



“Parent Handbook”

Table of Contents

Introduction

- Welcome Pg 2
- Philosophy Pg 2
- Preschool Program Pg 3
- Ratios Pg 4
- Hours of Operation Pg 4

Small Beginnings

- Daycare Calendar Pg 5
- Trial Period Pg 5
- The Daily Pg 6
- Open Door Policy Pg 6
- House Rules Pg 6
- Communication Pg 7
- Personal Care Plans Pg 7
- Nutrition Pg 7
- Rest Period Pg 7
- Activities/Outside Play Pg 7
- Media Allowance Pg 8
- Guidance Policy Pg 8
- Mandated Reporter Pg 8
- Payment Procedure Pg 8
- Government Assistance Program Pg 9
- Child Absences Pg 9
- Child Sick/ Vacation Days Pg 9
- Unforeseen Circumstances Pg 9
- Provider's Absence/ Vacation Pg 9

Health and Safety

- Illness Policy Pg 10
- Medications Pg 12
- Emergency/ Evacuation Policy Pg 12
- Transportation and Outings pg 12

Withdrawal of Services Policy

- Termination of Services Pg 12

Child Care Terminology

Pg 13

*If you are renewing your contract, please be sure to review the highlighted sections in this handbook. The highlighted sections in this handbook are updates for the year 2022.

Welcome

Small Beginnings Family Child Care provides a home-like, loving, safe, and play-based environment for children to explore the world around them. Services at our home child care are provided for children between the ages of 18 months - 6 years of age.

The first five years of a child's life are incredibly crucial! Children learn more in this time frame than at any other time in their life. During the first 5 years, every new experience will help create connections that will shape how children view themselves and navigate the world. As a child care provider, my job is to create a partnership with you, to assist your child during this monumental time in their life.

Philosophy

What is wellness and what are wellness dimensions?

Wellness is an ongoing process of implementing practices to be the best version of yourself. Since the first 5 years make up the foundation of a child's life, we believe that teaching and implementing wellness practices early on will give children a headstart in life.

The wellness dimensions are composed of 9 interconnected dimensions that affect one's health, being, and quality of life. The 9 wellness dimensions include physical, emotional, intellectual, social, creative, career, financial, and spiritual wellness. **We will only implement 6 out of the 9 of these dimensions at our daycare.** They include:

- **Intellectual Wellness:** Children will have an opportunity to participate in activities that support California's Preschool Learning Foundations, to prepare them for Kindergarten.
- **Emotional Wellness:** Children have opportunities to learn how to identify their emotions and will learn coping strategies to deal with their emotions.
- **Social Wellness:** Children will have opportunities to participate in activities that help them gain a sense of identity. Children will also have opportunities to learn healthy forms of communication.
- **Physical Wellness:** Children will have plenty of opportunities to engage in activities that encourage them to move their bodies. One of those activities will be our daily Morning Exercise which starts with yoga and ends with singing and dancing to interactive songs!
- **Creative Wellness:** Children will have opportunities to learn how to grow fruits and vegetables in our garden. They will also learn how to harvest those fruits and vegetables for their meals.

Preschool Program

Daily Schedule

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 8:30 am | <i>Breakfast</i> |
| 9:15 am | <i>Morning Exercise</i> |
| 11:30 am | <i>Lunch</i> |
| 1:00 pm | <i>Nap Time</i> |
| 3:30 pm | <i>Snack Time</i> |
| 5:00 pm | <i>Daycare Closed</i> |

**Subject to change, depending on the group's overall needs*

**Learning activities happen throughout the day, depending on what the activity is.*

Weekly Schedule

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Mindful Mondays | Learning and exploring awareness of our thoughts, feelings, body, and environment! |
| Tuesday Tea Time | Learning and exploring health and nutrition through nature! |
| Whimsical Wednesdays | Learning and exploring with our senses, through sensory activities. |
| Think About It Thursday | Learning and exploring through experiments! |
| Fun-day Friday | A fun day of exploration! |

FAQs

Will your preschool program help prepare my child for kindergarten?

Yes! One of the dimensions is “intellectual wellness” and within this dimension, we will be implementing California’s Learning Foundations to help prepare your children for Preschool.

How do you incorporate wellness dimensions and the California Learning Foundations into your daily schedule?

Example: Mindful Monday

After Morning Exercise (***Active Participation and Cardiovascular Endurance; Physical Wellness***), the children gather around for Circle Time. We read a book called, "When I'm Mad" (***Reading; Intellectual Wellness***). After reading our book, we discuss coping strategies that we can practice when we feel mad. (***Comprehension and Analysis of Age Appropriate Texts, Self Regulation, Social and Emotional***)

Understanding; Emotional Wellness & Intellectual Wellness). The kids then have an opportunity to practice using these coping strategies and practice communicating how they feel, with their peers (*Self Regulation and Social and Emotional Understanding, Language Use and Conventions; Social Wellness & Emotional Wellness*).

Ratios

According to California Licensing Standards for Family Child Care Homes, these are the ratio requirements:

For Small Family Child Care Homes (1 lead teacher)

4 infants

OR

6 children (*no more than 3 of whom may be infants*)

OR

Up to 8 children (*when 1 child is at least 6 years old and 1 child is enrolled in and attending kindergarten or elementary school*)

For Large Family Child Care Home (1 lead teacher & 1 assistant)

12 children (*no more than 4 of whom may be infants*)

OR

Up to 14 children (*when 1 child is at least 6 years of age and 1 child is enrolled in and attending kindergarten or elementary school*) **AND** no more than 3 infants

Here at Small Beginnings Family Child Care, we will never exceed the ratio requirements for licensing.

Hours of Operation

SBFCC is now a teacher-friendly childcare program! Our daycare program will be following the general school district calendar, starting January 2022. We will be closed during summer and winter break so you will not be required to pay tuition or a holding fee. Since spring and fall break dates vary, daycare will remain open and 50% of tuition will be due if you decide to keep your children home during these breaks.

Also, starting January 2022 there will no longer be “reserved time slots”. Our main hours of operation will be from **7:00 am- 5:00 pm**. We will provide extended childcare services up to 30 minutes before and after our main hours of operation, however, additional fees will apply. If you do need to utilize our extended care services, please give me at least a 24-hour notice so I can plan accordingly.

Daycare Calendar

Daycare will be closed on the following dates, listed below. All federal holidays will be paid holidays. Tuition will not be charged during summer break, winter break, or any personal days/vacations.

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Monday, January 16th | Martin Luther King Jr. Day |
| Monday, February 20th | Presidents Day |
| Monday, May 29th | Memorial Day |
| June 1st- June 6th | Daycare Provider Summer Vacation |
| Wednesday, June 21st | Personal Day |
| July 4th & July 5th | 4th of July |
| July 21st | Personal Day |
| July 24th & July 25th | Personal Days |
| Monday, August 21st | Personal Day |
| Monday, September 4th | Labor Day |
| Monday, October 9th | Columbus Day |
| November 3rd- 10th | Daycare Provider Yearly Vacation |
| Friday, November 10th | Veterans Day |
| November 23rd- November 24th | Thanksgiving Break |

(subject to change depending on family's schedules)

(Please Note: Due to low attendance numbers during the summer, I do take more days off than I do throughout the year.)

Trial Period

Each child will be given a **2 week trial period** where we will determine whether my home is the best fit for you and your family. During this 2-week trial period, you will have the right to terminate services without a 2 weeks notice. I do require **written notification**, at least the day of, notifying me that you will be terminating services. Please note that the “Enrollment Fee” is non-refundable. Any day child care is not provided, will be refunded. I will also have the right to terminate services, without 2 weeks’ notice, if I feel like my home is not the right fit for you and your family. In the event that this occurs, I will provide written notification and you will be refunded for days that care is not provided.

The Daily

Drop-offs and pick-ups can be both overwhelming and hectic so here are some policies that will help to create smooth transitions:

- During the times that I am caring for children, **quick questions/concerns would be best**. If you would like to have a meeting regarding more serious matters, that can be arranged. Also, please feel free to text me or message me through the Brightwheel App about any questions/ concerns you may have throughout the day. I will answer them as soon as possible.
- Although children are sometimes resistant during drop-offs, it is imperative that you make sure you **say goodbye to your child**. Although it may seem easy for you to slip out when your child is busy playing, it only causes mistrust and anxiety. This may lead to even more stressful drop-offs so PLEASE say goodbye to your children.
- Drop offs/ pickups during our nap time hours (1:00 pm- 3:00 pm) are highly discouraged! Please try to drop off or pick up your child before or after nap time. Children who get dropped off before nap/rest time need to be **ready to participate** in nap/rest time.
- Children will **only be released to authorized persons** listed on the *Child Care Emergency Contact Form (located in your Welcome Folder)*. I will NOT, under any circumstances, release children to anyone whom I believe is under the influence of drugs or alcohol. In the event that this happens, I will contact someone else who is authorized to pick up.
 - **Please Note:** Late fees will still apply if the child is in my care after hours.

Open Door Policy

Please feel free to visit your child throughout the day! Small Beginnings Family Child Care supports breastfeeding mothers! **Please Note:** Visits during rest time will be highly discouraged due to the importance of children getting the proper amount of rest

House Rules

- Smoking is not permitted on the premises.
- When you are on the premises, your child is your responsibility.
- Please respect my home and the items in it.
- Please do not pick up any children, who are not your own.
- Please do not film any children, who are not your own.
- Please respect me and my time.
- Please respect and follow my policies.
- Please communicate with me if you have any questions or concerns.

Communication

Every policy in this handbook is created for a reason. It is important to remember that in order for me to provide the best childcare environment for your children, policies have to be enforced. If at any time families continuously choose not to respect and follow our policies, families will be recommended to find alternative child care. Clear and honest communication is extremely important to me. Please do not hesitate to meet with me or message me if any problems arise while your child is attending our daycare.

Personal Care Plans

Children's schedules are constantly evolving so it is imperative that you fill out a *Personal Care Plan* so both you and I are on the same page. *Personal Care Plans* for infants need to be updated every 3 months. Please be as detailed as possible. Meetings may be arranged over the phone or in person (*after hours*) if needed.

Nutrition

Currently, we do not participate in the Child Nutrition Program however, we do continue to follow their nutrition guideline to ensure that children receive nutritious meals throughout the day. Since we do not participate in the food program, any special dietary needs will need to be provided by the parents.

Since we don't participate in the food program, infant formula will no longer be provided. If you want your child to continue with infant formula, you will need to provide it. All bottles must have a label with the child's first name, last name, and description of the contents.

Rest Period

I am required by the state to give children under the age of 5 at least 2 hours of rest time per day. However, there are times when the children may sleep longer than the allotted 2 hours. Parents are required to bring 2 sheets and a blanket, on their child's first day of attendance. Children will be highly encouraged to sleep during the rest period however, they will never be forced.

Activities/ Outside Play

Since many of the activities throughout the day will be play-based, please be sure to dress your child appropriately. Your child will most likely engage in messy activities throughout the day. I will try my best to keep them as clean as possible but it is not a guarantee.

Please be sure to bring your children dressed appropriately for outside playtime. I am required by the state to have at least 30 minutes of outside play, per day, unless there is inclement weather. Children are allowed to wear sandals however they will need to have an ankle strap. In the winter, please bring in a jacket that can stay at daycare.

Media Allowance

Children are exposed to different forms of media throughout the day. During breakfast, children are given the opportunity to watch an educational video. After lunchtime, the children are allowed to decide on a movie that they would like to watch, prior to nap time. Although the children are exposed to media throughout the day, it's during very specific times. During most of the day, the children are engaged in hands-on learning activities.

Guidance Policy

Redirection will be the primary way I deal with undesired behaviors. We do have a Calm Down Corner that children can go to at any time, to take a break and have some time to themselves. In our Calm Down Corner, we have de-escalation strategies posted along with anxiety relief fidgets. In the event that a child is engaging in countless undesired behaviors, a meeting will be arranged to discuss a Behavior Plan for the child. If the child is a danger to themselves and/or other children, this may lead to the discontinuation of services. ***Under no circumstances, will any corporal punishment be used to discipline children.***

Mandated Reporter

As a childcare provider, I am a mandated reporter. I am required by law to report any suspicions of any physical abuse, sexual abuse, and/or neglect.

Payment Procedure

You can pay tuition with

Cash

Brightwheel (*preferred*)

Zelle

I do not accept personal checks

Tuition is to be collected prior to care being provided and will be collected every **Friday by 5:00 pm**. If you have arranged for tuition to be collected monthly, tuition will still need to be paid by 5:00 pm on the agreed-upon date. **After 5:00 pm you will automatically be charged \$10.00 and an additional \$10.00 for every day your payment is late;** this includes the weekends. Children will not be allowed to attend childcare with a delinquent account unless a "Payment Plan" has been created. After 1 week of Late Payment Fees, families will be terminated and a court date may be set to collect the rest of the payment (*upon the provider's discretion*). "Payment Plans" may only be created for families who communicate with me at least 48 hours before the payment is due. A percentage of the balance will be due on that Friday by 5:00 pm and the rest of the balance will need to be paid on the agreed-upon date. If the contract is breached in any way, you will be required to pay the full balance due, pay all late fees, services will be suspended until you pay the balance, and it may be grounds for termination (*upon the provider's discretion*). Families who have delinquent accounts for more than a week

will be terminated and if the balance is not paid upon termination, a court date will be set for collection.

In the event that a Court Date has to be set for collection, the Parent/Guardian will be responsible for any and all fees associated. This includes but is not limited to all late fees, loss of wages, and any court costs.

Government Assistance Programs

Families who are participating in government-assisted programs are required to make the weekly payments until I receive notification that the program will be taking over the payments.

Child Absences

It is important to remember that you are paying for a slot. Therefore, there will not be any refunds for days your child cannot attend childcare. Families who give at least a 2 weeks' notice regarding their child's absence will be given a 50% discount for that day.

Child Sick/Vacation Days

Each family will be allotted 5 sick/ vacation days per year. You will not be required to pay tuition for the day(s) that you use them. The sick/vacation days can be used consecutively or can be used separately however, they cannot be used for paid holidays. If the sick/vacation days are not used by the end of the year, they can roll over to the following year. Since I do not offer refunds, the discount will be applied to the following invoice.

Unforeseen Circumstances

Unforeseen circumstances include but is not limited to a public health emergency or the event that daycare is closed due to an outbreak. In the event of an unforeseen circumstance, the families will be required to pay 50% of tuition. Families may also suspend enrollment during this time, however, they will still be required to follow the termination policy. If families do decide to suspend services during the closure of an unforeseen circumstance or public health emergency, they forfeit their spot. Families may choose to re-enroll however, a spot will not be guaranteed.

Provider's Absence/ Vacation

In the event that I am sick or in need of a personal day, daycare will be closed and the following week's invoice will be prorated. I will try to give as much notice as possible. At most, I will try to contact families by 6:00 pm. I will notify parents through the Brightwheel app and I will also send each family a text.

I am allotted **2 weeks (14 days) of vacation/ personal time off days per calendar year**. These vacation/ personal time off days do not have to be consecutive. I will be sure to give families at least a 2-week notice when I need to take vacation days or personal days. During these days, daycare will be closed and you will **not** be required to pay tuition. However,

it will be your responsibility to find alternative care. **It is highly recommended that you set up backup care in the event that I have to close daycare.**

Illness Policy

I understand that it is difficult for you as a parent/guardian to leave or miss work. Therefore, I highly suggest that alternative arrangements be made for occasions when your child should remain at home or need to be picked up due to illness. Exclusion from child care is sometimes necessary to reduce the transmission of illness or because child care is not able to adequately meet the needs of the child. “Mild” illness is common among children. Since, with some conditions, children spread infectious agents before showing any symptoms, exclusion serves no purpose as long as we can keep a child comfortable throughout the day. These children do not represent any harm to other children. Children should be excluded from the childcare setting for the reasons outlined below. **Please Note:** *The following list covers the most common illnesses, but is not inclusive of all reasons for exclusion:*

- An illness that prevents the child from participating comfortably in program activities. *(Example: A child who is lethargic, not their normal self, and/or in need of one on one care throughout the day)*
- An illness that results in a greater need for care than the provider can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children. *(Example: diarrhea that can not be contained in a diaper/ underwear or toilet; a child who needs one on one care throughout the day)*
- Fever of 100.5 degrees or greater
- Diarrhea — stools with blood or mucus, and/or uncontrolled, unformed stools that cannot be contained in a diaper/underwear or toilet.
 - **2 or more instances of diarrhea** within the time of care will result in exclusion as well.
- Severe cold— persistent cough, excessive runny nose, lethargic, low-grade fever of 99 or higher *(exclusion based on these symptoms will be left up to the child care providers discretion, doctors note may be required)*
- Vomiting — two or more times during the previous **24 hours**
- Mouth sores associated with drooling
- Rash with fever or behavioral changes, unless a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease
- Purulent conjunctivitis *(defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge)* until the child has been on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has begun.
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment has begun
- Scabies, until 24 hours after treatment has begun.
- Chickenpox, until all lesions have dried and crusted (usually six days).
- Pertussis (whooping cough), until five days of treatment with appropriate antibiotics.
- Hepatitis A virus, until one week after onset of illness, after immune globulin has been administered.

Required Conditions for a child to return to child care are:

- A child who has been excluded due to illness from child care may return when he or she is free of fever, vomiting, and diarrhea for a full 24 hours.
- When he or she has been treated with an antibiotic for a full 24 hours (unless otherwise specified).
- When he or she is able to participate comfortably in usual program activities, including outdoor time.
- The child should be free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling (not related to teething) unless a health care provider signs a note stating that the child's condition is not contagious.
 - The involved areas can be covered by a bandage without seepage of drainage through the bandage.
 - If a child is excluded because of a reportable communicable disease, I may require a doctor's note stating that the child is no longer contagious
- If anyone in your household tests positive for COVID will need to keep your child at home until the individual with COVID has been cleared.

For children's comfort and to reduce the risk of contagion, your child will be isolated from the other children and you will be required to pick your child up **within 90 minutes of notification**. A Late Pickup Fee will be charged for any child remaining in child care after 90 minutes. **Please note:** *children must remain home for 24 hours without symptoms before returning to child care (this includes over the weekend). For example, if your child has been vomiting on Sunday, please do not bring your child to daycare until they have been symptom free for at least 24 hours. In the case of a (suspected) contagious illness or continuing symptoms, a doctor's note may be required before returning.*

Special needs required by one child restricts the activities of all the children. Prolonged requests for special treatment may result in a request to keep the child home until they are able to participate in normal activities. Should your child require a modified diet due to recovery from an illness or injury, please inform me. You may be requested to supply the necessary foods required.

Please Note: **If you choose to refuse to follow our sick policies and protocols, your contract will be terminated immediately!** In order for me to keep the daycare up and running, I need each family to do their best to follow our policies. It is my job to ensure that children at our daycare are as safe as possible. These policies and procedures have been set in order to protect the daycare children and my family. I personally thank you for your cooperation!

Medications

Medication can be administered at child care under the following stipulations:

- All medication needs to be in its original container.
- Medication needs to be accompanied by the original measuring utensil.
- Medication cannot be used beyond the date of expiration.
- Medication can only be given for the purposes identified in the label/prescription.
- *Parent Consent Administration of Medication and Medication Chart* form needs to be filled out and returned to the child care provider.
- *Medical Order Form* needs to be filled out by a doctor and returned to the child care provider.

Emergency/ Evacuation Policy

In the event of an EMERGENCY, I will administer the necessary first aid. The Apple Valley Police Department or Paramedic Unit will be called and your child will be transported to the hospital. You will be notified immediately! If I cannot get in contact with you, I will call the designated emergency contact person on their *Child Care Emergency Contact* form. If an ambulance is called to transport your child, you will be responsible to cover the costs.

Fire Drills and Earthquake Drills will be performed once a month. *For more information on the emergency plan, important relocation sites, and contact numbers; please refer to your Welcome Folder.*

Transportation and Outings

*At the moment, we **do not** offer transportation services.*

Termination of Services

A minimum of 2 weeks written notice is required for termination of child care services. Even if your child does not attend during that two week period, payment is still required. In the event that I need to terminate child care services, I will give a 2 week notice **unless:**

- Your child is a danger to themselves and/or other children
- You fail to pay for child care services
- You threaten, attempt to harm, or continually disrespect me, my staff, my family, and/or my childcare policies.

If a Court Date has to be set for collection, the Parent/Guardian will be responsible for any and all fees associated. This is to include but is not limited to late fees, loss of wages, and any court costs.

Child Care Terminology

- **Full Time:** Child care is provided **4-5 days per week**, between **5- 10 hours a day**.
- **Part Time:** Child care provided **3 days per week**, between **5-10 hours a day**.
- **Half Day:** Child care provided **4-5 days per week**, up to **5 hours a day**.
- **Transition Period:** A transition period is for families who want to introduce their child to the new daycare environment slowly. During this transition period, the family may choose to start by bringing their child to daycare for only a few hours and then slowly increase those hours throughout the week. This is a great idea for children who may be a bit more apprehensive about starting daycare.
- **Diaper Program:** Diapers, wipes, and pull-ups are provided for an additional \$5.00 per week.
- **Enrollment Fee:** \$50.00 due at the time of enrollment
- **Holding Fee:** If a child's first day of childcare is not within two weeks of their enrollment date, the childcare provider will set up a payment plan where **50% of tuition** will be paid weekly until the child attends daycare. Starting January 1, 2022, families can only hold their spots for up to 2 months. After 2 months, families will have to decide whether to start full-time, part-time, half-day or forfeit their spot at daycare.
- **Early Drop Off/ Late Pickup Fees:** Child care provided outside of your daycare hours of operation. *Hours of operation 7:00 am- 5:00 pm.*
- You will be given a 5-minute grace period:
 - Any time that exceeds the 5-minute grace period, you will be charged **\$5.00** and an additional **\$1.00 for every minute** you are early/ late.
 - Planned early drop-offs/ late pickups are solely up to the childcare provider's discretion. If families would like to use this service, families will need to give at least a 24-hour notice.
 - After 3 Early/Late Fees (*no 24-hour notice*), in one calendar year, families will forfeit the 5-minute grace period and will be required to pay \$5:00 1 minute after closing time and an additional \$1.00 for every minute you are late.
- **Late Payment Fee:** Neglecting to pay for services
 - Payment will be collected 1 week prior to services being provided.
 - Any balances not received by **5:00 pm** on your agreed-upon payment date will result in an automatic **\$10.00 fee and an additional fee of \$10.00 will be charged for every day the payment is late.** (*starting Friday after 5:00 pm and including weekends*)

All late fees must be paid **before additional childcare services are provided.*

- **Sibling Discount:**
 - 1st child: Regular rate
 - 2nd child: **10% discount**

- **Referral Discount:** For families who have been referred by families who are currently enrolled at Small Beginnings Family Child Care.
 - **\$50.00 credit**
 - The family must notify me during the interview that you referred them.
 - The referred family must stay enrolled for at least **3 months**

- **Monthly Discount:** Special monthly discounts are posted on the Small Beginning website.

**All discounts (sibling, military, etc...) can only be applied to full-time families. Part-time families are not eligible for these discounts.*

**Discounts can not be combined with other discounts.*