FESSENDEN Children's Center

Parent Handbook

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The policies outlined in this handbook are subject to periodic review, and the Fessenden Children's Center reserves the right to make amendments and/or modifications as required.

Welcome to Fessenden Children's Center

Fessenden Children's Center was established in September 1989. Our program is developed for children three months to five years old, providing a nurturing environment and early childhood education in a private school setting. The Center is fully licensed for 52 children by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), located at 1250 Hancock Street, Suite 604, Quincy, MA, 02169, #617-472-2881. EEC may be contacted for the program's compliance history.

Fessenden Children's Center uses the Brightwheel app, a tool for classroom management, communication, photos, videos, online bill pay, and much more.

A note regarding photos/videos in Brightwheel:
Media shared in Brightwheel is meant to provide you with a glimpse into your child's day here at Fessenden Children's Center. Media may be shared of your child both individually and in their class group. Out of respect for everyone's privacy, any group pictures/videos shared with parents/guardians are not meant for social media. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation!

Our Philosophy and Goals

Fessenden Children's Center is a place where children can grow and develop in a safe, stimulating, and loving environment. Our Center incorporates a developmentally appropriate approach to teaching young children, which allows each child to grow and learn at his or her own pace. The close-knit atmosphere at the Center fosters feelings of trust among all the children and their family members.

The goals of the Center are guided by our belief that children should:

- Be safe and happy.
- Develop their self-esteem.
- Develop a sense of themselves as people worthy of love and respect.
- Develop a sense of themselves as powerful learners and achievers.
- Develop a sense of themselves as creative and imaginative people.
- Develop a sense of sensitivity to others.
- Develop a sense of self-control.
- Develop a capacity for self-expression.
- Develop respect for property, beauty, and order.
- Have relaxed and happy days.

Non-discrimination

Fessenden Children's Center is open to all employees of The Fessenden School, as well as, to the surrounding community; and does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, marital status, religion, political beliefs, cultural heritage, disability, or sexual orientation.

Using the toilet is not a prerequisite for enrollment at the Center.

Enrollment & Deposits

For returning children, a non-refundable deposit of $250 is required to hold your child's spot for the following school year. This deposit will be applied to your child's last month's tuition for the following school year.

For newly enrolled children, **a non-refundable deposit equal to one month's tuition is required to secure a spot. This deposit will be applied to the child's last month of enrollment.**

For children younger than three months when the contract year begins, the Center will hold the space at no charge until the child reaches three months of age and is eligible to attend the Center. If families wish to delay their child's enrollment and hold the spot beyond this point, a fee of 50% of the monthly tuition will be charged until the child turns five months, after which, at the Center's discretion, a family may continue to hold a spot for their child but must pay the full month's tuition to do so.

Families may reserve a spot for children born after the contract year begins. In this case, the Center will hold a spot for up to three months at no charge and then at 50% of the monthly tuition for up to two months. Beyond that time frame, a family must pay the full tuition to hold a spot for their child.

Failure to pay the required tuition within the specified timeframe will result in another child being offered the spot. Recognizing that the Center is a more vibrant experience with children in attendance, the Center may not always approve an extension beyond a child's five-month birthday.

Refund Policy

All deposits and tuition payments are non-refundable, except in cases where the Center is unable to provide services specified in the enrollment agreement.

By enrolling at The Fessenden Children's Center, parents acknowledge and agree to abide by the terms and conditions outlined in this enrollment policy.

Daily Schedule* – Baby 1 Group (children 3 - 12 months)

7:30 - 8:00 AM Breakfast & bottle feeding / Playtime
8:45 - 9:15 AM Snack & Diaper changing
9:15 - 9:30 AM Morning naps begin
9:30 - 9:45 AM Teacher-directed activities (art, music, circle time, sensory table, etc)
9:45 - 10:30 AM Bottle feeding/diaper changing / clean-up activities / get ready to go outside
10:30 - 11:15 AM Go out for a walk or to the play yard
11:15 - 11:30 AM Diaper changes, hand washing, and preparing lunches & bottles; mid-day go home
11:30 AM - 12:15 PM Lunch & bottle feedings
12:15 - 12:45 PM Clean up lunch / prepare for mid-day naps
12:45 - 2:15 PM Naps/playtime
2:15 - 3:00 PM Diaper changes/snack time/bottle feedings
3:00 - 4:30 PM Clean-up snack/playtime / sensory activity / go home

***Feeding, naps, and diaper changes are always done on an as-needed basis. The daily schedules noted above could vary from day to day.**

Daily Schedule* – Baby 2 Group (children 12 - 20 months)

7:30 - 8:00 AM Breakfast & bottle feeding / Playtime
8:45 - 9:15 AM Snack & Diaper changing
9:15 - 9:30 AM Morning naps begin
9:30 - 9:45 AM Teacher-directed activities (art, music, circle time, sensory table, etc)
9:45 - 10:30 AM Bottle feeding/diaper changing / clean-up activities / get ready to go outside
10:30 - 11:15 AM Go out for a walk or to the play yard
11:15 - 11:30 AM Diaper changes, hand washing, and prepare lunches & bottles; mid-day go home
11:30 AM - 12:15 PM Lunch & bottle feedings
12:15 - 12:45 PM Clean up lunch / prepare for mid-day naps
12:45 - 2:15 PM Naps/playtime
2:15 - 3:00 PM Diaper changes/snack time/bottle feedings
3:00 - 4:30 PM Clean-up snack/playtime / sensory activity / go home

***Feeding, naps, and diaper changes are always done on an as-needed basis. The daily schedules noted above could vary from day to day.**

Daily Schedule* – Toddler 1 Group (children 15 - 30 months)

7:30 - 8:00 AM Arrival / Breakfast / Free play (if your child arrives at 8:00 am or after please be sure to feed him/her their breakfast at home)
8:15 - 9:00 AM Tabletop activities / Sensory table activity / Bathroom & Diapers
9:00 - 9:15 AM Snack
9:15 - 9:45 AM Circle Time / Art Activity
9:45 - 10:00 AM Get ready to go outside
10:00 - 11:00 AM Outdoor Activities
11:00 - 11:30 AM Bathroom / Prepare lunch
11:30 AM - 12:00 PM Lunchtime
12:00 - 12:30 PM Clean up lunch / Diaper changing & toileting / Rest mat setup
12:30 - 2:30 PM Rest time
2:30 - 3:15 PM Bathroom / Snack / Clean up rest mats
3:15 - 3:30 PM Clean-up snack
3:30 - 4:30 PM Go home / Free play / Outdoor time (weather permitting)

***Toileting/diapering and hand washing are done throughout the day on an as-needed basis.**
The daily schedule noted above could vary from day to day.

Daily Schedule* – Toddler 2 Group (children 2 yrs - 3.5 yrs)

7:30 - 8:45 AM Morning drop-off / Breakfast / Child choice time
8:45 - 9:00 AM Clean-up / Diaper changing & toileting / Hand Washing
9:00 - 9:15 AM Snack time
9:15 - 9:30 AM Morning meeting time
9:30 - 10:00 AM Prepare for gross motor activities
10:00 - 11:00 AM Outdoor time / Indoor gross motor time
11:15 - 11:30 AM Diaper changing & toileting / Hand Washing / Lunch prep
11:30 AM - 12:00 PM Lunchtime
12:00 - 12:30 PM Rest time prep / Midday go home
12:30 - 2:30 PM Rest time
2:30 - 3:00 PM Snack time / Diaper changing & toileting / Clean up rest mats
3:30 - 4:30 PM Go home begins / Free Play / Outdoor time (weather permitting)

***Toileting/diapering and hand washing are done throughout the day on an as-needed basis.**
The daily schedule noted above could vary from day to day.

Daily Schedule* – Preschool Group (children 2.9 yrs - 5.10 yrs)

7:30 - 9:00 AM Arrival time / Child choice time
9:00 - 9:30 AM Bathroom / Wash hands / Snack
9:30 - 9:45 AM Group morning meeting
9:45 - 10:45 AM Teacher-directed activity / Child choice activity
10:45 - 11:00 AM Clean-up / Bathroom time
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM Outdoor time / Indoor gross motor time
12:00 - 1:00 PM Lunchtime / Bathroom time / Rest time prep / Quiet book time / Mid-day go home
1:00 - 2:30 PM Rest time / Outdoor or Indoor activities
2:30 - 3:30 PM Bathroom / Nap Mat Clean-up / Snack
3:30 - 4:30 PM Go home

***Toileting/diapering and hand washing are done throughout the day on an as-needed basis.**
The daily schedule noted above could vary from day to day.

Child Guidance Policy

The Children's Center teachers strongly believe that clear communication is paramount in providing a safe and stimulating environment for children. The teachers provide positive reinforcement to children in a clear, direct, and consistent manner, making it easier for the children to understand classroom expectations. We realize occurrences are going to happen where the children exhibit undesirable behavior. To help them problem-solve these occurrences the teachers will first, validate the child's feelings and then explain why the behavior is inappropriate. Teachers should always keep in mind the developmental level of the child when responding to a situation. Distraction, redirection, or removal from an area may help the child to regain a sense of control over his or her behavior.

Child guidance also includes:

1. Encouraging self-control and using positive child guidance techniques such as positive expectations, setting clear and consistent limits, and redirecting.
2. Helping children learn social, communication, and emotional self-regulation skills that they can use in place of challenging behaviors.
3. Using environmental modifications, activity modifications, adult or peer support, and other teaching strategies to encourage appropriate behavior and prevent challenging behaviors.
4. Intervening quickly when children are physically aggressive with one another and helping them develop more positive strategies for resolving conflict.
5. Explaining rules, procedures, and the reasons for them to the children, and where appropriate and feasible, allowing children to participate in the establishment of program rules, policies, and procedures.
6. Discussing behavior management techniques among teachers to promote consistency.
7. Teachers must have a method of communicating effectively with each child.

Specific prohibitions:

1. Corporal punishment, including any type of physical hitting, inflicted in any manner upon the body, shaking, threats, or derogatory remarks; shall not be used.
2. No child shall be subject to confinement in a swing, high chair, crib, playpen/pack-n-play, or any other piece of equipment for an extended period in place of supervision.
3. No child shall be denied outdoor time, meals, or snacks; force-feeding children or otherwise making them eat against their will, or in any way using food as a consequence.
4. No child shall be punished for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet.
5. No child shall be subject to excessive time-out. Time-out may not exceed one minute for each year of the child's age and must take place within an educator's view.

Transition Policy

At times, a child's chronological age does not necessarily determine their group placement within the Center. If a child is being considered for a group change or a program change the following process will be implemented:

Plan for transitioning a child from one group within the Center to another group:

1. The director will contact the child's parents/guardians to let them know of the change being considered.
2. The teachers will provide progress reports, and teacher observations that support their recommendation for a group change and we will ask for parent/guardian input.
3. Once the previous steps are complete, the teachers will then begin the transition process.

Transportation Policy

Fessenden Children's Center does not provide transportation of any kind to and/or from the Center. For liability reasons, we do not allow our teachers to transport children in their personal vehicles to and/or from the Center or during their workday.

Please use the "reserved for children's center drop-off and pick-up" parking spaces or another available non-residential parking space when dropping off and/or picking up your child. **Do not leave your car parked and running in the parking lot for any reason.**

All children enrolled at the Center are required to have written parent/guardian consent for their child's transportation plan.

In the event of a medical emergency, 911 will be called and the ill or injured child will be transported by way of an ambulance (parent/guardian's consent found in the child's file).

As part of our program, we occasionally organize field trips to allow the children to experience new environments and visit new places outside the center. Fessenden Children's Center contracts 3rd-party transportation services for field trips which are provided by Local Motion.

Arrival Policy

The Center opens each day at the following times:

7:15 AM for Fessenden faculty

7:30 AM for community families

For staffing purposes, all children must arrive at the time stated on their contracts.

parents/guardians are responsible for escorting their child into the building and letting the teachers know that their child has arrived. Whenever possible, please make appointments for your child in the afternoon so that their morning activities are not interrupted. **Early drop-off and/or late pick-up must have prior approval from the director.**

Departure Policy

The Center closes at 4:30 PM each day. For staffing purposes, all children must be picked up by the time stated on their contract. Parents/guardians should notify the director if they are going to be late. In the event of chronic tardiness by a parent/guardian, the director will request that the parent/guardian revise their child's contract. Also, if anyone other than the parent/guardian is picking up we ask that you add them into Brightwheel as an "Approved Pick Up", as well as notify the staff in writing of who (please provide their full name) is responsible for picking up that day. In addition to the note, the teachers will ask to see a photo ID.

Late Pick-up Policy

Center staffing is based on the hours the children are scheduled to attend the Center. Please plan accordingly to pick your child up on time each day. After a 5-minute grace period, families will be charged a $20.00/hour late fee. Please note that full charges will be billed for any portion of the hour you are late. For example:

- *If pick-up is 12:30 pm and you pick up at 12:36 pm you will see a $20.00 charge*
- *If pick-up is 12:30 pm and you pick up at 3:06 pm you will see a $60.00 charge*

Late fee charges will be included in the next billing cycle under the description "Late pick up." Your cooperation in being at the school on time would be appreciated. If you are going to be late due to unforeseen circumstances please contact the Director.

Clothing Policy

- Children should be dressed comfortably, simply, and suitably for the weather. We engage in messy activities that may cause children's clothing to get dirty despite wearing smocks. We do not want to inhibit the children unnecessarily, so we ask that you send them in comfortable play clothes so that they can participate without hesitation.
- Remember that the children will be playing OUTDOORS so be sure their clothing is durable and their footwear is sturdy. Dress in layers on cold days! **Please do not send your child in long dresses, drawstring clothing of any kind, loose-fitting jewelry, or loose-fitting footwear such as flip-flops, Crocs, party shoes, or loose-fitting sneakers or shoes; these clothing items are not safe for daily activities and could be hazardous to your child's safety.**
- An extra set of clothing (WELL LABELED) including shoes, socks, pants, shirt, and underwear (if applicable) must be left at the Children's Center in case of accidents.

Home Toys

We have a wide variety of toys and materials, as well as many opportunities built into our curriculum for the children to have the opportunity to share at the Center. For these reasons, children's toys should stay at home or in your car. **Comfort items used at rest time are the only exception.**

Snacks

We provide a mid-morning and a mid-afternoon snack daily. The children participate in preparing the snacks whenever possible.

Lunches

parents/guardians are responsible for providing their child's lunch. **The Children's Center is a peanut and tree-nut-free Center.** Peanut butter and other nut butters can be substituted with soy butter or seed spreads such as Sunbutter or WOW butter. We ask that all foods be prepared in child-size portions; already cut, sliced/peeled, and stored in labeled unbreakable containers for safe and easy eating. We ask that parents/guardians use ice packs inside their child's lunchbox to keep the food from spoiling. In our effort to adhere to EEC regulations pertaining to nutrition, we ask that you send a well-balanced meal for your child(ren).

A well-balanced lunch should consist of the following:

- Protein sources: meat, poultry, fish, eggs, cooked beans, cheese, tofu, and seed spreads.
- 2 vegetables or 2 fruits or 1 vegetable & 1 fruit.
- Grain: whole-grain cereal, whole-grain bread, whole-grain crackers, unprocessed whole-grain rice, or unprocessed whole-grain pasta.
- Dairy product

Nap/Rest Time Policy

To prevent sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), all infants aged 12 months and younger are placed on their backs for sleep unless the child's health care professional orders otherwise in writing or the child demonstrates the ability to roll over independently. Always remember… "Back to Sleep and Tummy to Play".

We provide a quiet rest or naptime for all children who attend the Center for **four or more hours per day**. Sleep is an important part of a healthy childhood. Naps give children time to rejuvenate and let active bodies rest. Without naps or quiet rest periods, children may become overtired. Children who are overtired are often easily upset and may even have a harder time falling asleep at night.

As the children get older, we understand that they may take shorter naps or stop napping altogether. In this case, children will be offered quiet activities to do on their mats after resting their bodies for at least 30 minutes. We are asking the parents/guardians to refrain from asking that staff keep a child awake or wake them up early. Per directive from our licensor, the need for a nap is to be guided by the child.

Diapering and Toileting Policy

Toilet use is not a prerequisite for enrollment at the Center regardless of age. All children will begin using the toilet following their physical, emotional, and developmental abilities.

- All diapering areas in the Center are separate from food prep and food service areas. Teachers always wear sterile exam gloves whenever diapering a child, assisting a child with toileting, or changing a child's soiled clothes.
- All teachers will prepare the diaper changing area before each diaper change; this includes covering the diaper changing surface with disposable exam table paper.
- The teacher will gently lay the child down on the diaper changing surface; always keeping one hand on the child at all times.
- All diapering and toileting surfaces are cleaned with a bleach and water solution after every use.
- All teachers and children will wash their hands with soap and water after diapering and toileting.
- All disposable soiled diapers are placed in a covered diaper barrel. Non-disposable diapers are placed in a covered diaper barrel (provided by the parents/guardians of the child).
- All soiled clothes are placed in a plastic bag and put in the child's backpack. All children are required to have at least one complete change of clothes at the Center at all times. If a child does not have a change of clothing at the Center; the Center will provide the child with the appropriate article(s) of clothing from its extra clothing supply.

During the toilet learning process, we work cooperatively with parents/guardians to help their child(ren) achieve their toileting goals. **Once a child is consistently using the toilet at home with only an occasional accident, parents/guardians should contact the classroom teachers to set up a time to discuss continuing toilet learning at school.** Toilet learning can be an emotional process for a child to go through and for this reason, **we will take the child's lead**. Staff will use positive words of

encouragement, praise, and lots of patience. **If a child has two or more accidents that have a significant impact on the teachers' ability to uphold classroom sanitation regulations, we will require that the child continue to wear diapers or pull-ups to the Center until the director and classroom teachers are confident that the child feels comfortable and displays a willingness to use the toilet.**

Children's Health Records

All children are required to have a physical exam form (health form) with all immunizations up-to-date at the time of enrollment. Documentation of immunizations shall be kept up-to-date and new health forms are required every three months up to twelve months of age and annually thereafter.

Childhood lead screenings must be done on all children between the ages of nine and 12 months and annually thereafter at the ages of two and three. Children must also be screened at age four if they live in a community deemed high risk for lead poisoning. Documentation of this should be listed on your child's health form stating the date of the last screening and the result. Additionally, the varicella vaccine (chickenpox) is required at the age of one and should also be documented on your child's health form.

If for any reason parents/guardians object to having their child immunized or screened for lead they must submit to the Center (along with the updated health form) a signed letter from their child's pediatrician stating the reasons for their objections to having their child immunized.

Illness Policy

Please email the director in the morning if your child will be absent. If your child begins to display signs of illness while at the Center, we will call you to bring them home and recommend that you consult with their doctor.

The following criteria will be considered in determining if your child must go home:

- Fever of 100.4 degrees or higher. Please note that when the temperature is taken externally a degree is added to accurately reflect an oral temperature.
- Inflammation, oozing, and redness of the eyes
- One incident of vomiting (Not spitting up)
- Two or more incidents of diarrhea back-to-back
- Communicable disease, such as excessive/continuous coughing; evidence of mouth or throat pain
- Unknown or undiagnosed rash or skin irritation
- Highly irritable behavior, due to mild illness, which causes an inability to participate in daily activities
- Highly lethargic, due to mild illness, which causes an inability to participate in all of the daily activities

*For a more in-depth description, please refer to our Center Illness Policy

Please do not send your child to the Center sick.

If your child is sent home sick, for any reason, they will not be able to return for at least 24 hours. He/she must be symptom-free for 24 hours before returning to the Center no matter the cause.

We reserve the right to require a doctor's note for your child to return to the Center.

You will be informed verbally or in writing by the director or assistant director of any outbreak of a contagious illness or disease. We also ask that you notify the director or assistant director of any contagious disease or illness that your child has been exposed to outside of school.

Plan for Administration of Medication

The Center requests that whenever possible parents/guardians plan their child's medication dosage schedule so that medications will be given before and/or after childcare. However, if this is not possible, the following applies:

Prescription Medication:

Prescription medication must be brought to school in its **original container** and include the child's name, the medication name, the dosage, the number of times per day and the number of days the medication is to be administered, and the route. The prescription label will be accepted as the physician's written authorization.

The Center will not administer any medication contrary to the directions on the label unless so authorized by the written order of the child's physician.

The parents/guardian must fill out the Authorization For Medication Form before the medication can be administered. Teachers will document each time a child receives a dose of the medication when at the Center.

Non-prescription Medication:

Non-prescription medication will be given only with the written consent of the parents/guardian and the child's healthcare provider. The Center will accept a signed statement from the healthcare provider listing the child's name, the name of the medication, the dosage and the criteria for its administration, the number of times per day, and the number of days the medication is to be administered, and by what route. The statement will be valid for one year from the date it was signed.

The parent/guardian must fill out the Authorization for Medication Form, which allows the Center to administer the non-prescription medication in accordance with the written order of the healthcare provider. The statement will be valid for one year from the date it was signed.

The Center will make every attempt to contact the parent/guardian before the child receives the non-prescription medication unless the child needs medication urgently or when contacting the parents/guardian will unreasonably delay appropriate care.

Topical Ointments and Sprays:

Topical ointments and sprays such as petroleum jelly, sunscreen, bug spray, etc. will be administered to the child with written parent/guardian permission. The signed statement from the parents/guardian will be valid for one year and include a list of topical non-prescription medications.

When topical ointments and sprays are applied to wounds, rashes, or broken skin, the Center will follow its written procedures for non-prescription medication which include the written order of the physician, which is valid for a year, and the Authorization For Medication Form is signed by the parents/guardian.

All Medications:

1. The parents/guardian must administer the 1st dose at home in case of an allergic reaction.
2. All medications must be given to the teacher directly by the parents/guardian.
3. All medications will be stored out of the reach of children (in the cabinet that houses the first-aid kit or on the refrigerator door shelf if refrigeration is necessary). All medications that are considered controlled substances must be locked and kept out of reach of children.
4. The teachers are responsible for the administration of medication. In his/her absence, the program director or the assistant director will be responsible.
5. The Center will maintain a written record of the administration of any medication (excluding topical ointments and sprays indicated in the below table), which will include the child's name, the time and date of each administration, the dosage, the route, and the name of the staff person administering the medication. This completed record will become part of the child's file.
6. All unused medication will be returned to the parents/guardian.

Individual Health Care Plan Policy

The Center must maintain as part of a child's record an individual healthcare plan for each child with a chronic medical condition, which has been diagnosed by a licensed healthcare practitioner. The plan must describe the chronic condition, its symptoms, any medical treatment that may be necessary while the child is in care, the potential side effects of that treatment, and the potential consequences to the child's health if the treatment is not administered.

The lead teachers may administer routine, scheduled medication or treatment to the child with a chronic medical condition in accordance with written parent/guardian consent and physician's authorization.

Notwithstanding the provisions of 606 CMR 7.11(1)(b)2) above, the teacher must have completed training, given by the child's physician, or the center's healthcare consultant, that specifically addresses the child's medical condition, medication, and other treatment needs.

In addition to the requirements for the routine, scheduled administration of medication or treatment outlined in section (3)(a), above, any unanticipated administration of medication or unanticipated treatment for a non-life-threatening condition requires that the lead teachers must make a reasonable attempt to contact the parents/guardian(s) before administering such unanticipated medication or beginning such unanticipated treatment, or if the parents/guardian(s) cannot be reached in advance, as soon as possible after such medication or treatment is given.

The teacher must document all medication or treatment administration, whether scheduled or unanticipated, in the child's medication and treatment log.

The written parent/guardian consent and physician's authorization shall be valid for one year unless withdrawn sooner. Such consent and authorization must be renewed annually for the administration of medication and/or treatment to continue.

Emergency, Illness, or Injury Procedures

At the Center:

In the event of an emergency, illness, or injury an administrator will call to inform the parents/guardian of the incident. In any situation that requires emergency room attention, a staff member will accompany the child in an ambulance to the hospital, and the parents/guardians will be instructed to meet them there. The child's health information will accompany them.

If parents/guardians cannot be reached:

When parents/guardians cannot be reached, emergency contacts will be called in a further attempt to reach parents/guardians. A designated staff member will continue to try to reach parents/guardians and/or emergency contacts until someone is contacted.

When on a Field Trip/Walks off Campus: If an accident or acute illness occurs while on a field trip/walk off campus, the lead teacher will take charge of the emergency, assess the situation, and give first aid as needed. Based on the severity of the emergency or illness, the lead teacher will determine the mode of transportation for the child to receive medical treatment.

The program director, assistant director, or other designated adult, will be contacted by the lead teacher as soon as possible and informed of the nature and extent of the injury and the proposed plan of action.

As a preventive measure, before departure from the Center, the program director and/or lead teacher will determine appropriate guidelines to be followed during the field trip/walk off-campus to ensure continuity and safety of the children including:

1. All groups are issued a travel backpack containing first-aid supplies and current family contact information. Teachers are required to bring the travel backpack whenever their group goes on a field trip, walks on or off campus, or while in the Center's play yard.
2. Emergency information, including contacts and telephone numbers, will be kept in all travel first-aid bags at all times.
3. In the event of an emergency, at least one teacher per group should have a cell phone on their person. Before leaving the Center, someone will be designated as the person to call 911 in an emergency.

Holiday Schedule

All holidays that fall during your child's weekly schedule are included in your monthly tuition fees.
Labor Day
Indigenous People's Day
Thanksgiving Break (*3 Days*)
Winter Holiday Break **(as per holiday and vacation schedule**)
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
President's Day
Patriot's Day
Memorial Day
Juneteenth

Summer Vacation Break (Optional)

Teacher Work Week (**1 Week as per holiday and vacation schedule**)
Independence Day observed

Vacations

Fessenden Children's Center is closed for one week each year, in August, for renovations and classroom setup. We will also be closed for a few days between Christmas and New Year to accommodate holiday travel. This is the only time during the year that the Center is closed except for the holidays listed above. The Center reopens the week before Labor Day weekend each year.

Snow Day Policy

The Center will be closed during the snowy season if The Fessenden School is closed**.**
If Fessenden School is already closed due to a vacation break, the Center will follow Newton Public Schools and will be closed if Newton Public Schools are closed.
In the unlikely event that both Fessenden School and Newton Public Schools are closed, the director or assistant director will decide. Once a final decision has been made, a written communication will be sent to you via email and/or Brightwheel message to notify you of any closure. **If you have any questions as to whether the Center is open please send an email or Brightwheel message to the director or assistant director:**

Fee Schedule
Parents/guardians will be invoiced monthly via Brightwheel. There is an Extended hourly rate of $20/hour for any additional hours (which include additional days, late pick-ups, and/or early drop-offs) that are not included in your child's regularly contracted schedule. We do our best to accommodate schedule changes both during the current school year and from one school year to the next. All schedule changes must be approved in advance by the director; once approved, schedule changes will begin on the **1st day** of the following month after the request. Please note that requests for additional days both during the school year, as well as, from one school year to the next school year will be accommodated, provided there is availability. **A change of schedule form will be sent to you to be completed and signed once a request is made via email or verbally.**

For current tuition rates please visit our website at:
https://fessendenchildrenscenter.org/family-childrens-center/resources/

Sibling Discount: 10% monthly tuition discount off the lower-priced tuition(s).

Education Discount (applicable for families with a parent/guardian whose primary employment is in a school setting): **If your child does not attend at all during one of the below vacation weeks, a 20% discount will be applied to that month's tuition.**

Eligible Vacation Weeks:

Public School February vacation
Fessenden March vacation
Public School April vacation

March vacation consists of more than one week; in light of this, if families would like to take the two weeks, discounts will be on a reducing balance basis.

Summer vacation:
The Children Center's summer program begins on July 1st and ends the third week in August. Families are welcome to take the full months off or have a reduced schedule. Discounts will not be given to families who choose to take vacation during the summer. For example, if you decide to take one week of vacation in July and August, you will be charged for the full month. Regular monthly sibling discounts or faculty discounts will apply,

Withdrawal from the Center
If you withdraw from the Center for any reason (moving, job change, financial difficulty, serious illness, etc.) **30 days' written notice is required.**

Pre-school program

The Fessenden Children's Center preschool program is intended to be a two-year program for children turning four and five during their enrollment. A child may enroll for a third year (or a second year after they turn five) pending space availability and at the sole discretion of the Center's Director.

Parent/Guardian Visits

Fessenden Children's Center has an open-door policy for parents/guardians to visit when their child is in attendance.

Parent/Guardian Participation

Fessenden Children's Center parents/guardians are encouraged to volunteer in the Center in a variety of ways: chaperone field trips, and/or share special talents (e.g. cooking, art, music, or storytime).

Parent/Guardian Conferences/Meetings

Parents/guardian conferences/meetings are offered in conjunction with their child receiving an updated progress report, or upon parents/guardian request. Fessenden Children's Center encourages parents/guardians to make use of these opportunities to discuss their child with the classroom teachers.

Progress Reports

Fessenden Children's Center prepares written progress reports periodically on the progress of each child in the program. The progress report will be based on observations and documentation of the child's progress in a range of activities over time and, when applicable, will include samples of the child's work. The center will provide a copy of each report to the parents/guardians, and at the parents/guardian's request, set up a time to meet to discuss their child's progress.

Frequency:

a. A written progress report for infants and children receiving outside or additional services will be prepared every three (3) months, and a copy provided to the parents/guardians.

b. Toddlers' and preschoolers' developmental reports will be prepared every six (6) months, and a copy provided to the parents/guardians.

c. The center shall bring any significant developmental concerns to the parents/guardian's attention as soon as they arise.

Contents:

a. The progress report will address the development and growth of the child including but not limited to the developmental domains of Cognitive, Social/Emotional, Language, Motor, and Life Skills.

b. All adults working with the child will have an opportunity to share their observations when a teacher is writing progress reports.

Referral Meetings

The director will schedule a meeting with parents/guardians to notify them of the Center's concern and will prepare a current list of possible resources. At the meeting, the director will provide the parents/guardians a written statement including the reason for recommending a referral for additional services, a summary of the observations teachers have made of the child, and any efforts the Center may have made to accommodate the child's needs.

The director will offer assistance to the child's parents/guardians when making the referral. Parents/guardians should be encouraged to call or request an evaluation in writing. If parents/guardians need extra support, the Center may, with written parent/guardian consent, confer with the relevant referral agency.

If a child is under the age of three (3), the director shall inform the child's parents/guardians of the availability of services provided by Early Intervention Programs.
If the child is at least 3 years of age or older, the director shall inform the child's parents/guardians of the availability of services (offered through their local public school) and their rights, including the right to appeal, under Chapter 766.

Referral Services
Whenever any teacher is concerned about a child's development or behavior and feels that further evaluation is warranted, he/she should report it to the director and/or assistant director. If the director agrees, the teacher is requested to complete an observation report and review the child's record before making a referral.

The follow-up to the Referral
The director or teachers will consult with the parents/guardians, or with parent/guardian permission, confer with outside agencies or service providers (currently working with the child) to inquire how they can best meet the child's needs at the Center. If it is determined that the child does not meet the criteria for services, the classroom teachers will be advised to continue the observation process to document the child's progress.

Record of Referrals
The director will maintain a written record of any referrals, including the parents/guardian conference and results.

Avoidance of Suspension and Termination/Suspension and Termination Policy
Fessenden Children's Center will take the following steps to avoid the suspension and termination of a child from the Center due to challenging behavior. The procedures to avoid suspension and termination include:

1. Providing an opportunity to meet with parents/guardians to discuss options other than suspension and termination.
2. Offering referrals to parents/guardians for evaluation, diagnostic or therapeutic services.
3. Pursuing options for supportive services to the program, including consultation and educator training.
4. Developing a plan for behavioral intervention at home and in the program.

Suspension
A parent/guardian may be called at any time their child exhibits behavior that may be harmful to themselves or others. Only after every attempt has been made to correct the behavior, will a parent/guardian be asked to take the child home immediately. In addition, a suspension of 24 hours or longer may be implemented. A letter will be given to the parents/guardians at the time of suspension with written documentation of the specific reasons for the suspension. A child may return to the Center after a meeting with the parents/guardians has taken place to discuss and implement a plan for intervention to remedy the behavior.

Termination
A child may be asked to leave the program for a variety of reasons including, but not limited to: safety for him/herself, the safety of others, chronic disruptive behavior, physical and/or verbal abuse of educators or children by a parent/guardian or a child, not observing the rules of the program, non-payment or excessive late payments of fees.

Fessenden Children's Center's procedures for terminating a child from the program are as follows:

1. parents/guardians will be notified in writing and at a face-to-face meeting of the reasons for termination. A copy of this letter will be kept in the child's file.
2. The director will inform parents/guardians of the availability of information and referral for other services through a selection of local childcare agencies per the Center's Childcare and Family Resource Directory.
3. When any child is terminated from the Center, whether initiated by the Center or by the parents/guardians, the teachers will prepare the child for termination from the Center in a manner that is consistent for the child to understand.

Procedures for Reporting Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect to the Department of Children and Families (DCF)

Based on Federal and state guidelines, abuse is defined as harm or threatened harm to a child's health or well-being including non-accidental physical or emotional injury or sexual abuse.
Note: Sexual abuse of a child is child abuse and is against the law. Suspected sexual abuse must also be reported. Neglect is defined as deliberate or negligent failure to provide a child with adequate food, clothing, or shelter, supervision, medical or other essential care. ***All teachers are considered mandated reporters of suspected child abuse and neglect.***

If a report involves a member of the staff, who has been involved in an incident, a written report must be made as soon as possible, but no more than four hours after the incident. Should someone hear of an incident involving someone else on staff, this must be reported within 24 hours. All reports should be made to the director. The director will develop and maintain written procedures for addressing any suspected incident of child abuse or neglect, which includes but is not limited to ensuring that an allegedly abusive or neglectful staff member does not work directly with the children until the Department of Children and Families investigation is completed and for as much additional time as EEC requires.

Training is provided to the staff on identifying signs of possible abuse and neglect and how to document observations. The director is responsible for ensuring that all teachers are aware of child abuse and reporting issues.
As educators we are mandated by law to make a report; however, it is not up to us to decide whether or not abuse or neglect is taking place. That responsibility lies with the Department of Children and Families (DCF).
To report any injuries, concerns/suspicions of child abuse or neglect call 1 (800) 792-5200.

Incident Reporting to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC)

All professionals responsible for the care of children are required by Massachusetts Law (Chapter 119, Section 51A) to report to the State's Department of Children and Families (DCF) and to the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) situations where they have reasonable cause to believe that a child is being abused or neglected. The responsibility rests both on individuals and on the Center. The following procedure is established to ensure that reports are made in a timely and effective fashion, and that information about students and their families is treated in a way that is respectful of their privacy. This policy intends to ensure that all of the Fessenden Children's Center's children are given the best possible protection from abuse and neglect. If a report involves a member of the staff, who has been

involved in an incident, a written report must be made as soon as possible, but no more than four hours after the incident. Should someone hear of an incident involving someone else on staff, this must be reported within 24 hours. All reports should be made to the director. The director will develop and maintain written procedures for addressing any suspected incident of child abuse or neglect, which includes but is not limited to ensuring that an allegedly abusive or neglectful staff member does not work directly with the children until the Department of Children and Families investigation is completed and for as much additional time as EEC requires.

Oftentimes, the most difficult task of any caregiver involved in the process is the identification of conduct, which constitutes child abuse and neglect that must be reported. Although it is impossible to list every act or omission that constitutes such conduct, Massachusetts laws and regulations provide some helpful guidelines. The statute covers a child under the age of 18 years who is suffering serious physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse inflicted upon him/her, including sexual abuse, or from neglect, including malnutrition.

Abuse- as defined in the regulations means the non-accidental commission of any act upon a child, which causes, or creates a substantial risk of, serious emotional injury, or constitutes a sexual offense under the laws of Massachusetts.

Serious Emotional Injury- Is defined as an impairment of or disorder of the intellectual or psychological capacity of a child as evidenced by observable and substantial reduction in the child's ability to function within a normal range of performance and behavior.

Serious Physical Injury- Includes the obvious: death, fracture, hematoma, burns, impairment of any organ, and any other "non-trivial" injury, tissue swelling or skin bruising resulting from the incident which occurred, and also, a very broad category defined as a child's failure to thrive.

Neglect- as defined in the regulations means the failure by a caretaker, either deliberately or through negligence or inability, to take the actions necessary to provide a child with minimally adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, supervision, emotional stability and growth, or other essential care; provided, however, that such inability is not due solely to inadequate economic resources.

Reporting Responsibility and Timing of the Report

If a report involves a member of the staff, who has been involved in an incident, a written report must be made as soon as possible, but no more than four hours after the incident. Similarly, if a staff member witnesses an incident, it must also be reported, in writing, within that same time requirement. If a child or a child's parents/guardian should make a report to a member of the staff, this must be reported, in writing, on the same day or within 12 hours. Should someone hear of an incident involving someone else on staff, this must be reported within 24 hours. All reports should be made to the director. The director will develop and maintain written procedures for addressing any suspected incident of child abuse or neglect, which includes, but is not limited to, ensuring that an allegedly abusive or neglectful staff member does not work directly with the children until the Department of Children and Families investigation is completed and for as much additional time as EEC requires.
If the director is absent from the Center, the report shall be made to the assistant director or the director's designee. The person receiving the report will inform the executive director, Michael Grossman, immediately but no later than 24 hours after receipt.

Contents of the Report

All reports should give the name or names of the children involved, the time, date, and location of the incident, and a detailed description of the incident including its beginning and its end. Both child and adult witnesses should be listed and the report should be signed legibly by the reporter. On the report, the receiving Center authority should note the time at which verbal notification of the incident was received (person, time, date) and the written notification was received (person, time, date).

Response to the Incident

The Center's response will be guided by the following principles:

- To protect and support the child
- To allay the child's distress
- To protect confidential information regarding the child and his or her family
- To ensure that all students are protected and safe from possible danger or harm

Priority will be given to listening to the child and responding sympathetically and helpfully to his or her distress. An appropriate liaison will be undertaken with the child's family. It is expected as a matter of course that this process will involve a mental health consultant or physician, and it may involve members of the Center's Administrative Counsel and Attorney. Interviews will be conducted in such a way as to assure that confidential information will be protected.

When a staff person learns of a situation of possible abuse or neglect, they should consult immediately with the director or other designee regarding the incident. Appropriate action should be taken to protect the child and to respond to the child's distress. Where appropriate, the Center's attorney will also be involved in these decisions. Scrupulous efforts will be made to protect the confidential nature of the information about the child and their family.

If after the consultations described above, the director determines on behalf of the Center that a case report should be made, the director will make the report to DCF and EEC by immediate phone call, to be followed within 24 hours by a written "51A " report. At times, it can be unclear whether conduct has reached a level of reportable abuse and neglect. In the event of disagreement between a staff member and the Center's administration, any party who believes that the incident rises to the threshold for making a case report must make the report.

Parent/Guardian Rights: State Regulations

Confidentiality and Distribution of Records

Information contained in a child's record shall be privileged and confidential. The Center shall not distribute or release information in a child's record to anyone not directly related to implementing the program plan for the child without the written consent of the child's parent/guardian. The center shall notify the parents/guardians if a child's record is subpoenaed.

The child's parents/guardians shall, upon request, have access to their child's records at reasonable times. In no event shall such access be delayed more than two (2) business days after the initial request without the consent of the child's parents/guardians. Upon such an access request the child's entire record regardless of the physical location of its parts, shall be made available. The center shall establish procedures governing access to, duplication of, and dissemination of such information; and shall maintain a permanent, written log in each child's file indicating any persons to whom information contained in a child's record has been released. Each person disseminating or releasing information contained in the record, in whole or in part, shall upon each instance enter into the log the following; staff member's name, signature, position, date, the portions of the record that were disseminated or released, the purpose of such dissemination or release, and the signature of the person to whom the

information is disseminated or released. Such log shall be available only to the child's parents/guardian(s) and the center personnel responsible for maintenance.

Amending a Child's Record

A) A child's parents/guardians shall have the right to add information, comments, data, or any other relevant materials to a child's record.
B) A child's parents/guardian(s) shall have the right to request deletion or amendment of any information contained in a child's record. Such a request shall be made following the procedures described below:

1) If such parents/guardians believe that adding information is not sufficient to explain, clarify, or correct objectionable material in the child's record, they shall have the right to a conference with the teachers to make their objections known.
2) The Center shall, within one week after the conference, render to the parents/guardian(s) a written communication stating the reason for the decision. If the center's decision is in favor of the parents/guardian, it shall immediately take steps as may be necessary to put the decision into effect.

Transfer of Records

Upon written request of the parent/guardian, the center shall transfer a copy of the child's record to the parent/guardian or any other person the parent/guardian identifies when the child is no longer in care.

Availability of Information to the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC)

Upon request of a teacher, authorized by the director and involved in the regulatory process, the Center shall make available to EEC any information required to be kept and maintained under these regulations and any other information reasonably related to the requirements of these regulations. Authorized employees of EEC shall not remove identifying case material from the center's premises and shall maintain the confidentiality of the individual records.

Parent Handbook Acknowledgement

By signing below I, _____, hereby acknowledge that I have received and reviewed a copy of the Fessenden Children's Center Parent Handbook.

Child(ren)'s Name(s): _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____