of how your usual tuition is normally paid (privately, voucher, grant, etc.)

Please note that late pick-up fees are not intended to be seen as an invitation to pick up children after hours or as personal babysitting time. To help track and enforce this policy, “Late Pick-Up” slips will be issued each time a child is picked up past 5:00 PM. These slips will include: Child’s name, Date, Time of pick-up, Fees owed, Parent signature. A copy of each slip will be sent home and placed in your child’s file. Only 3 late pick-up slips will be allowed. After the third, your child’s spot at Tiny Town will be forfeited.

**Late Payment Fees**

A **$100.00 late fee** will be added to the tuition for each week that payment is late, in addition to the current tuition amount. If payment is not received within **2 weeks**, the child’s spot will be forfeited, and enrollment will be terminated.

**Vouchers & Grants**

Tiny Town does accept **limited subsidy payments** through PACE/DCF vouchers and grants. It is the **parent's responsibility** to pay their portion of the tuition co-pay or obtain the Director’s signature for reimbursement. Additionally, it is the parent’s responsibility to ensure that **updated, annual paperwork** is submitted **before** the voucher/grant expires.

If the voucher expires without renewal, the parent will be responsible for paying the tuition **out of pocket**. In such cases, payment may be **prorated** if the expiration was not realized in time for the proper renewal.

**Withdrawal Policy**

If you plan to **withdraw your child** from the center entirely, a **two-week written notice** is required, along with payment of **two weeks' tuition**, regardless of whether your child attends school during that time. If no written notice is provided, tuition will still be expected as usual, and if you decide to withdraw your child abruptly, tuition will still be invoiced.

If your child does not attend for **2+ weeks** without any communication, their spot will be **forfeited**.

**Temporary Withdrawal**

If you plan to temporarily withdraw your child for **two weeks or more** and do not wish to pay for that time period, we will do our best to hold your spot. However, **holding your spot is not guaranteed**. If a spot becomes available for another child, we will reach out to you to offer the option of paying to **hold your spot**.

**Note**: This applies to situations such as summer vacations, family illness, personal vacations, moving, etc. If you wish to temporarily withdraw, please notify the **Director at least two weeks in advance**. Unless there is an agreement made with the Director, **both parties must have full understanding** of the arrangement for temporary withdrawal.

**Drop off & Pick Up Procedures**

**Parents/Guardians/Trusted adults must use the front entrance and use the code to access the front door. Please do not give the entry code out to anyone not on your approved contact list, we try to keep the code between enrolled families and staff only. If the door code changes, families will be notified.**

Tiny Town opens at **8:00 AM**, and we kindly ask that children arrive **before or by 10:00 AM** so we can begin our educational day. If you are running late or have an appointment, please notify us via **phone call or Brightwheel message** **before or by 10:00 AM**. Without communication, we will assume your child is absent for the day. If there is no communication by 10:00 AM, we will start contacting the emergency contact list.

For safety reasons, it is crucial to communicate your child's attendance with us. Children will not be allowed to arrive **after lunchtime** unless approved by the Director. We also do not allow children to be dropped off during nap time unless they are being picked up by someone else in the evening, or they are transitioning between schools.

If a parent or legal guardian will be late for pick-up, **please notify us in advance**. If you need your child to arrive earlier than their typical drop-off time, please arrange it with the Director beforehand. **Early arrivals will not be permitted without prior approval** as staffing is based on contracted drop-off and pick-up times.

For security, the center will not release your child to anyone other than their parent or regular appointed pick-up person **without written parental authority**. The person picking up must show a valid **ID** to any staff member who does not recognize them, and the name on the ID must match the written authority or pick-up list.

**Drop-off and pick-up times should be limited to about 5 minutes.** Extended times may make it more challenging for your child to start their daily routine. Each classroom has its own routine, so please let your child’s teacher know if there’s anything specific we can do to ease transitions.

Children should **walk into school independently** and start their morning routine on their own (if able). Similarly, pick-up should be quick and efficient. Extended pick-ups can cause disruption in the classroom, potentially upsetting children who haven’t been picked up yet or leading to unwanted behaviors in front of their caregivers.

**Parking Lot Safety Rules**

At pick-up and drop-off times, Tiny Town Inc. asks that you:

* **Stay Alert**: Always pay attention to your child, hold their hand in the parking lot, and place them in their car seat as quickly as possible. Children must be securely buckled into their car seat.
* **Siblings**: If you need extra time to get your child and siblings out of the car, please have siblings wait in the hallway entrance to avoid distractions and ensure safety.
* **Parking Lot Safety**: The parking lot can be dangerous as vehicles often speed through. Please refrain from running around or engaging in extended conversations in the parking lot. For safety, stay away from the emergency ramp near the Infant/Toddler room. We ask that you do not socialize around the property after picking up your child, as we need to maintain a safe and efficient environment.
* **Close at 5:00 PM**: We close at 5:00 PM, and staff/Director are not permitted to leave until all children have been picked up and all families have exited the premises.
* **Children in Vehicles**: Massachusetts state law prohibits leaving children unattended in cars. Please do not leave infants or children in the car while dropping off or picking up. If needed, we are happy to meet you at the door for drop-off, bring your child to your car at pick-up, or stand by your car to assist, depending on staff availability. Please contact your child’s teacher in advance to make these arrangements.
* **Parking**: Please be respectful and park in the designated, lined spaces. Avoid parking on the grass, shells, or in the middle of the parking lot. Our parking lot must remain organized for the safety of all families, especially since other parents are pulling in and backing up, and Vanpool/PPS buses are dropping off children.

**Respectful Behavior at Pick-Up**

* **Please be respectful of teachers and the classroom environment at the end of the day.** Our staff is scheduled so that the classrooms can be thoroughly cleaned, organized, and disinfected. Teachers should be able to leave at their scheduled times without having to re-clean their classrooms or put away toys. We kindly ask that you **keep your child with their own belongings** and **clean up any messes** they may have made. This cooperation is greatly appreciated and helps ensure the smooth end-of-day routine.
* **When you arrive, your child is your responsibility.** Please keep them safe on the premises and hold them accountable for their actions. We ask that you supervise them closely during pick-up to maintain a safe and respectful environment for everyone.
* **Pick-up is not a time for parent-teacher conferences.** Teachers still have children to supervise and tasks to complete before the end of the day. If you need a longer conversation (10+ minutes), please **message, email, or call** to arrange a suitable time to discuss.
* Additionally, **please refrain from using your cellphone** during drop-off and pick-up. Your child and their caregivers deserve your full attention during these moments.

**Awake and Alert Policy**

At Tiny Town Inc. we prioritize the safety, well-being, and developmental growth of every child. As part of our efforts to support independence and create a smooth transition for children entering school each day, we have implemented the following guidelines:

**1. Awake and Alert Upon Arrival:**

* All students, regardless of age, must arrive at school awake and alert. Infants may not remain in carriers if asleep upon arrival. If students are not able to participate because of being too tired and sleeping, we will ask families to pick up their children.
* Parents/guardians are encouraged to ensure their child is fully awake before arriving not only for safety, but also to help ease the transition into the classroom.

**2. Encouraging Independence:**

* Children who are able to walk should do so independently when entering the building, accompanied by their parent/guardian, rather than being carried. This helps promote physical independence and builds confidence in their ability to navigate their environment.
* This practice also supports the child’s emotional development by fostering a smoother separation when it is time for parents to leave.

**3. Separation Support:**

* We understand that separation can be challenging for some children. By encouraging them to walk into the building on their own (with parent support), we aim to build resilience and confidence, making the separation process easier for both children and parents.
* Our staff is here to assist children with any emotional needs and provide support as they adjust to their school day.

**4. Parent and Guardian Partnership:**

* We encourage open communication with parents and guardians regarding any difficulties with separation or other concerns related to transitions.
* If a child consistently has difficulty waking up or engaging upon arrival, we may discuss strategies with the family to address these issues and ensure the child has a positive start to their day.

**School & Classroom Information**

* **Bulletin Boards and Brightwheel**: Important center information, announcements, lost & found items, permission slips, and other updates will be displayed on bulletin boards within the classrooms. Your child’s artwork will also be showcased here. Each classroom sends out newsletters monthly, either on paper or via Brightwheel, with specific news related to your child’s class. Major school announcements and holiday events will also be communicated through the Brightwheel app.
* **Traditions at Tiny Town**: Tiny Town has built a strong foundation of traditions over the years. We celebrate holidays, birthdays, graduations, special events, in-house field trips, and visits from special guests. Parents are often invited to volunteer for snack contributions or to participate in these events. These traditions are something families look forward to year after year and help make Tiny Town unique.
* **Accommodations for Traditions**: If a family does not agree with a specific tradition, we will listen to their concerns and have a conversation with the Director to explore possible accommodations. Possible options might include removing the child from the group for the event, planning a separate activity for children who do not participate, or offering a tuition credit for absence from the program on the day of the event. However, accommodations are not guaranteed due to staffing requirements, and traditions themselves will not be canceled or adjusted.

**Behavior Management Policy**

**Discipline/Redirection:**
At Tiny Town, discipline, guidance, and redirection are consistent and always based on the individual needs of the child. Age-appropriate behaviors and incidents are prioritized. Our professional teachers undergo regular training to ensure effective interaction and guidance with each child. **Redirection** and **positive reinforcement** are our primary strategies for behavior management.

**Positive Guidance Strategies to Prevent Unwanted Behaviors:**

* **Monitoring**: Teachers observe children for signs of negative behavior, such as tattling, power struggles, physical space issues, or negative body language, to prevent escalation and mistreatment of others.
* **Encouraging Communication**: Children are encouraged to express their feelings through words or signs rather than through actions.
* **Curriculum Integration**: Social-emotional and conflict resolution skills, such as sharing, taking turns, and asking for toys, are embedded into the daily curriculum. Role-play and puppet play are often used to teach and practice these skills.

**Expected Behaviors for Redirection/Discipline:**

The **most important rule** for children, staff, and families at Tiny Town is **safety**. Any behavior that compromises safety is taken very seriously.

Tiny Town **staff** **does not** engage in the following discipline strategies:

* **Corporal punishment** of any kind (e.g., spanking, hitting, shaking)
* **Cruel or severe punishment**, humiliation, isolation, etc.
* **Denial of food, water, or bathroom needs**
* **Forced feeding or forced sleeping**
* **Punishment for toileting accidents**
* **Discrimination** due to religion, race, gender, or any other factor

Any use of these methods would result in immediate dismissal of the staff member involved and further investigation.

**Tolerable/Expected Behaviors:**

It is **normal** for children to test boundaries as they learn how to behave in a group setting. At Tiny Town, staff members are trained to redirect negative behaviors appropriately. The following behaviors are considered **tolerable** and **expected** as part of a child’s development:

* Crying
* Yelling
* Appearing upset
* Physical altercations **within certain limits** (e.g., hitting, kicking, scratching)
* Throwing objects **within certain limits**
* Refusal to participate

**Steps for Redirection and Discipline:**

1. **Verbal Intervention:** Staff will use verbal intervention to talk with the child about their behavior, explaining in an age-appropriate way why the behavior is undesirable. Positive alternatives will be suggested. Teachers may use visual aids such as posters, cue cards, and rules posted in the classroom to help children understand the difference between positive and negative behaviors.
2. **Take a Break:** If verbal intervention does not resolve the behavior, the child may be asked to take a break in a safe quiet space. The child will try to calm their body in a quiet area where they are still visible to the staff member. The purpose of this break is for the child to calm down, reflect, and rejoin the group when they are ready. The break will last no longer than one minute per year of the child's age.
3. **Staff Collaboration:** If needed, a staff member will seek support from another teacher. Both staff members will work together, or give the other teacher a break to re-establish a calm and positive environment.
4. **Teacher’s Choice**: When a child is having difficulty playing safely or is struggling with their emotions in a group setting, we implement **Teacher’s Choice**. This approach provides the child with an opportunity to calm their body and regain control in a safe and supportive space. When a child is struggling, we guide them to a designated space chosen by the teacher. This space allows the child to take a break, away from the group, to help them calm down. The teacher stays close by, often sitting with the child, doing an activity together, and talking through their emotions. We reflect with the child about how their body was feeling when they had trouble. This helps the child recognize and name their feelings.

**Steps for Consistent or Unmanageable Negative Behaviors:**

* **Parent Conference:** If negative behaviors persist, a meeting with the parent or guardian may be scheduled to address the issue. Continued disruptive or dangerous behavior may result in dismissal from the center (see Intolerable Behaviors).
* **Incident/Injury Reports/ABC DATA:**
	+ If a child causes injury to another child, staff member, or property, an **incident report** will be completed as required by state regulations.
	+ If a child is injured, an **injury report** will be filed, and the parent/guardian will be notified immediately. Both reports are kept confidential.
	+ To better help track behavior patterns, teachers may take anecdotal observations using **ABC Data Forms** (Antecedent, Behavior, Consequence) within the classroom.

**Intolerable/Reportable Behavior:**

If a child's behavior is dangerous, unsafe, or traumatic to others, immediate action will be taken. This may include taking the child to a safe area, attending to the injured party, and notifying the Director. The following behaviors are considered **intolerable** and will result in immediate action:

* **Severe physical injury** to any person (e.g., hitting, kicking, biting, punching, choking)
* **Throwing objects** or furniture in an attempt to cause harm or damage
* **Extreme anger or rage** that cannot be calmed or redirected
* **Consistent disruption of the group**, requiring one-on-one supervision
* **Inappropriate use of classroom or playground materials** to cause harm
* **Threatening to harm**any child or staff member in the school, or making violent threats against the school as a whole.
* **Repeated incidents** of unmanageable behavior, especially if causing injury or disruption, may result in the child being sent home for the day and require a 24-hour respite day at home. Multiple reportable incidents within a single day may lead to sending the child home for the day. Continued instances of unmanageable behavior can lead to termination from the center

**Biting Policy**

Tiny Town Inc. recognizes that biting is a common developmental stage, especially among infants, toddlers, and young preschoolers. It is generally a phase that children will outgrow, and there are various reasons why a child may bite. **Common Reasons for Biting:**

* Teething
* Exploration
* Stress or frustration
* Imitating behavior
* Personal space being violated or crowded
* Lack of vocabulary
* Seeking attention/affection

**Classroom Strategies to Discourage Biting:**

In our infant, toddler, and preschool classrooms, biting is an expected part of development. To discourage this behavior, teachers regularly communicate with the children, using books, posters, pictures, verbal and visual cues, and group discussions about appropriate behavior.

While biting, hitting, and yelling are typical behaviors at this stage, we take the following steps when a biting incident occurs:

1. **First-Time Incident:**
	* Observe the child closely to determine if there is a pattern or if the incident was an isolated event.
	* Record relevant details (e.g., teething, overcrowding, or competition for a toy).
2. **In All Cases:**
	* Comfort the child who was bitten and apply first aid.
	* Firmly inform the child who bit that “biting hurts,” while continuing to comfort the bitten child.
	* Wash the bitten area thoroughly with soap and water, check for broken skin, and apply ice.
	* Notify an administrator immediately and contact both sets of parents. Parents should consult a pediatrician, especially if the injury is on the face or hands.
	* Complete Injury and Incident Reports for both children.
	* Maintain ongoing communication with parents and staff, discussing strategies to address the behavior at both home and school.
	* Provide relevant articles to parents and staff, and make referrals to outside services if necessary. Research will also be done to obtain appropriate oral fixation tools to help prevent biting.
3. **If Biting Becomes a Pattern:**
	* If a child repeatedly bites, extra care is taken to avoid situations that may trigger the behavior, and the child will be closely monitored with direct supervision.
4. **After Multiple Incidents:**
	* **Two Reportable Biting Incidents in One Day:** The child will be sent home for the day, and a plan of action meeting will be required before their return.
	* **Multiple Biting Incidents:** The child must stay home for the remainder of the week to allow for respite, and a follow-up meeting will be held before returning.
	* A child may be temporarily excluded until a suitable action plan is in place, or until one-on-one care or behavioral tools are available to prevent further incidents.

**Termination Due to Continued Biting Behavior:**

Tiny Town reserves the right to terminate the child's position at the center to ensure the safety of others. If all efforts have been exhausted and the child continues to bite within a short period (e.g., daily, a week or a month), or if:

* The same child repeatedly bites another child
* The action plan or referrals are not being taken seriously
* Interventions are ineffective in a group setting

**Incident Confidentiality and Documentation**

* **Documentation of Incidents:**
All incidents, including biting and injuries, are documented on our standard incident and injury report forms. The forms are completed and signed by both the teacher and the administrator. Two copies are made: one for the child's home and one to be kept on file at the center. Incidents are also recorded in a main log in the office, and in a classroom log. Parents will be notified via Brightwheel or phone call of any incidents, depending on the time of day incidents may be reported in person at pick up with the correct forms.
	+ **Incident Forms** will be provided to parents if their child was the one who bit.
	+ **Injury Forms** will be provided if their child was the one who was bitten.
* **Confidentiality:**
The names of the children involved in the incident are kept confidential. We aim to have private discussions with parents, either by phone before pick-up or privately in the office, to avoid labeling the child who bit/injured another child and to respect the privacy of the child who was harmed. This approach allows our teachers to focus their time and energy on addressing the behavior and working to prevent future incidents.
* **Parental Communication:**
We encourage parents to bring any concerns or frustrations directly to their child’s teacher or the administrator. Tiny Town advises against approaching other families directly regarding an incident, even if your child informs you about who bit or harmed them. Please understand that it is emotionally challenging for both families involved in such incidents, and direct communication can often escalate the situation.

**Age-Appropriate Reconciliation**

* When an incident occurs, we consider the age and developmental stage of the children involved. As children grow and develop, they will naturally begin to understand empathy and take responsibility for their actions. We do not expect infants or toddlers to apologize for their actions, nor do we expect preschoolers to fully grasp the meaning of “sorry” or truly regret their actions at this stage of their development.
* We do not force children to apologize or prompt apologies, as we aim to teach them to develop these skills independently. In the moment, we encourage children to “check in” with each other by asking if the other child is “okay,” offering a handshake or a hug, or pointing out emotional cues like, “Your friend’s face looks sad because you hurt them.” We allow space and separation when needed and then gently guide children to check in with one another.
* When a child is developmentally ready, we teach them when and how to express an apology, but we always wait for the right moment. We believe each day offers a “clean slate,” and past incidents are not brought up, as every child deserves the opportunity to start fresh.

**Benefits of Inclusive Childcare**

Inclusive childcare offers a wide range of benefits for all children, fostering an environment where they can learn from and interact with peers of similar ages, and develop important social and emotional skills. Some of the benefits include:

* Opportunities to learn through observation and interaction with other children.
* Support and time to build meaningful relationships with peers.
* Practical chances to practice social skills in real-world situations.
* Exposure to a diverse range of stimulating and challenging activities.
* A pace and environment that supports individual learning and growth.
* The chance to build connections with caring adults beyond their parents.

For typically developing children, interacting with peers who have special needs offers additional advantages, such as:

* A greater appreciation and acceptance of individual differences.
* Increased empathy toward others.
* Preparation for a more inclusive and diverse society.
* Opportunities to master new skills by practicing and teaching others.

Tiny Town Inc. is guided by Vygotsky’s theory of social constructivism, which emphasizes learning in a social context. We believe that a community of learners, rich in diverse backgrounds and experiences, provides the ideal setting for growth. In our classrooms, children learn to navigate social relationships—collaborating, negotiating, empathizing, persevering through challenges, and finding solutions together.

Tiny Town Inc. is a small, open-floor daycare and preschool environment, adhering to EEC teacher-to-student ratios. As a result, we do not have the resources to separate or isolate children, either temporarily or permanently, based on parent or guardian requests. If there is a documented safety concern or behavior issue involving children, we take steps to ensure children are closely monitored when interacting. We may also prompt children to engage in different areas of the classroom to maintain a safe and supportive environment. If necessary, a meeting will be held with families to discuss concerns and reconsider enrollment. Accommodations such as permanently separating children in classrooms are not feasible within our setting, and such requests cannot be granted.

**Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI) at Tiny Town**

Through the Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI), the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) provides funding to districts across the state to foster partnerships between school districts and local early education programs. The primary goal of this initiative is to expand access to high-quality preschool education within the district. We are fortunate at Tiny Town to participate in this competitive grant program.

As part of this initiative, we have an itinerant team of specialists, including a special education teacher, a speech-language pathologist, a board-certified behavior analyst, and an occupational therapist. This team works closely with our Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten classrooms, supporting the entire class while also providing individualized services for children with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). We also collaborate with the Plymouth Early Childhood Center to ensure that we are providing the highest quality education and support for all children.

**Screening and Parental Consent**

As part of this initiative, all Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten students will undergo automatic screening unless a parent chooses not to have their child involved in the grant program. Permission forms will be provided for parents to consent to their child’s participation in this program and to authorize further evaluation if needed.

**Required Documents**

To complete the registration process for Preschool or Pre-Kindergarten programs, your child will be assigned a state ID (SASID Number). In addition to the required enrollment forms, we will need your child’s **birth certificate and completed CPPI registration forms**.

**Referral Policy**

At Tiny Town, our teachers and staff hold degrees and certifications in Early Childhood Education, and we are required to complete special needs training each year to ensure inclusivity for all children. While we strive to accommodate every child in our care, it is important to note that we are not exclusively special education teachers. Therefore, we work closely with parents/guardians to refer children to appropriate services that can help them succeed. The referral process is a collaborative effort, and parents/guardians must actively participate for it to be effective.

If ongoing concerns persist and we cannot provide one-on-one care, the Director and the center reserve the right to terminate the child’s enrollment if Tiny Town is determined not to be the best fit for the child's needs. However, all efforts will be made to avoid this step.

**Written Plan for Referral Services**

Tiny Town follows these procedures for referring parents/guardians to the appropriate social, behavioral, mental health, educational, and medical services:

1. **Observation & Initial Concerns**:
	* The lead teacher will regularly monitor and observe concerns, keeping written notes.
	* The teacher will discuss the observations with the Director.
2. **Director's Observation**:
	* The Director will also observe the child and meet with the lead teacher to discuss concerns.
3. **Parent Conference**:
	* The Director will contact the parent/guardian to arrange a conference. Both the Director and lead teacher will discuss the concerns and available options.
4. **Referral Resources**:
	* The Director maintains an up-to-date list of referral resources for various services. This list is available for parents.

**Referral Meeting with Parents/Legal Guardians**

* The Director will schedule a meeting with the parents/guardians and lead teacher to discuss concerns and provide a list of potential referral resources.
* During the meeting, the Director will give the parents a written statement that includes:
	+ The reason for recommending the referral.
	+ A brief summary of the center’s observations.
	+ Any efforts the center has made to accommodate the child’s needs.
* The Director will assist parents/guardians in making the referral, including offering to contact the service provider on their behalf with written consent.
* For children **3 years or older**, the Director will inform parents/guardians about available services and their rights, including the **Right to Appeal** under Chapter 766.
* For children **under 3 years old**, the Director will inform parents/guardians about services available through Early Intervention Programs, Plymouth Public Schools (PECC) the town's integrated preschool program.

**Follow-up to Referral**

* With parental/guardian permission, the Director will contact the referral agency or service provider to evaluate the child and help meet their needs at the center.
* If the child does not require services or is ineligible, the center will review the child's progress every three (3) months to determine if another referral is necessary.

**Record of Referrals**

* The Director and Lead Teacher will keep a written record of all referrals, including parent/guardian meetings and the results. This record will be maintained in the child’s file.

**Referral Resources**

Here is a list of community resources for social, behavioral, mental health, educational, and medical services:

* **Justice Resource Institute**: 508-468-6042
* **Plymouth Early Childhood Center**: 508-830-4347
* **Kennedy Donovan Early Intervention**: 508-747-2012
* **Child at Risk Hotline**: 1-800-792-5200
* **Department of Children and Families (Plymouth)**: 508-732-6200
* **Massachusetts Prevention of Cruelty to Children (Plymouth)**: 508-746-2490
* **Parental Stress Hotline**: 1-800-632-8188
* **Welfare Office (Plymouth)**: 508-732-3100
* **Department of Early Education and Care**: 508-828-5025
* **Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital Hotline** (for doctors, dentists, vision, and hearing screenings): 1-800-256-7326

**Plan to Avoid Suspension and Termination**

At Tiny Town Inc., the Director, teachers, and staff will collaboratively assess whether a child is benefiting from their attendance at the center. However, the final decision regarding suspension or termination will rest with the Director. This decision may be necessary when the health and safety of staff or other children are at risk due to a child's behavior.

Additionally, suspension or termination may occur if the child’s developmental needs are not being met at the center because the child requires specialized services that the center cannot provide. While referral efforts will be made to address these needs, if these efforts are unsuccessful, the parents/legal guardians will be notified in writing of the need for termination. Prior to making a termination decision, concerns and issues will be discussed with the parents/guardians. All efforts will be made to secure an outside evaluation that states the child’s needs can be better met in another setting. All discussions and correspondence related to this matter will be documented in the child’s file. The Director will work to make the transition from the center as smooth as possible.

**Termination of services may also occur if the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) fail to comply with the center's policies, including but not limited to the following:**

* Continuous tardiness in dropping off in the morning or picking up the child at the end of the day
* Failure to make scheduled payments or pay due fees for childcare services
* Failure to follow health and safety guidelines
* Malicious damage to property, including the Center’s property
* Physical attacks on other children or staff members
* Failure to complete required paperwork for the child’s file
* Failure to follow through with a child’s behavioral plan
* Inappropriate private conversations initiated in classroom spaces
* Failure to provide life saving medication with proper documentation
* Gossiping about children or families associated with the Center, either within or outside the Center
* Attempt to discipline or yell at any child that is not your own
* Any individual found accessing the property (including parking lot) before or after hours (8:00AM-5:00PM) without prior approval will be subject to termination
* Defamation of Tiny Town Inc. in person, news outlets, or on social media/online
* Use of harassment of any kind; verbal, physical, sexual, emotional
* Use of demeaning inappropriate language, swearing, or yelling towards any educator or administrator (written or verbal)
* Attempts to control classroom management or remove staff without proper reasoning or understanding that may hinder the educational environment for all children involved
* **Unreasonable Demands:** Any unwarranted or excessive demands on the time, attention, or services of staff, or making unreasonable requests that create undue pressure or strain on staff and resources.
* Threats made of any kind to any staff member or administration
* Inappropriate communication with staff during or after hours
* **Interference with Staff Duties:** Consistently undermining or questioning the authority and expertise of staff, consistent mistrust in daycare center staff.
	+ At Tiny Town Inc., we value open communication and trust between families and staff. However, if a parent or guardian consistently expresses a lack of trust in the center’s ability to provide quality care, or if they make false or unfounded reports against the center, it may create a conflict of interest and disrupt the positive environment needed for the child’s well-being.
	+ In such cases, the center reserves the right to discontinue services. A consistent pattern of undermining or questioning the professionalism, care, and safety standards of the center may result in the termination of care for the child. This policy aims to maintain a supportive and respectful environment for both staff and children.
	+ If there are genuine concerns or issues, we encourage parents/guardians to engage in constructive dialogue with the Director and staff to resolve any conflicts. However, if the situation cannot be resolved amicably or continues to undermine the center’s operations, services may be discontinued.

**Involving Daycare Staff in Personal Family Issues or Court Matters**

* Tiny Town Inc. expects all families to maintain appropriate boundaries between personal family matters and the professional responsibilities of daycare staff. Daycare staff are not to be involved in personal family disputes, court matters, or any situations that are unrelated to the child's care and well-being at the center.
* Parents/legal guardians should not request or pressure daycare staff to take sides or provide testimony in legal matters, family disputes, or personal issues, as staff members are not permitted to serve as witnesses or participants in these matters. Any attempts to involve staff in such issues will be addressed promptly and may lead to a reevaluation of the family’s standing with the center.
* The center's primary focus is the care, safety, and development of the children. All interactions with staff should respect the professional roles and responsibilities of the daycare team. If there are concerns about personal matters or court issues, the family should seek appropriate professional guidance outside of the daycare setting.

**Involvement of Law Enforcement or Legal Action:**

* If there is a situation involving law enforcement, legal disputes, or serious concerns about the child’s well-being, Tiny Town Inc. reserves the right to terminate daycare services immediately without notice due to a conflict of interest. This could include cases of suspected abuse or neglect, or other issues that may require external intervention.

***In the event that Tiny Town Inc. decides to suspend or terminate a child/family for any reason, written documentation will be provided to the parents/legal guardians outlining the specific reasons for the proposed suspension or termination. This document will also outline any circumstances under which the child may return to the center, if applicable.***

**Transition Policy**

At our center, we strive to ensure that transitions—whether due to a child's departure or a move to another group—are handled thoughtfully, with care, and in a way that supports the emotional well-being of the child. The following guidelines outline our approach to managing transitions.

**Departure of a Child:**

When a child is terminated from the center or withdrawn by their parents, the staff will approach the situation with sensitivity, preparing both the child and the other children in the classroom. The departure will be communicated positively, with simple and reassuring statements such as, “They are going to a different school to help them learn.” Discussions about the child’s departure will be framed in a positive light to minimize any feelings of anxiety or sadness.

To create a sense of closure, the children in the class will be encouraged to engage in an activity such as drawing, making a poster or card, creating a special photo with the class, or hosting a small goodbye party in the departing child’s honor. These activities will allow the children to express their feelings and offer a positive, memorable farewell.

In the event of a sudden departure where there is no opportunity for these closure activities, the class teacher will write a simple goodbye note to the child. This note may include a photo of the child with the class or drawings from the other children. All correspondence regarding the child’s departure will be positive and open-ended, and copies of any documentation, including efforts made to support the child, will be kept in the child’s file for reference.

**Transition from One Group to Another:**

When a child is transitioning from one group to another, the staff will work collaboratively with the child’s parents to ensure the child’s needs are met. With parental consent, the teachers involved, along with the parents, will meet to discuss the child’s specific needs and develop strategies to provide extra support during this transition. This meeting will help ensure the child’s emotional and developmental needs are addressed as they adjust to their new group and environment.

Through clear communication, a supportive environment, and thoughtful planning, we aim to make transitions as smooth as possible for all children in our care.

**Grievance Policy**

At our center, we believe that open communication is key to ensuring the well-being of every child and fostering a positive relationship between parents, legal guardians, and staff. If concerns arise, we encourage parents or legal guardians to follow the steps below:

1. **Discuss Concerns with Immediate Caregiver or Lead Teacher**
If a concern or issue arises, we encourage parents or legal guardians to address it as soon as possible with the child’s immediate caregiver or the Lead Teacher. This is often the most effective way to clarify the situation and resolve any misunderstandings.
2. **Meet with Assitant Director**
3. **Meet with the Owner/Director**
If the concern is not resolved after speaking with the caregiver or Lead Teacher, or if further discussion is needed, parents/legal guardians are welcome to schedule a meeting with the Director of the center. To arrange this meeting, parents can either call the center or send an email. During this meeting, parents may choose to discuss their child’s needs with any teacher of their choice, including the Director.

Our goal is to address any concerns in a timely and respectful manner, ensuring that all issues are handled with care and consideration. We are committed to working collaboratively with parents and legal guardians to support the best interests of the child. ***No parent will face any negative consequences for reporting legitimate concerns to EEC.***

**Allegations of Abuse/Neglect Policy**

At our center, the safety and well-being of every child is our utmost priority. This policy outlines the procedures for identifying and reporting suspected child abuse or neglect in accordance with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) regulations and our commitment to protecting children.

**Definitions:**

* **Child Abuse**: The non-accidental commission of any act by a caretaker that causes or creates a substantial risk of harm to a child's physical or emotional well-being, including sexual abuse.
* **Child Neglect**: The failure by a caretaker, either deliberately or through negligence, to provide necessary care for a child, including but not limited to, food, safety, clothing, shelter, medical care, supervision, or other essential needs.

**Allegations of Abuse/Neglect Against a Staff Member:**

If there is reasonable cause to believe that a staff member may have been abusive or neglectful toward a child, the following steps will be taken:

1. **Immediate Notification**: The person who suspects abuse or neglect shall immediately report the concern to the Director.
2. **Assessment by Director**: The Director will assess the situation, ensuring a thorough investigation is conducted by gathering information from relevant individuals, including teachers and parents.
3. **Reporting to Authorities**: The Director will report the suspected incident to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) as required by law.
4. **Suspension of the Staff Member**: The staff member in question will be immediately removed from direct contact with children and will be placed on administrative leave with pay pending the outcome of the investigation.
5. **Corrective Action**: If allegations are substantiated through the investigation, corrective action, up to and including termination, will be taken.

**Identification of Suspected Abuse or Neglect:**

* The Director is responsible for contacting the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to report any suspected abuse or neglect.
* A written statement may be required by DCF, and the Director will make every effort to learn the details of the situation.
* If a 51A report is filed against a staff member, the EEC and DCF must be notified.
* DCF will either "screen in" or "screen out" the report. If the report is screened in, DCF will conduct an investigation to determine whether the allegations are supported.

**Documentation of Concerns:**

* **Timeline for Reporting**: Reports must be made to DCF and EEC (as needed) within **24 hours** of the concern being raised. A written report must follow within **48 hours**.
* **Contact Information**:
	+ **Local DCF Office**: 508-732-6200 (Child-at-Risk Hotlink) / 800-792-5200
	+ **Local EEC Office**: 508-828-5025

**Mandated Reporters:**

State law requires professionals who work with children in childcare or school settings to report suspected abuse or neglect. As mandated reporters, staff must:

* **Oral Report**: Make an immediate oral report to DCF if they have reasonable cause to believe a child under the age of 18 is being abused or neglected.
* **Written Report**: Submit a written report to DCF within 48 hours.

Staff members are strongly encouraged to report any concerns to the Director. However, if a staff member feels their concern has not been adequately addressed, they are legally entitled to make a report to DCF independently. The center staff is required to follow the appropriate steps, regardless of who files the report. Any profession defined by law as a mandated reporter, is required to assist in a 51B investigation or initial assessment, even if they are not the filer of the 51A report. Mandated reporters who are licensed by the Commonwealth are required to complete training to recognize and report suspected child abuse and/or neglect.

It is important to note that anyone, at any time, can contact DCF and file a 51A report if they have reasonable cause to suspect abuse or neglect. The center must fully comply with any subsequent investigations and actions that arise from such reports. The department does not require any kind of physical documentation that indicates abuse/neglect to make a report.

Our center is committed to ensuring a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment for all children in our care, and we take all necessary measures to protect them from harm.

**Parental Rights Policy**

In accordance with Chapter 28, Section 10 of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) holds the legal responsibility for regulating the operation of day care centers, including nursery schools. Tiny Town, Incorporated, as the licensee, is required to inform all parents/legal guardians of their rights as outlined in the regulations upon admission of their child to the center. Below are the parental rights and procedures that are in place to ensure transparency, communication, and respect for families:

**Parental Rights:**

1. **Parent Visits:**
Parents/legal guardians are permitted to make unannounced visits to the center and their child’s classroom while their child is present. We encourage parental involvement and ensure that parents can observe and evaluate the care provided.
2. **Parent Input:**
Parents/legal guardians have the opportunity to provide input in the development of the center's policies and programs. If a written response is requested, the center will respond in writing to the parent/legal guardian.
3. **Reports to Parents:**
The program will provide written progress reports regarding each child's participation and development within the center at least **every six (6) months**. In addition:
	* For infants and children with disabilities, the center will provide a written developmental report every **three (3) months**.
	* The center will inform parents/legal guardians immediately of any significant developments or special concerns related to their child’s development.
4. **Parent Conferences:**
The program will make staff available for individual conferences with parents/legal guardians upon request. These conferences are intended to discuss the child’s progress and address any concerns.
5. **Confidentiality & Distribution of Records:**
Information in a child’s file is privileged and confidential. The center will not release information from a child’s record to anyone not directly involved in the implementation of the program without written consent from the child's parent/legal guardian. If a child’s record is subpoenaed, the parent/legal guardian will be notified.
	* Parents/legal guardians have the right to access their child’s file at reasonable times, and access shall not be delayed more than **two (2) business days** after the request is made, unless written consent is given by the parent/legal guardian.
	* The center will maintain a permanent log of any person to whom information from a child’s file has been released. This log will include the name, position, date, portions of the file released, the purpose of the release, and the signature of the person receiving the information.
6. **Amending the Child’s File:**
Parents/legal guardians have the right to add information or comments to their child’s file. They may also request deletions or amendments of the information contained in the file. If a parent/legal guardian disagrees with the contents of the file, they can meet with the Director to discuss the issue. The Director will respond within **one (1) week** of the conference in writing, stating the reasons for the decision.
7. **Transfer of Records:**
Upon written request from the parent/legal guardian, the center will transfer the child’s file to the parent/legal guardian or to another individual designated by the parent/legal guardian when the child leaves the center.
8. **Notification to Parents/Legal Guardians:**
The center will notify parents/legal guardians of the provisions of this policy upon the child’s admission to the center and will provide written notification at least **once a year** thereafter.

**Information Required by the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC):**

* The center is required to provide any information requested by the EEC that is necessary for regulatory compliance. EEC employees are authorized to review information at the center but will not remove identifying case materials from the premises.

**Meeting with Parents/Legal Guardians:**

* Prior to admitting a child to the center, the center will meet with the parent/legal guardian to provide the following information:
	+ Written statements of the center’s purposes, services, referral policies, procedures for parent conferences, visitations, and input into center policies.
	+ Information related to child’s file procedures and emergency health care protocols.
	+ Opportunity for parents/legal guardians to visit the center’s classrooms either at the time of the meeting or prior to enrollment.

Additionally, the center will maintain a copy of the EEC regulations on the premises and will provide it to any person upon request.

**Unlimited Access:**

* **Parent/Legal Guardian Access:**
Parents/legal guardians are authorized to visit the center during operating hours to observe their child and evaluate the care provided.
* **Court Orders:**
Court orders will be strictly followed. A copy of any relevant court order may be placed in the child’s file to corroborate the court’s instructions.

**Tiny Town, Incorporated** is committed to providing an environment that respects and upholds the rights of all parents and legal guardians. We strive to maintain open communication and a collaborative relationship with families, ensuring the best possible care and support for each child.

**Contingency Plans**

Tiny Town Child Care Center has developed a series of contingency plans to ensure the safety, health, and well-being of all children and staff in case of emergencies. These procedures are put in place to manage a variety of emergency situations, from power outages to medical emergencies.

**Emergency Contact:**

* All staff members carry cell phones to ensure they can contact parents/guardians in case of emergency.

**Power Outage or Loss of Heat/Water:**

* In the event of a power outage, loss of heat, or water, parents/guardians will be notified immediately and asked to arrange for the pick-up of their child(ren) from the center.

**Plan for Missing Children**

While we aim to prevent any child from going missing, it is important to have a policy in place to manage such a situation should it arise. The following steps will be taken:

1. **Immediate Search:**
	* If a child is noticed missing, the staff member responsible for the child will immediately search the premises, including all indoor areas (e.g., cabinets, closets, cubbies) and outdoor spaces. They will also verify whether the child has been picked up by a parent or guardian.
2. **Notification:**
	* If the child is not found, the staff member will immediately notify the Center Director, who will then contact the police and the child's parent/guardian.
3. **Search Continuation:**
	* While the police are en route, staff will continue to search the facility, checking every possible hiding place.
4. **Lockdown Procedure:**
	* The staff will initiate a lockdown procedure, ensuring all exits are monitored and no one is allowed in or out of the facility.
5. **Information to Gather:**
	* The teacher responsible for the child should document the following:
		+ Child’s name, age, height, weight, date of birth, and hair color.
		+ Clothing the child was wearing and any distinguishing features.
		+ The time the child was last seen.
		+ Any suspicious vehicles or persons near the facility, if relevant.
6. **Director's Role:**
	* The Director will remain on-site as the primary contact for law enforcement and the child's guardians.
7. **Amber Alert:**
	* If necessary, the Director will request the activation of an Amber Alert.
8. **EEC Notification:**
	* After the incident, the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) will be notified, and a 51A report will be filed. The center will investigate the cause of the incident and determine measures to prevent future occurrences.

**Evacuation Plan**

In case of a fire, natural disaster, or any other situation requiring evacuation, children will be evacuated to a designated safe area until further instructions are received from emergency response personnel.

**Contingency Plan for Evacuation:**

* **Location:** If Tiny Town cannot be re-entered after an emergency, children and staff will evacuate to:
	+ **Manomet Bible Church** (next door)
	+ **Indian Brook Elementary School** (across the street)
* **Procedure:**
	+ Staff will notify the Director and gather attendance to ensure all children are accounted for.
	+ Teachers will ensure all children are evacuated calmly and orderly, and parents will be notified of the change in pick-up procedures.
	+ The Director will ensure any necessary medications, first-aid supplies, and log sheets are gathered.
	+ Parents/guardians will sign the sign-out log upon arrival to pick up their child.

**Sheltering-in-Place**

In some situations, it may be necessary to keep children and staff inside the facility for safety reasons. This could be due to a tornado, shooting, or other external threat.

* **Procedure:**
	+ The Director or Assistant Director will oversee the situation and follow the instructions of emergency personnel.
	+ Staff will ensure all children are kept safe and secure inside the building, following all safety protocols as directed by authorities.

**Entergy Nuclear Plant Emergency (Not Applicable at this time)**

In the event of an emergency at the Entergy Nuclear Plant:

1. **Staff Notification:** Staff will be notified of the nature of the emergency and asked to assist as necessary.
2. **Evacuation:** Teachers will gather their class logs and head to the nearest exit to the play area. Staff will clear exits and ensure the safety of the children.
3. **Attendance Check:** Once all children are safely in the play area, attendance will be conducted.
4. **Notification to Parents/Guardians:** The Director will notify parents/guardians to pick up their children as soon as possible, and alternate pick-up locations may be designated.
5. **Medical Supplies:** The Director will gather necessary medical supplies, prescription medications, and daily log sheets.

**COVID-19/Pandemic Response**

Our COVID-19 policies are updated according to the latest guidelines from the Board of Health and the Department of Early Education. The center will inform families of any changes via Brightwheel messages. Key points include:

1. **Illness Protocol:** If a child or staff member shows COVID symptoms, they must be picked up or leave immediately. They may not return until seen by a licensed healthcare provider.
2. **Positive Case:** If a child or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, the center will notify the EEC, the Board of Health, and follow further instructions.
3. **Center Closure:** If the center must close due to a COVID-related mandate, families will be notified immediately. Parents will be required to pay two weeks’ tuition for a guaranteed spot upon re-opening.

**Fire Drills & Safety**

* **Fire Drills:** Conducted monthly and logged for staff and child training. The Plymouth Fire Department periodically assists with these drills to ensure safe and quick evacuations.
* **Shelter-in-Place:** In the event of a threat outside the facility (e.g., intruder or police emergency), Tiny Town will initiate a shelter-in-place procedure where all doors will be locked, lights turned off, and children will remain in a safe area out of view.

**Transportation Policy**

* **Transportation to/from Center:** The center does not provide transportation for children to or from home or school. Parents/guardians are responsible for transportation.
* **Field Trips:** Children will not be transported to field trips. Instead, guests are invited for in-center presentations. If a walking field trip is planned, parents must complete a permission slip for their child to participate.
* **Medical Emergency Transportation:** In the case of a medical emergency, children will be transported via ambulance, accompanied by a qualified staff member. The Director will notify the parents/guardians.

These contingency plans ensure the safety and well-being of children in the event of emergencies and aim to provide clear, efficient procedures for handling various types of incidents.

**Massachusetts Guidance on Car Seat Safety**

In Massachusetts, including Plymouth, child passenger safety laws are designed to protect children based on their age, weight, and height. Here's a summary of the requirements:

* **Rear-Facing Car Seats:** Children under 2 years old or weighing less than 30 pounds must be secured in a rear-facing car seat.

[malegislature.gov](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/190/SD678.Html?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

* **Forward-Facing Car Seats:** Once a child surpasses the rear-facing seat's height or weight limits, they should transition to a forward-facing car seat with a harness.

[malegislature.gov](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/190/SD678.Html?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

* **Booster Seats:** Children under 8 years old or shorter than 57 inches (4 feet 9 inches) should use a booster seat.

[webfirstinsurance.com](https://webfirstinsurance.com/blog/massachusetts-car-seat-laws-explained/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

* **Seat Belts:** Children 8 years or older, or those who have reached 57 inches in height, can be secured with a seat belt. However, it's recommended that children under 13 ride in the back seat for optimal safety

**SIDS Risk Reduction Practices at Tiny Town Child Care Center**

Tiny Town Child Care Center is committed to the safety and well-being of every infant in our care. To help reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), we adhere to the following practices and guidelines:

**Infant Sleeping Practices:**

* **Back Sleeping:** All infants 12 months old or younger are always placed on their backs to sleep. This practice is followed unless there is a written note from a physician specifying otherwise.
* **Supervision:** Infants under six months of age are under direct visual supervision at all times, including while napping. This supervision continues for the first six weeks after enrollment.
* **No Soft Bedding:** No child under 12 months of age will be placed in a crib with pillows, comforters, stuffed animals, or any other soft or padded materials that could pose a suffocation hazard.

**Additional SIDS Risk Reduction Tips (Based on Recommendations from the American SIDS Institute):**

* **Rooming-In:** The baby’s crib should be placed in the parents' room until the infant is at least 6 months old, as studies have shown that infants are safest when their beds are close to their mothers.
* **Appropriate Sleeping Attire:** Infants should be dressed in just enough clothing to keep them warm without the need for blankets. The room temperature should be comfortable, as overheating increases the risk of SIDS.
* **Avoid Tobacco Smoke:** Infants should not be exposed to tobacco smoke. Research indicates that increased exposure to tobacco smoke raises the risk of SIDS.
* **Breastfeeding:** If possible, breastfeeding is encouraged, as studies show that breastfed infants have a lower incidence of SIDS compared to formula-fed babies.
* **Avoid Exposure to Respiratory Infections:** Infants should not be exposed to individuals with respiratory infections, as SIDS has been linked to minor illnesses such as colds or gastrointestinal infections.
* **Immediate Medical Attention:** If a baby experiences periods of not breathing, becomes limp or turns blue, or shows signs of excessive gagging after spitting up, parents should seek immediate medical attention.

By following these guidelines and recommendations, Tiny Town Child Care Center strives to reduce the risk of SIDS and ensure the health and safety of every infant in our care.

**Accident & Health Policy**

At **Tiny Town Child Care Center**, we prioritize the safety and well-being of all children in our care. Our Accident and Health Policy ensures that we are fully prepared to handle medical emergencies and health-related incidents, adhering to best practices in child care.

**1. First-Aid & Emergency Care**

* **Staff Certification**: All staff members are required to complete **annual training** in **First-Aid**, **CPR**, and **AED** for infants, children, and adults.
* **First-Aid Kits**: Each classroom is equipped with two first-aid kits—one for indoor use and one for outdoor use. These kits are clearly marked with a **RED CROSS**. Staff are trained on the locations of the kits and are made aware of where they are at all times.
* **Medications**: Children’s medications are properly labeled and stored with the first-aid kits. Any **rescue medications** needed by a child (e.g., EpiPen, inhalers) travel with the child as they move between rooms or outside.

**2. Non-Emergent Accidents**

For typical injuries such as **bumps**, **bruises**, **scratches**, or **bite marks**, the following procedures are followed:

* **Immediate Response**: The supervising staff member will attend to the child immediately, assess the severity of the injury, and provide necessary first-aid.
* **Injury Reporting**: After administering first-aid, the staff member will inform the **Director**, and an **injury report** will be completed. This report includes details on who was involved, when and how the injury occurred, and who administered care.
* **Parental Notification**: Parents/guardians will be informed about the incident, either through a **phone call** or **Brightwheel**, depending on the severity of the injury. Parents will be required to sign a copy of the report, which will also be provided to them for their records.

**3. Emergent Accidents**

For more serious incidents, such as **broken bones**, **concussions**, or **severe cuts**, the following steps will be taken:

* **Immediate Notification**: Parents/guardians will be notified immediately. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, emergency contacts listed on the enrollment form will be contacted.
* **Ambulance Assistance**: In the event of a serious injury, an **ambulance** will be called, and a staff member will accompany the child to the hospital. The staff member will remain with the child until the parent/guardian arrives.
* **Injury Reporting**: A detailed injury report will be completed, noting that emergency assistance was required. The report will be filed with the **Department of Early Education and Care (EEC)**.

**Sick Policy**

Tiny Town maintains a strict sick policy to ensure the safety of both children and staff.

**4. Plan of Care for Mildly Ill Children**

If a child exhibits **mild symptoms** (e.g., a mild runny nose), the following steps will be taken:

* **Observation & Comfort**: The child will be monitored by staff and made comfortable with food, drink, rest, and appropriate play materials.
* **Separation**: If needed, the child will be placed in a **separate space** or room with a supervising staff member. Proper hydration will be encouraged, and infection control procedures will be followed to clean any used sleeping mats or blankets.
* **Parental Notification**: If the child cannot participate fully in class, a **phone call** will be made to the parents to arrange for the child’s pickup from care.

**5. Fever Protocol**

* **Fever of 100°F or Higher**: If a child develops a fever of **100.0°F or higher**, they will be sent home immediately. If fever-reducing medication is provided, it will be administered with prior consent from the parent.
* **Return Policy**: The child may not return to care until they have been **fever-free for 24 hours** without the use of fever-reducing medication.

**Exclusion Criteria for Illnesses and Conditions**

Children may be excluded from care if they exhibit any of the following conditions or symptoms:

1. **COVID-19**
	* Excluded for **5 days** from the **first day of symptoms** or **positive test result**, whichever comes first.
2. **Chicken Pox**
	* Must stay home until cleared by a doctor.
3. **Excessive Colds/Nasal Discharge**
	* Must be excluded if symptoms are excessive.
4. **Chronic Cough**
	* Must be excluded if the cough is persistent and non-productive.
5. **Diarrhea**
	* The child will be sent home after the **second diarrhea** episode if the diarrhea cannot be contained in a diaper/toilet, or if it is **watery**, **extremely loose**, or **frequent**.
6. **Ear Infections**
	* Must be on **antibiotics** and **fever-free** for at least **24 hours**.
7. **Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)**
	* Must be on **antibiotics** and eyes must be **clear** for at least **24 hours**.
8. **Any Drainage from Eyes or Ears**
	* Requires **clearance from a doctor** and a **stay at home** until cleared.
9. **Lice**
	* Must be treated professionally. **No nits or eggs** can be present when returning.
10. **Scabies, Ringworm, Fungal Skin Infections**
* Must stay home until treated and clear.
1. **Strep Throat**
* Must be on **antibiotics** and **fever-free** for **over 24 hours**.
1. **Vomiting**
* A child who vomits for any reason will be sent home. The child must stay home for **24 hours after the last vomiting episode**.
1. **Undiagnosed Rash/Bumps/Skin Condition**
* Requires a **doctor's evaluation** for clearance.
1. **Fever 100.0°F or Higher**
* The child must be **fever-free for 24 hours** without medication before returning.
1. **Hand-Foot-Mouth Disease**
* Requires at least **one week** out of school. If any sores or rash are visible, the child will not be allowed back until completely clear.
1. **Impetigo**
* Requires at least **one week** out of school. If any sores or rash are visible, the child will not be allowed back until completely clear.
1. **Flu**
* Requires **one week** out of school until cleared.
1. **Scarlet Fever, Roseola**
* Requires **one week** out of school until cleared.
1. **Respiratory Infection**
* The child must be **fever-free** for **24 hours** before returning, with a non-productive cough.
1. **RSV & Pneumonia**
* Requires **one week** out of school and must be free of a **non-productive cough** before returning.
1. **Asthma Attack/Flare-Up**
* Requires **24 hours at home** and **doctor’s clearance** before returning. If the attack occurs at school, **911** will be called.
1. **Allergic Reaction**
* Particularly if the child requires an **EpiPen**. The child must have **doctor’s clearance** before returning. In case of a life-threatening allergic reaction, **911** will be called.
1. **Injury Requiring Excessive Care**
* For injuries such as **bumps to the head**, **eyes**, **broken limbs**, etc., a **doctor’s note** for clearance and special care instructions/restrictions is required.
1. **Return from Medical Procedure**
* After surgery, dental work, or any other medical procedure (e.g., “tubes”, stitches), a **doctor’s/dentist’s note** is required for clearance and special care instructions/restrictions.
* If a child is unwell and needs to stay home from public school or their alternative preschool program, they may not attend Tiny Town in their place. We are unable to accept children who are sick, especially if their usual program would send them home.
* Additionally, if a sibling is ill and required to stay home, we ask that all children in the family remain at home until everyone is feeling well. This helps prevent the spread of contagious illnesses and keeps our community healthy.

These guidelines are in place to maintain a healthy and safe environment for all children and staff. If your child exhibits any of these symptoms or conditions, please ensure they are appropriately treated and cleared by a doctor and symptom free before returning to care. We understand that our strict policy may interfere with getting back to work, however we need to ensure that all staff members and other children can remain healthy to keep the school open and available to all.

**Medical Information Policy**

**Physical Examinations**

* **State law** requires that each child attending the center be examined by a licensed physician within **30 days of admission**, and **annually thereafter**.
* It is the responsibility of the **parent/guardian** to ensure that the child's medical report is kept current.
* All **immunizations** must be **up-to-date** for the child's age, and **proof of immunization history** must be provided.
* **Age appropriate Vaccinations** are required for all children enrolled at the center. **Religious or medical exemptions** are not accepted per Tiny Town policy.

**Medication Administration**

**\*ALL LIFE SAVING MEDICATION MUST TRAVEL DAILY TO SCHOOL WITH A CHILD WHO NEEDS IT!\***

1. **Staff Training**
	* All staff members are required to complete **The 5 Rights of Medication Administration** training and retake it **annually**.
2. **Prescription and Non-Prescription Medications**
	* Medication will only be administered with **written orders** from the child’s **physician** and **parental authority**.
	* The **first dose** of any medication, whether prescription or over-the-counter (including medications for teething, etc.), **must be given at home**. This applies to both daily and as-needed medications. We will not administer the first dose of any medication at daycare.
	* All prescriptions will be entered into the center's log, and staff will be notified of any relevant medical situations.
	* **Authorization forms** are available from the center when required.
	* A **standing order** from the physician may be given, which lists the medication and its administration details.
3. **Over-the-Counter Medications**
	* Medications like **Tylenol**, **Motrin**, or **Benadryl** require an **authorization form** signed by both the **physician** and the **parent/guardian**. This form should include:
		+ The name of the medication
		+ The reason for its administration
		+ Proper dosage and route
	* The medication must be labeled with the **child’s name**, **expiration date**, and must be in the **original packaging**.
	* The **original syringe** or **measurement cup** must be included.
	* **Medication authorizations** must be renewed **annually**.
4. **Topical Medications**
	* Non-prescription topical medications (e.g., **sunscreen**, **diaper cream**, **petroleum jelly**) may only be applied with written parental authorization, via a signed consent form, which must be renewed **annually**.
	* Containers must be labeled with the **child’s name** and the **expiration date** clearly visible.
5. **Prescription Medications**
	* The medication must be in the **original bottle** with the label from the pharmacy or physician, which includes:
		+ The **child’s name**
		+ **Dosage** and **schedule** of administration
		+ The **medication contents**
		+ The **date purchased** and the **physician’s name**
		+ The **LOT number** on the box must match the medication.
	* **Authorization forms** must be signed by the parent for each medication.
	* **First doses** must be given at home so that the child can be observed for reactions.

**Medication Handling and Storage**

* All medication is to be stored **out of reach of children** at all times.
* Any remaining medication will be **returned to the parent** after the medication administration window is complete, and it will be **documented** in the child’s record.
* **Medications should not** be placed in **drinking cups** or **bottles**.
* Medications should **not** be left in **backpacks** or **cubbies** where children can access them. They must be handed directly to a **teacher** or **director** to be stored in the **first-aid/medication cabinet** in the child’s classroom.
* **Expired medications** will be **returned** to the parent/guardian.

**Antibiotics and Exclusion**

* When an antibiotic is prescribed, the child will be **excluded from the center** from the time of diagnosis until **24 hours after the first dose** of the antibiotic is administered.

**Individual Healthcare Plans (IHCP)**

* If a child has an ongoing medical condition that requires treatment at both **home** and **school** (e.g., **severe allergies**, **asthma**, **special physical adaptations**, **behavioral plans**), an **Individual Healthcare Plan** (IHCP) must be completed by a **physician** and kept on file at the center.
* The IHCP should detail:
	+ The nature of the condition
	+ What to look for
	+ When and how to administer treatment
* If the child requires medication (e.g., **nebulizer treatments**, **inhalers**, **EpiPens**), the IHCP should include **medication consent** from both the **physician** and the **parent/guardian**.
* If a child is diagnosed with an ongoing medical condition **before** enrollment, the child may not start at the center until the proper IHCP is completed, signed, and submitted.
* If a child is diagnosed with a condition **during enrollment**, the center will provide the required forms immediately. The child may not return to care until the IHCP is completed, signed, and submitted.
* **All IHCPs must be renewed annually**.

**Allergies**

1. **Notification**
	* Parents/guardians must inform the center **verbally** and in writing about any **food and/or environmental allergies**, including the severity, symptoms, and treatment plan.
	* **Allergy lists** are posted in each classroom and are updated monthly or as needed.
2. **Epi-Pen and Allergy Medications**
	* In the case of a **severe allergy** that requires an **EpiPen**, the parent/guardian must supply the prescribed **EpiPen** with the proper **medication consent** forms, **original box**, and **prescription label** showing the child’s name and expiration date.
	* The **EpiPen** will travel with the child throughout the day and will either be kept in the **first-aid/medication cabinet** in the child’s classroom or in the **outdoor first-aid kit**.
	* All staff members are made aware of children with allergies and are informed about the location of their **EpiPen**.
3. **Procedure for Identifying Allergies**
	* **Initial conferences**, the **enrollment form**, and the IHCP form filled out by the physician will identify existing allergies.
	* The **Director** will inform all teachers and staff about the type of allergy, treatment, and the location of the child’s medication.
	* If a child develops an allergy after enrollment, the **physician** must complete an IHCP, detailing the allergy and treatment plan.
4. **Food Exclusions/Special Dietary Needs**
	* Parents/guardians must inform the center of any **food exclusions** or **special dietary needs** not related to allergies.

These guidelines are in place to ensure the health and safety of all children at the center. Parents are responsible for providing up-to-date information about their child’s medical needs and ensuring that required forms are filled out and renewed annually.

**What to Bring:**

**ALL ITEMS SHOULD BE LABELED WITH YOUR CHILD’S FIRST AND LAST NAME.** Parents/Guardians in **ALL classrooms** are required to provide and send **DAILY** the following items:

* **Lunch Box** with ice pack
* **Morning snack, afternoon snack, and lunch**
* **Refillable water bottle** or **sippy cup (bottles if needed for infants)**
* **Zippered bag** or **small backpack** that will hold:
	+ A **crib-sized sheet** or **roll-up bed**
	+ *Infants in cribs will need a* ***Pack & Play*** *size sheet*
	+ **Blanket**
	+ **Extra weather-appropriate clothes**
	+ **Extra sweatshirt/coat**
	+ **Medications** (See medication policy for details)
	+ **Diapers and wipes** (if required)

**Additional Information:**

* **Rest items** and **clean changes of clothes** will be kept at school until your child’s **last day of the week**.
* Rest items should be washed before returning to school the following week to avoid spreading germs.
* Tiny Town provides **limited extra crib sheets/roll up mats** and clothing in case of accidents or if forgotten. However, it is the **family’s responsibility** to provide these items for your child’s day at school.
* **Extra changes of clothes** provided by Tiny Town are based on **donations**. If we do not have extra clothes that fit your child, we will **contact you** to bring in some.

**Parents/Guardians of the INFANT/TODDLER Classroom need to send DAILY:**

* Enough **bottles** for the number of expected feedings while at school, plus one extra for emergencies (e.g., 3 expected feedings = 4 bottles)
* Enough **formula/milk/breast milk** for the number of expected feedings, plus extra for one emergency situation (e.g., 3 expected feedings = 4 feedings)
* **Solid or pureed foods** (if your child is eating them. **Please only send food items your child has eaten at home first**)
* **Crib sized sheet** (If in a crib, will need **Pack & Play** size sheet)
* **Blanket** (if over 1 year) or **sleep suit**
* **Numerous sets of extra, clean clothing** for all contingencies
* **Diapers & wipes**
* **OTC diaper creams, ointments, or powders** (medication consent form required)
* Any **comfort items** (binkies, lovies, teethers, etc.)
* **Bibs**
* **Feeding utensils**
* **Separate cups** for milk or juice
* **Lunch box** with ice pack
* **Morning snack, afternoon snack, & lunch**
* Breastfed babies should be able to use a bottle or cup before starting in our care.
* We ask that you keep teachers informed of special dietary instructions.
* The Infant/Toddler staff will work closely with parents to determine if/when/which center snack foods can be served to each child.
* Infants are held and hand-fed with the bottle. We encourage older infants who can hold bottles themselves to do so either in a teacher’s arms or seated at a table to encourage independence (with supervision).

**Please DO NOT Bring:**

* Electronic devices (unless permitted by teacher for rest time or communication purposes)
* Toys from home (unless it is a regular item required for comfort)
* Medicines in children’s drinking cups or bottles
* Do NOT leave any medication in your child’s bag
* Do NOT leave any personal inappropriate paraphernalia in your child’s bag
* Excessive belongings beyond what is required as the cubby spaces are small

**Meals and Snacks:**

* **Meal times** in all classrooms are approximately at: Morning Snack/Breakfast **9:30AM**, Lunch **12:00PM**, Afternoon Snack **3:00PM**. Times may vary slightly depending on the flow of the day, special events, and needs of the children.
* **Meals, Snacks, Formula, Bottles, etc.**: All meals, snacks, formula, bottles, etc., **must be provided by parents/guardians**. Tiny Town does have extra snacks available for emergency situations, but it is expected that families will provide enough food to cover the entire day, including extra food if needed. If we offer extra snacks that we have not seen your child eat before, we will check with you first.
* **Drinks**: Tiny Town provides **water** or occasional juice boxes for refilling cups or bottles. Please specify your child's preferences or restrictions regarding drinks.
* **Allergies and Food Restrictions**: We take **food allergies very seriously**. Upon enrollment, please notify us of any **food allergies**, and refer to our medical policy regarding Individual Healthcare Plans for allergies. **We may exclude other food allergens based on individual circumstances.** Additionally, inform us of any food exclusions based on personal preference, religion, or lifestyle. If your child is sent to school with a food containing excluded allergens it will be sent back home, and we will offer your child something else to eat.
* **Breakfast**: Please ensure your child has **eaten breakfast** before arriving at daycare. If your child arrives without breakfast, please speak with the teacher. Depending on the time of day, we will either offer breakfast or help to provide a morning snack that includes breakfast items.
* **Meal Belongings**: All of your child’s meal items (including bottles, containers, etc.) will be sent home each day. Please ensure these items are washed and returned with your child the following day.

**Lunch Preparation Guidelines for Safety and Efficiency**

Please send cold lunch/finger foods, or cook lunch at home so that it can be quickly reheated at Tiny Town. We specifically request that you **do not send Mac & Cheese cups** or **frozen foods**. These types of items take extra time to cook and cool down. With many children to serve, it can significantly delay lunchtime, and it also poses safety risks when dealing with boiling water while trying to serve each child and watching for hot spots. Please send in an ice pack to make sure that items that should be kept cold do not spoil (yogurt, cheese, milk) or let us know if something needs to be kept in the refrigerator at parent request (must be labeled).

To ensure the safest and most efficient process:

* **Thermoses**: You may send your child’s food in a thermos that keeps it warm, as this eliminates the need for reheating.
* **Reheatable Meals**: Please pack any meals that need to be heated in their own separate container, NOT IN BENTO BOXES AMONG OTHER FOOD ITEMS.

**Daycare Schedule and Routine**

A daycare schedule and routine are crucial for both the children and the caregivers. They help create a structured, predictable environment that supports children’s growth and development. Each classroom’s schedule varies based on the age of the children, their needs, and developmentally appropriate expectations. Toileting and diapering are added into their scheduled routines and are taken care of as needed. Here are some reasons why a daycare schedule and routine are so important:

**1. Provides Stability and Security**

* **Predictability:** A consistent routine helps children feel secure and know what to expect throughout the day. Knowing when it's time to eat, play, rest, and engage in learning activities helps reduce anxiety, especially for younger children who may be away from their parents for the first time.
* **Emotional Security:** A stable schedule helps children build trust with caregivers, making them feel safe and supported in their environment.

**2. Supports Developmental Milestones**

* **Cognitive and Emotional Growth:** Regular routines provide children with opportunities to learn in a structured environment. They can focus better on activities, engage in lessons, and practice key skills such as language development, problem-solving, and social skills.
* **Fine and Gross Motor Skills:** Structured play and activities help children improve their physical development. For example, outdoor playtime promotes coordination, balance, and motor skills, while learning activities like puzzles or drawing enhance fine motor abilities.

**3. Teaches Responsibility and Independence**

* **Self-Regulation:** A routine helps children learn how to manage their own time. It provides a foundation for learning personal responsibility, such as cleaning up after playtime or getting ready for nap time.
* **Building Independence:** As children grow, they learn to follow a schedule independently. For example, they may start to feed themselves, choose activities, or put their shoes on for outdoor play. Having regular routines teaches them autonomy.

**4. Promotes Healthy Habits**

* **Consistency in Meals and Rest:** Regular meal and nap times ensure that children get adequate nutrition and rest, which are critical for their physical and cognitive development. Consistent sleep patterns help regulate their circadian rhythms, making them more alert and attentive during learning activities.
* **Time Management:** Children learn to transition from one activity to another, helping them manage time and understand how to prioritize their daily tasks.

**5. Facilitates Social Skills Development**

* **Group Activities:** A structured routine includes opportunities for social interactions with peers. Children learn to share, cooperate, and communicate with others during group activities, snack times, and outdoor play.
* **Conflict Resolution:** With a predictable routine, children are more likely to engage in structured group play where they learn how to work through conflicts, practice empathy, and understand group dynamics.

**6. Supports Caregiver and Parent Communication**

* **Clear Expectations:** Having a well-defined routine helps caregivers communicate expectations clearly with both children and parents. Parents know when their child will have meals, naps, or special activities, which helps them feel more involved in their child's daily life.
* **Ease of Transition:** When children are familiar with the daily routine, they are more likely to transition easily between activities, making the caregivers' jobs more manageable. Parents can also use the routine to talk to their child about their day and discuss any highlights or concerns.

**7. Enhances Learning Opportunities**

* **Structured Learning Time:** A balanced routine includes dedicated times for educational activities such as reading, arts and crafts, or problem-solving games. This ensures that children receive a well-rounded experience that supports their intellectual development.
* **Fosters Creativity and Exploration:** Routine doesn't mean rigidity; it allows for flexibility in how activities are carried out. Structured time for play fosters creativity, exploration, and imagination, all crucial components of early childhood learning.

**8. Helps Manage Transitions**

* **Smooth Transitions Between Activities:** A routine that includes specific times for each activity (such as snack time, playtime, nap time, etc.) helps children transition smoothly between different parts of their day without feeling overwhelmed or out of control.
* **Managing Separation Anxiety:** Consistent routines provide comfort, especially during transitions like saying goodbye to parents in the morning. Children can be reassured by knowing what comes next in their day.

**9. Reduces Stress for Caregivers**

* **Clear Structure for Caregivers:** A well-organized routine allows caregivers to plan and execute activities effectively. It helps them manage their time and resources, providing a clear framework for the day, which leads to less stress and confusion.
* **Meeting Individual Needs:** A structured routine allows caregivers to be mindful of each child's specific needs (such as feeding or nap schedules), ensuring that every child receives the care they require.

**10. Prepares for the Transition to School**

* **School Readiness:** A daycare routine that mirrors school-like structure, with designated times for learning, snack, and outdoor play, helps prepare children for the routine of a school day. Children are familiar with transitions, structured activities, and group settings, making the transition to kindergarten or other formal schooling smoother.

**Nap/Rest Time Policy**

* In accordance with regulations, all children will be provided with a regularly scheduled nap or resting time. While children will not be forced to sleep, they may be encouraged to lie quietly for a designated period. The length of rest time will vary depending on the needs of each child. There is no set rule regarding the maximum duration a child should remain resting, but if a child is unable to sleep after a bit of resting, they will be offered alternative quiet activities. Teachers are unallowed to prevent children from resting or keep them awake so they do not nap, unless a doctor’s note is provided, per EEC regulation.
* Children are welcome to bring a familiar item from home, such as a small blanket or stuffed animal, toys or electronics to use during nap/rest time. These items will be stored in your child’s backpack or mat bag, so please keep in mind that storage space is limited. To help avoid confusion, please clearly label all personal items with your child’s name.
* Additionally, please note that all class laundry is sent home weekly to be washed. This ensures that the items are sanitized and safe for the children to use, promoting a hygienic environment for everyone.

**Curriculum at Tiny Town Inc.**

**Curriculum** is the heart and soul of our learning program. It encompasses all experiences, activities, and interactions that nurture children’s growth and development. At Tiny Town Inc., our curriculum includes:

* **Nurturing Relationships** between teachers and children
* **Learning Environment and Activities** that engage and inspire
* **Daily Schedules** that promote structure and flexibility
* **Children’s Skill Assessments** to monitor and support progress
* **Partnership with Families** to strengthen the learning community

**Our Commitment to Children’s Development**

At Tiny Town Inc., we are committed to providing a well-rounded, engaging, and nurturing environment that supports the growth of every child. Through our comprehensive curriculum, we ensure that children not only meet developmental milestones but also gain the skills and confidence they need to succeed in the world. At Tiny Town, we support children in:

* **Meeting Developmental Objectives:** Helping children successfully reach milestones across all areas of development.
* **Learning Real-World Content:** Teaching children knowledge and skills that will benefit them throughout their lives.
* **Fostering Imagination, Curiosity, and a Love for Learning:** Encouraging children to explore, question, and develop a passion for discovery.

**We Teach Children to Be:**

* **Confident, Flexible, and Resilient Thinkers:** We foster a growth mindset and encourage children to approach challenges with confidence.
* **Strong Communicators:** Emphasizing the importance of listening, speaking, and expressing ideas clearly.
* **Excellent Planners and Decision-Makers:** Helping children develop problem-solving and critical thinking skills.
* **Compassionate and Supportive Friends:** Teaching children how to build positive relationships and work together as a team.
* **Responsible Citizens:** Encouraging empathy and an understanding of their roles in the world.

**Learning Through Play**

At Tiny Town, we believe that **children learn best through play** and that childhood should not be rushed. Play enhances all areas of development, and we give children the time and space they need to grow at their own pace. Our play-centered learning approach is designed to support:

* **Learning about Myself and Those Around Me:** Children develop a sense of self and an understanding of their relationships with others.
* **Brain Power:** Fostering cognitive skills such as memory, reasoning, and problem-solving through engaging activities.
* **STEM Development:** Promoting knowledge in **Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math**, encouraging curiosity and critical thinking.
* **Improving Memory and Processing Skills:** Activities are designed to enhance brain function and cognitive development.

**Imagine That: Creative Expression**

* **Expressing Myself Creatively:** We provide opportunities for children to explore their creativity through art, music, and movement.
* **Visual Arts Exploration:** Introducing children to various materials and media, enhancing their appreciation of art and artists.
* **Music and Dance:** Encouraging musical expression through voices and instruments, as well as exploring movement through dance and creative expression.

**Social and Emotional Development**

* **Managing and Expressing Feelings:** We teach children to recognize, express, and manage their emotions, helping them build emotional intelligence.
* **Developing Positive Self-Esteem and Self-Identity:** We encourage children to develop a strong sense of self-worth and understand their role in the world.
* **Building Character:** We help children develop empathy, resilience, and the skills needed to build positive relationships.
* **Making Friends and Building Positive Relationships:** Social skills are nurtured through group activities, play, and collaboration with peers.

**Learning about the World**

* **Cultural Awareness and Diversity:** Children are introduced to different cultures, histories, and traditions to foster respect and appreciation for diversity.
* **Early Learning in History, Geography, Economics, and Civics:** Beginning awareness of the world around them, including a foundation in social studies concepts.

**Outdoor Learning at Tiny Town Inc.**

* At **Tiny Town Inc.**, we believe in the power of outdoor learning to enrich children’s development and enhance their educational experience. Outdoor environments offer unique opportunities for children to engage with nature, learn through active play, and build essential life skills. Our outdoor learning approach is an integral part of our curriculum and contributes to the holistic development of each child. Outdoor learning at Tiny Town Inc. is more than just play; it is an essential part of our curriculum that supports the **physical**, **cognitive**, **social**, and **emotional development** of children. We love to climb trees, garden, work in the dirt, help with the playground landscape, make made pies, use chalk and bubbles, swing on the swings, and so much more! Dress to play and get messy!

**Curriculum Tools at Tiny Town Inc.**

In addition to our play-based approach, Tiny Town also incorporates specialized curriculums to further support children’s development:

* **Handwriting Without Tears:** Focused on fine motor development and literacy skills, this program helps children develop the foundational skills needed for writing.
* **Second Step Social Emotional Learning:** A research-based program designed to foster social-emotional development, teaching children’s skills like empathy, self-regulation, and problem-solving.
* **ASQ (Ages and Stages Questionnaire):** Parents will be asked at the beginning of the year to screen their own child using the ASQ format either online or hard copy. Results are communicated to the child’s parents, and suggested resources for follow up, monitoring, or further assessment may be recommended if needed. Screening young children is an effective, efficient way for professionals to check a child’s development, help parents celebrate their child’s milestones and know what to look for next, and determine whether follow-up steps are needed. It’s also an essential first step toward identifying children with delays or disorders in the critical early years, before they start school.
* **Theme based:** At Tiny Town teachers have creative freedom for how they may implement our thematic play-based curriculum. We explore the seasons, and holidays, alongside themed units that engage children and foster the learning that THEY want to learn about! Teachers create a variety of hands-on activities, stories, art projects, songs, and games that align with the themes of each unit.

**Tiny Town Inc. Progress Report Policy**

At Tiny Town Inc., we are committed to providing ongoing feedback regarding the development and progress of the children in our care. We aim to ensure that each child receives the best possible early education experience, rooted in best practices and aligned with developmental milestones.

To support this commitment, our progress reports will be based on the following frameworks:

1. **Massachusetts Early Education Standards:** Our progress reports are designed to reflect the Massachusetts Early Education Standards, which guide our curriculum, teaching practices, and child development expectations for children aged 0-5 years. These standards focus on the domains of social-emotional development, language and literacy, cognitive development, physical development, and approaches to learning.
2. **CDC Milestones:** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Milestones are incorporated into our progress reports to monitor and document age-appropriate developmental milestones. These milestones cover areas such as speech and language, motor skills, social skills, and cognitive development. We will track each child’s progress based on these milestones to ensure they are meeting key development benchmarks at each stage.
3. **Plymouth Public Schools Preschool Progress Report Formats:** Our progress report format is designed to align with the Plymouth Public Schools Preschool Progress Report to ensure consistency in reporting and to make it easier for families and educators to track progress. The format focuses on the following key developmental areas:
	* **Social/Emotional Development**: Interaction with peers and adults, self-regulation, empathy.
	* **Physical Development**: Fine and gross motor skills, health and physical well-being.
	* **Language Development**: Communication skills, listening, and understanding, expressive language.
	* **Cognitive Development**: Problem-solving, concepts of number, science, and reasoning skills.
	* **Approaches to Learning**: Curiosity, persistence, cooperation, and self-control.

**Report Frequency**

Progress reports will be issued **every 3 months if infant or child has diagnosed special need, otherwise every 6 months (typically in January/June)** to ensure that families have updated information on their child’s development. These reports will be available to families and are a valuable tool for discussing each child's individual growth and learning journey.

**Parent-Teacher Conferences**

In addition to the written progress reports, we will offer **parent-teacher conferences at request** to further discuss your child’s development, goals, and any specific areas of focus. These conferences provide a more personalized approach to ensure that both the family and our educators are working together to support the child’s growth.

**Confidentiality and Collaboration**

All progress reports are confidential and will only be shared with the child’s family or authorized individuals. We encourage open communication with families to address any questions or concerns about the child’s progress. We value your input and believe that a partnership between families and educators is crucial to each child’s success.

**DIAPERING POLICY**

* Diapering time is an opportunity for caregivers to interact and build trust with children by modeling language, teaching self-care, and encouraging participation.
* Each child’s diaper is changed when wet or soiled as needed, and routinely checked/changed on a schedule every two hours starting upon arrival.
* Diaper changes and potty accidents are documented and initialed by staff manually and via Brightwheel.
* Please prepare to bring your child to school in a clean diaper. While we know young children are unpredictable and things can happen on the way to school, if staff have to freshen up every child upon arrival that takes time away from valuable playing and learning as they transition into their day. For safety reasons, parents may change their own child before leaving if it is busy, or please let a teacher know right away so we can arrange staffing for them to be cared for as soon as possible.
* Children are changed at least within 2 hours of pick up and are always rechecked before anticipated pick up times. We are happy to help and change your child if you notice a BM or they are wet when picking them up, staff permitting. Teachers must stay in ratio and stay attentive to the children still in our care, due to this diaper changes right at pick up time may be challenging. Parents are welcome to change their own children for a fresh diaper before they go if desired or needed.
* Parents must notify teachers if a child needs to be changed more frequently due to rash, if there is a more concerning rash or medical condition child must have doctor’s clearance.
* Families provide their own diapering supplies such as diapers, wipes, creams, ointments and petroleum jelly (written medical consent from parents/guardians is required for staff members to apply anything at school). Anything prescribed by a doctor must have original packaging and doctor’s note.
* A disposable covering is used on the changing surfaces which are of adequate size to prevent the child from coming in contact with the changing surface. It is changed after each child has been diapered and disposed in a closed container.
* Running water is adjacent to the diapering area for hand washing.
* Each child is cleaned and dried with disposable wipes during the diaper change. After changing, the child’s hands are washed with liquid soap and running water; hands are dried with disposable towels.
* Changing surface is cleaned and disinfected after each use.
* Soiled disposable diapers are placed in a closed trash container that is lined with a leak proof disposable lining. These diapers are removed from the facility daily.
* Soiled clothing is placed in a separate, sealed plastic bag which is labeled with the child’s name and returned the parents at the end of the day.
* Staff and children wash their hands with liquid soap and running water and dries hands with disposable towels after each change.
* Changing table is smooth, intact and impervious to water and easily cleaned.
* Diapering and hand washing facilities are separate from areas used for food preparation.
* Children are supervised while using the bathroom facilities and changing tables.
* A common changing table or diapering surface is not used for any other purpose.
* Children must use diapers WITH tabs at Tiny Town. *NO PULL UPS PLEASE.*
* **Tiny Town PREFERS DISPOSABLE DIAPERS!** IF your child uses cloth diapers, it is the PARENT/GUARDIAN’S responsibility to provide a sanitary, SEALED BAG, and a sanitary, sealed CONTAINER to put your child's soiled diapers & diaper bag in to send home (Department of Early Education and Care Regulations section Health and Safety 7.11(m).)

**TOILET LEARNING POLICY**

* Tiny Town Inc. does **not** base enrollment or developmental placement on toilet training status. Your child does not have to be trained to attend their age-appropriate classroom; however, you will be charged a higher tuition rate until your child is fully toilet trained.
* Children need attuned, communicative parents and educators to support and facilitate the toilet learning process, which is individual to each child. Tiny Town will partner with families in this process, but it must begin at home.
* Children should transition directly from diapers to underwear for toilet mastery; avoid pull-ups that may reduce the physical sensation of wetness.
* **The child should be the first person on board to learn toileting**. They should show a natural interest, want/ask to use potty and underwear, feel uncomfortable in soiled diaper/clothing.
* Tiny Town requires **at least a full long weekend** in underwear at home with minimal accidents(1-2) before bringing your child to school in **underwear**. *Potty training is much different in group care than in the comfort of your own home*. At least 3 extra full changes (shoes included) are required when new to underwear.
* Children will be brought to the toilet hourly when new to underwear, and as needed/cues recognized.
* Soiled clothing will be bagged, if BM accident Tiny Town will ask parent if they would like clothing saved or disposed of.
* After 2nd accident children will be put back in a diaper.
* Parents should provide comfortable clothing that allows children to dress and undress independently, avoiding "tricky clothing" such as overalls and belts.
* Incentives are welcome while learning to toilet train (potty charts, stickers, M&Ms, jelly beans, etc.)
* Parents and teachers should proceed slowly and take cues from the child teach children words for body parts, and the process
* Parents and teachers will create an environment to ensure success (such as a potty seat or small potty, etc.)
* Parents and teachers expect and handle “accidents” without emotion
* Parents and teachers are to avoid punishment excessive praise around toilet use (it can make children feel bad when they aren’t successful)
* Parents and teachers will begin the experience with children at the diaper table, or changes in the bathroom area, encouraging children to try every diaper change
* Parents and teachers will encourage skills like pulling up and down their pants/wiping.
* Parents and teachers create a supportive and pressure-free environment that encourages a child’s natural curiosity about the toileting process.
* Children will be properly supervised at all times.
* Children should never be forced to use the toilet before they are ready, nor disciplined for accidents or for refusing to use the bathroom. The purpose of toilet learning is to help children gain control of their bodily functions. If a child is ready, the process can provide a sense of success and achievement. If a child is not ready, toilet learning becomes an unnecessary struggle for control between adults and children. The most important part of successful toilet learning is to remember it starts with the child. Effective toilet learning doesn’t begin until the child shows signs that they are physically, cognitively, and emotionally ready.
* If a child does not make it to the bathroom before their underwear or clothing becomes wet or soiled, respond as follows: Remind them with matter-of-fact language that what has happened is perfectly acceptable, and it happens all the time when kids are toilet-learning. Listen to and respond to their words, feelings or body language to support self-esteem. Help them collect a change of clothing. Help the child clean up and redress. When possible, let the child redress themselves.

**Brightwheel Communication App**

Tiny Town Inc. uses the **Brightwheel** app for communication between the center and families. **It is essential for all parents/guardians to be enrolled on the app to stay connected and informed.** Once you are enrolled, we will send you an invitation to download the app on your phone or other electronic device. You can also access your account via the **Brightwheel website** with your personal login.

**Features of the Brightwheel App:**

* **Photos/Videos**: Watch your child’s day unfold with snapshots sent directly to your mobile device.
* **Stay Connected**: Communicate with your child’s teacher and stay involved with school activities, reinforcing learning at home.
* **Attendance** records
* **Message** your child’s teachers throughout the day, and also privately message Administration for private or billing matters
* **Simplified Billing**: Set up automated payments and easily access digital invoices, receipts, and year-end tax statements.
* **Your Child’s Community**: You can invite grandparents, nannies, and friends to be part of the app, with control over what they can see and do.

We use **Brightwheel** for all important alerts, newsletters, calendars, and messaging updates. In case of illness or injury, we will notify you through the app and follow up with a call if necessary. Make sure you’re enrolled so you don’t miss any updates or important information! Please note: **Brightwheel is NOT in real time (with the exception of sent/recieved messages)**. Teachers are focused on the care and supervision of the children in their class. We usually send updates within a few moments of real time, or during or down times (nap, end of day). **Please make sure \*notifications\* are set up on your device so you can see updates as they come through.**

**Photos/Social Media/Website**

At Tiny Town Inc., we take photos of your child during various activities, such as playtime and creating artwork. These photos may be shared on the **Brightwheel app** for family access, and may also be posted on **Tiny Town Inc.’s social media accounts** or **website**.

As a parent/guardian, you have the right to **grant or deny permission** for your child’s photos to be used in each individual media outlet. You will find these permissions in the **enrollment packet**, and we ask that you review and indicate your preferences regarding photo usage.

**Social Networking and Communication with Teachers**

At **Tiny Town Inc.**, we have specific guidelines regarding the interaction between teachers and families to maintain a professional and respectful environment. These guidelines help ensure that the focus remains on the child’s development and well-being while respecting the boundaries between personal and professional relationships.

1. **Social Networking**:
	* **Teachers are not allowed to engage in social networking with families** on personal platforms. This includes platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and other social media outlets. The goal is to keep professional boundaries clear and maintain an appropriate relationship between teachers and families.
2. **Speaking on Behalf of Tiny Town Inc.**:
	* **Teachers are prohibited from speaking on behalf of Tiny Town Inc.** in any public setting or via social media. Only designated individuals, such as the Director or Management, may speak on the school’s behalf. This ensures consistency in communication and protects the integrity of the center’s messaging.
3. **Babysitting Outside of Tiny Town Inc. Hours**:
	* While teachers may choose to babysit children outside of their scheduled hours at Tiny Town Inc., this arrangement is considered **personal** and must not interfere with their responsibilities and hours at the center. This policy is designed to maintain professional boundaries and ensure that the teacher’s duties and focus during work hours remain dedicated to the children in their care.
4. **Emergency Contact List**:
	* If a **teacher** is planning to take a child home from Tiny Town Inc. due to parental arrangements, the teacher must be **listed on the child’s emergency contact list**. This is a safety measure and ensures that there is clear documentation and communication in place regarding any changes in the child’s departure from the center.

**Licensing Authority:**

The **Department of Early Education and Care (EEC)** is the licensing authority responsible for setting the standards for the licensing or approval of school-age and daycare programs. Parents may contact the EEC to inquire about the program's compliance history.

**Contact Information:**

* **Department of Early Education and Care**
1 Washington Street, Suite 20
Taunton, MA 02780
Phone: 1-508-828-5025

**Tiny Town Inc. Contact Information:**

* **Tiny Town Inc.**
1226 State Rd, Plymouth, MA 02360

Phone: 508-224-7769

**Fax:** 508-224-1736

**Email:** tinytowninc@gmail.com

**Website:** [www.tinytownchildrenscenter.com](http://www.tinytownchildrenscenter.com)

**Early Intervention/ABA/Private Service Policy**

We are very happy to be able to allow children to work with their private ABA or Early Intervention therapists while at school. However, please understand that it takes a village for children to meet their goals in all of their environments, and services must also be communicated at home, not just at school.

The licensee must accept applications and make reasonable accommodations to welcome or continue to serve any child with a disability who requires special services. In determining whether accommodations are reasonable and necessary, the licensee must, with parental consent and as appropriate, request information about the child from the Local Education Agency (LEA), Early Intervention Program, or other health or service providers (e.g., ABA). Based on the available information, the licensee must, with the parent’s input, identify in writing the specific accommodations required to meet the child’s needs at the program, including but not limited to:

1. Any changes or modifications in the child’s participation in regular program activities;
2. The size of the group to which the child may be assigned and the appropriate staff-child ratio; and
3. Any special equipment, materials, ramps, or aids needed to serve the child.

The licensee must provide written notification to the parent within 30 days of receiving the authorized and requested information, if, in the licensee’s judgment, the accommodations required by 606 CMR 7.04(13) to serve the child are not reasonable or would cause an undue burden to the program. The licensee must maintain a copy of this notification in its records.

Accommodations related to the toileting needs of a child with a disability who is not toilet trained must not be considered an undue burden. In determining whether the accommodations required by 606 CMR 7.04(13) are reasonable or would cause an undue burden to the program, the licensee must consider at least the following factors:

1. The nature and cost of the accommodations needed to provide care for the child at the program;
2. The ability to secure funding or services from other sources;
3. The overall financial resources of the licensee;
4. The number of persons employed by the licensee;
5. The effect on expenses and resources, or the impact otherwise of such action upon the licensee;
6. Whether the required accommodation alters the fundamental nature of the program;
7. Whether the chemistry between staff and therapists is positive;
8. Whether the therapists are adhering to program policies.

The licensee must, with parental permission, contribute to the development and review of the child’s program plan in cooperation with the LEA, Early Intervention Program, ABA, and/or other health and service providers. The licensee must identify at least one educator to serve as the liaison for each child with a disability. The liaison must be responsible for coordinating care in the program and with service providers, and communicating with the child’s parents, service providers, and educators.

**Service Provider Requirements:**

* All Early Intervention/ABA or other health and service providers must sign in/out for each visit.
* All Early Intervention/ABA or other health and service providers must have identification on them at all times when visiting.
* All Early Intervention/ABA or other health and service providers must adhere to program policies when at the program.
* Therapists/service providers are not allowed to be alone with children and must be in direct supervision of a Tiny Town employee at all times.
* Caretaking needs for the child receiving services and other children in the classroom are to be met by Tiny Town staff only.
* Therapists/service providers are not allowed to carry or pick up the child they are working with, or any other child within the program.
* All members of staff and visiting therapists at our school have a duty of care towards pupils and must be aware of the boundaries involving physical contact. There is a strict no-touching rule unless a child needs comfort or is hurt.
* Therapists are not allowed to discipline any child. Any redirection for the child receiving services must be in alignment with their written plan.
* Service providers must follow along with the child’s natural course of the day and not prevent them from participating. If they need to pull a child aside to work with them directly, it must be done within the group classroom or play area outdoors.

**Parent Consent:**

I understand that my child is receiving private services during their time at Tiny Town. I will provide all consent paperwork necessary and ensure that the organization adheres to program policies. I also understand that Tiny Town reserves the right to not allow private therapies at any time if they cannot reasonably accommodate my child’s needs or if the services do not adhere to the program’s policies.

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Tiny Town Inc. Parent Handbook Acknowledgment**

Please sign below and return to Tiny Town either electronically or in person.

I have received and read the **Tiny Town Inc. Parent Handbook**. I understand all my rights and responsibilities stated in the parent handbook. I understand that **Tiny Town Children's Center Inc.** policies can be changed and revised at any time. I understand that these policies will be in effect immediately.

**Parent/Guardian Name:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
**Child’s Name:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_