



FAMILY HANDBOOK

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Dear BBLC Family,

This handbook was carefully developed to help explain our program and the policies of how we operate further. Please take a few minutes to become familiar with this information, along with the Enrollment Agreement provided to you. On your Enrollment Agreement, you will be asked to acknowledge your receipt and agreement to the policies outlined in this handbook. We reserve the right to update this handbook at any time, but we will always let families know if we do.

Kindly,

BBLC Board of Directors

President Lacey Hogan (605)-280-7049

Vice President Erin Sibbel (402)-340-7415

Secretary Karen Lang (605)-207-0126

Treasurer Mahra Strand (605)-680-9468

Melissa Johnson (712)-259-6227

board.bbhc@gmail.com



Who We Are

Mission and Values

BBLC is a non-profit state licensed childcare facility for 42 children in Platte, SD. The only money that operates the daycare is the money paid by the parents for the care of their children. All revenue goes toward wages, utilities, and other expenses. The mission of BBLC is to deliver safe, quality, compassionate early childhood care and education to the future early learners of our community. This mission is carried out by creating a stimulating and nurturing environment where children of all abilities, regardless of socio-economic or cultural background, can grow and learn together in acceptance of one another. At BBLC we value the importance of character, commitment to the family, commitment to the community and surrounding areas, respect for the individual, and celebrating our strengths and differences.

Philosophy

BBLC's philosophy is based on a belief that children of all abilities benefit from an inclusive environment, emphasizing acceptance of individual differences and ability levels. We believe that each child is a unique individual and is to be respected as such. We believe that each child is a precious, important person and needs to feel good about themselves. Our curriculum is planned to foster the growth of the whole child. This includes cognitive, social, emotional, physical and language skills. Activities are planned to be age appropriate and flexible in meeting the children's needs. Playtime is an exceptional medium in which young children learn. The center strives to provide an environment that is non-competitive, safe, and fosters curiosity. Positive experiences are essential to a child's well-being.

For children with special needs, inclusion facilitates developmental progress by exposure to role modeling of social, language, and physical skills through interactions with typically developing peers. We also believe that the typically developing children gain solid interpersonal skills, including self-confidence, acceptance, empathy, and communication. Inclusiveness allows all children to relate and interact with peers in play and daily routines, engaging in experiences that promote the development of self-help skills, self-control, and the understanding that others have different backgrounds and perspectives than themselves.

Board of Directors

Since our founding as a 501C3 nonprofit in 2003, BBLC has been guided by a Board of Directors comprised of 5 volunteers. Board members are willing to give their time, talents, and enthusiasm to ensure BBLC is fiscally sound and maintains the highest standards in childcare and early childhood education.

The board is led by the president and is comprised of a vice president, secretary, treasurer, and co-treasurer who serve 3-year terms. Requests to address the board may be submitted to board.bbhc@gmail.com



Our Staff

Our program is built on safe, quality, early childhood education and care. The quality of our program is a direct reflection of our quality staff. Our staff are carefully selected based on qualifications and undergo rigorous background screening through the state prior to employment starting with Central Registry Screening that is performed in state as well as National Screening. This screening will verify whether an individual has ever had a report of child abuse or neglect. This screening is completed, and the results are obtained prior to staff caring for the children in an unsupervised capacity and are required for all ages of staff and are completed and submitted via the Live Fingerprint Scan System, IDEMIA:

- A set of *FBI* (Federal Bureau of Investigation) *fingerprint check*
- *DCI* (South Dakota Division of Criminal Investigation) *fingerprint check*
- *NCIC SOR* (National Crime Information Center) *check*
- *Central Registry check*
- *Sex Offender Registry check*

All staff must have some level of experience with young children while also demonstrating a genuine interest in children. Though it is no longer a state requirement, BBLC still performs reference inquiries before employment begins. Within 90 days of employment staff will have completed:

- Level I Orientation SDSU Training house online (completed within 90 days of employment)
- *Level II SDSU Training house online (completed within 2 years of employment)*
- DSS (Department of Social Services) Recognizing and Reporting of child abuse or neglect
- A **signed** Acknowledgement of Responsibility to Report Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect
- Heartsaver CPR AED Card (if not previously obtained)

Bright Beginnings Learning Center is committed to lifelong learning and obtaining mandatory .8 hours of training monthly, to ensure staying in compliance with state licensure, in having staff complete all 10 hours of annual training, in partnership with SDSU Training House, Sanford Children, and Childcare Oriented On Demand Training.

Hours of Operation

We are open Monday – Friday 7:00a.m. to 5:30p.m.

Holiday Closing and In-Service Days

BBLC will be closed **9 days** each year.

**Please note that holiday and teacher training days do remain full tuition days.*

- **New Year's Day**
- **Good Friday**
- **Memorial Day**
- **Fourth of July**
- **Labor Day**
- **Thanksgiving Day**
- **Friday after Thanksgiving**
- **Christmas Eve Day**
- **Christmas Day**



Program Ages

We provide care for children 6 weeks to 5 years of age. If enrollment availability allows before and school care may be offered for children ages 5-8.

Enrollment Options

Full Time (greater than 3 days/week)	\$165/week
Part Time (3 days or less/week)	\$140/week
Preschool Only (8:00am-12:30pm)	\$125/week
Half Day Kindergarten	\$125/week
After School Care	\$50/week
Drop In Rate (if available)	\$40/day

Rates will be reviewed annually, to determine if increases are necessary. Review of rates may take place more frequently, if necessary.

Annual Fee Increase

Due to the potential increase of input costs, there may be a 2-5% rate increase added each year and families will be given a 30-day notice prior to the increase. This increase may also be suspended at our discretion if there proves to be no need for a rate change that year.

Additionally, currently, BBLC offers an option of a summer contract, available to children of full time enrollment status. The summer contract runs for the months of June and July and, if chosen, allows a full time child to attend up to 3 days per week at a rate of \$140 per week. As detailed above, the financial impact and feasibility of this contract is reviewed annually.

Licensed Capacity

BBLC is State-Licensed and Annually inspected to ensure everything meets or exceeds Mandatory standards, including child-to-staff ratios and safe facilities. Bright Beginnings is licensed to serve up to 42 full time enrollments. This will include 42 infants / toddlers / preschoolers in combination – not to exceed 42 infants / toddlers / preschoolers and school age kids.

Child Enrollment

Applications will be kept on file in order of first contact. Parents must complete and return required forms prior to the child's first day. These forms are to be kept current. Any additions or changes in information must be reported to the Director. A child's file is considered confidential information and is available only to the center personnel, Social Services licensing personnel and to the child's parents.



The Bright Beginnings Learning Center reserves the right to accept or decline a child for care on the basis of the center's ability to comply with the needs and/or requirements of the child.

Absence / Vacation Policy

BBLC offers five (5) free days that are available for **FULL TIME** enrollment, to be utilized in the event a child is absent (illness, vacation, etc). Vacation/absence days will not be pro-rated due to any holiday or other absence during the period the credit day are being used. Vacation/absence days cannot be used in lieu of a two-week disenrollment notice requirement, cannot be used for tuition owed and have no monetary value. Parents/guardians are responsible for completing the vacation/absence form (to document the request) in order to receive reimbursement. Reimbursement will only be given if a form is completed and submitted by the end of that month.

****Please notify the center when your child(ren) will not attend the center on a scheduled day. There will be no credit given for an absence outside of the 5 free days for full time student enrollment.**

Temporary change to a child's enrollment status is not available for extended absences (for example, maternity leave). A child must maintain their enrollment status in order to ensure a spot. As a family, the decision to send fewer days is always available, however, the expected weekly rate will not change.

Late Pick-Up Policy

A late fee will be charged for children who are picked up **after 5:40pm**. A late charge of **\$15.00** for each child will be billed on the monthly tuition.

Extra charges:

Additional charges may apply to the following: Early or late dismissal, No School days, Field trip expenses (applicable for all ages).

Inclement Weather Policy/ Closure

BBLC will independently make decisions regarding closures due to winter weather. We will not exclusively follow Platte- Geddes school closures. *In the event that BBLC is closed due to weather, families will NOT be charged for services that day.* The decision whether or not to close will be determined by staff availability, number of children in attendance, and overall weather conditions. If the decision is made to close the facility, parents will be notified as early as possible. These notifications will be provided via ProCare, email, and posted on Facebook.

Should severe weather conditions make it necessary for the daycare to close *early*, staff will notify parents so appropriate arrangements for picking up your child can be made.



In addition, emergency blizzard conditions may require the evacuation of our building. This type of emergency would result in contacting parents or the designated emergency contact to pick up your child, if necessary. If your child is moved for an emergency evacuation you will be contacted with the location.

Other Closures

In the instance that electricity, water, heating/cooling system is down, or other circumstances that are out of our control, management reserves the right to close the center. Parents will receive as much notification as possible, with a minimum of an hour to pick up your child. These unexpected closures will not be reimbursed, unless determined otherwise by the board.

The following is the state guidelines for indoor building temperatures to be maintained to stay open:

- No colder than 65 degrees Fahrenheit and no warmer than 75 degrees Fahrenheit

Termination and Withdrawal

Enrollment may be terminated if:

- Payments are consistently late or missed entirely
- Your child shows dangerous behavior or requires 1:1 care
- There is a lack of compliance, by parents, to center policies
- Pickup of your child(ren) is consistently later than closing time

If a decision has been made to withdrawal your child from BBLC, a two-week notification is required. If you withdraw your child before the two weeks are up, you will still be billed for the remainder of the two weeks.

Confidentiality

All child(ren) information will be kept in an individual child file and kept in the Director's office for confidentiality purposes.

Photographs and Media Relations

BBLC will give the opportunity to select whether you wish to allow your child to be photographed and have pictures of your child posted in such areas as our website, bulletin boards, newsletters and our Facebook page. We will not list your child's last name in any media. Please fill out the required photograph permission form and return. (see attached)



Communication

Our success depends on establishing a positive relationship with you. Frequent communication with both the board, director and your child's teacher will benefit the continued learning and growth process of your child. We encourage you to become involved in the school and join us in a partnership of your child's journey of learning!

We will use a variety of communication methods throughout the year to keep you current on your child's learning:

- **Lesson Plans** – detail the activities your child will be working on during the week
- **Conferences** – conferences can be requested with your child's teacher and/or the director.
- **Facebook page** - will provide current updates, notices and events.
- **Open Door** - You are always welcome to come visit your child(ren)'s classroom(s)! Please let us know ahead of time if you would like to come be a part of our fun!
- **Initial meeting with parents/walk throughs** – When you enroll your child, the Director will show you through the center and answer any questions you may have. You may wish to share concerns about your child with the Director, express what you expect from the program, etc. Please tell us if your child is on medication, behaves in any unusual ways, or has special traits of which the staff should be aware.
- **Procure notes or messages**– We encourage you jot the staff a note if there is anything different for the day we should know about. Please tell a staff member if your child has a medication that needs to be given. A current Medication Administration form will need to be on file in order for staff to administer medications.
- **E-mail** – We understand that not everyone has e-mail, but if you do and would like to communicate that way, we welcome it.
 - a. Directors email: brightbeginnings@midstatesd.net.
 - b. Board of Directors Email: board.bbhc@gmail.com

Supplies to Bring

A supplies list will be provided upon enrollment acceptance.



Child Pick-up Authorization

Our staff will only release children to parents, and those persons specifically authorized for pick up on the Enrollment Application and Agreement. Other individuals seeking to pick up a child must be previously authorized in writing by the parent or guardian (email, handwritten note, etc.). A phone call must be made to the center to verify authorization if written authorization cannot be given. Authorized individuals will be asked for photo identification upon arrival. Please inform any persons picking up of our policies and advise your pick-ups to talk with one of our staff prior to taking the child.

***A notarized court order that clearly outlines the custody arrangement is required if a parent or guardian is to be denied pick up.*

In the situation that a person tries to pick up a child and has been suspect to or convicted of abuse of a child, the proper authorities will be notified and the person will not be allowed to take that child out of BBLC.

If a person comes to pick up a child and that person appears to be incapacitated a staff will notify the proper authorities and that person will not be allowed to take the child out of the BBLC.

Please notify the center if you are picking up or dropping off outside of your typical time. During pick-up/drop offs, an adult must be with your child(ren) at all times.

Safety Protocols

Each year our center will practice the following drills:

- 4 Fire Drills
- 1 Tornado Drill
- 1 Lockdown Drill

Our staff are all trained in our evacuation procedures and will ensure the safety for all children in our care.

Nutrition

We serve well-balanced meals to meet your child's daily nutritional needs. Menus are displayed on our Parent Bulletin Board on the main floor. Breakfast, lunch, and snack are provided, in accordance with the guidelines set by the State of South Dakota Child Care Food Program.



- Breakfast: 7:00 am-8:30am
- Lunch: 11:00am-12:00pm
- Afternoon snack: 2:30pm-3:00pm.

***There may be times when the cook will make last minute substitutions, and these will be noted.*

Food Allergies: BBLC requires a doctor's note on file stating you child(ren) allergies.

Infants: Are fed according to individual schedules and will be held while bottle feeding. It is against BBLC's policy that bottles are ever propped to feed an infant.

Baby food/formula: is to be provided by the parent. This ensures that your baby has the correct food/formula to best meet his/her needs.

***If an infant/ Tiny Tot is unable to eat the food on the daily menu, baby food/ pureed food will be given to avoid a choking hazard.*

Transportation/Field Trips

We will not be providing transportation for any child while attending BBLC.

Regarding field trips and walking excursions we require the "Walking Release and Request" box to be checked upon filling out Child(s) Application for admission to BBLC. This will give permission for your child(ren) to attending walking field trips, if you choose not to check that box your child will be placed in a different classroom until their class returns.

Important Information

Our staff are mandated reporters by the South Dakota State Law and need to immediately report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect to the SD Department of Social Services or law enforcement. Any changes of circumstance which may affect the ability to comply with licensing rules (new program location, building renovations/remodeling, suspected in-house child abuse or neglect, ownership change or new director) must be reported to Child Care Services.

All our staff/volunteers are screened by the DSS Central Registry Check and are required to sign a statement which defines child abuse and neglect and the reporting requirements.

If you as a parent feel you need to report suspected maltreatment of a child or a possible licensing violation, please refer to the information below.

- **Division of Child Protection Services** – for reporting suspected maltreatment of a child occurring within a family or community
1-877-244-0864
- **Department of Human Services, Division of Licensing** – for reporting of possible licensing violations
1-800-227-3020



Alcohol and Drug Policy

All tobacco products, drugs, alcohol and firearms and/or paraphernalia related to the previously listed are prohibited items on BBLC Premises.

Discipline/ Behavioral Management Guidance Policy

We believe in establishing consistent, easy-to-understand limits. We expect that our teachers model appropriate behavior and protect and preserve children's feelings. To that end, we have set safe limits for children and regard each child as an individual. When clear, consistent and appropriate age limits are present; children increasingly become responsible for themselves. At BBLC we encourage children to use language as opposed to actions to resolve conflicts. We use redirection to help your child learn acceptable limits of behaviors. In some situations a child may be required to choose a different activity or refrain from interaction with children until he or she can regain appropriate control of themselves. In certain situations, a brief time out or away from other classroom activities (but still under the visual control of the teacher) may be warranted in order to allow for "cool down" time. Children will always be encouraged to rejoin activities whenever they are able to exhibit acceptable behavior and cope with their environment and conditions. Our staff act as role models and encourage children's appropriate behaviors which will aid in helping develop self-control, self-esteem, and respect for themselves and the rights of others. Actions taken by our staff will always be individualized, consistent, and appropriate to each child's level of understanding.

Examples of unacceptable behavior include, but are not limited to:

- Hitting (teachers and/or peers)
- Biting
- Throwing Toys
- Screaming
- Damaging property/toys
- Disrupting/disrespectful towards teachers, peers and equipment

Note: No punishment will be issued in connection with rest, food or toileting.

If persistent unacceptable behavior continues, BBLC will implement the following action steps:

1. Director will observe and record child's behavior and teacher's responses
2. Communication between director, lead teacher and parents by email, phone call or messaging via ProCare.
3. A parent conference will be set up after 3 incidents with Lead Teacher, Director, and no less than one Board Member.
4. Develop an action plan with director and lead teacher that includes appropriate intervention strategies for child(ren), teacher, center and family.

Note: In certain cases a child may not respond to behavioral management and our discipline action plan. In this case, termination of enrollment may be considered.



Illness Policy

It is the policy of BBLC and all licensed facilities that children with a fever of 100 degrees Fahrenheit (auxiliary) or more must be sent home and/or not attend the center. If your child becomes ill at the center parents will be notified immediately.

*Conditions of which children will not be able to attend BBLC or be sent home:

- Excessive nasal congestion or discharge (not allergy-related)
- Severe Coughing
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Conjunctivitis
- Chicken Pox or other communicable diseases
- Strep Throat
- Pinworm/Ringworm
- Lice
- Contagious rashes or skin conditions

Upon notification, parents are required to promptly pick up their child from the center. In case of illness or injury to a child, where parents are not available, a person on the authorized pick-up portion of enrollment application may be contacted. Children may not return to school until they are completely fever free and symptoms of illness are no longer present *without the use of fever reducing medication or non-prescription medication for 24 hours*. They may return if they have a doctor's note stating they are well enough to attend. This policy is meant to keep our children comfortable and will help decrease the risk of illness spreading to other children. In the event of serious illness or injury, your child may be transported to a medical facility.

Note: All contagious diseases will be reported to the State Health Dept. and will also be reported to all parents on the center message board.

Closure Due to Illnesses

If the center or a specific room needs to be closed due to illnesses, parents will be notified as soon as possible. The decision to close the facility or a room due to illness will be made based on all available information. This decision will be made by the director and the board of directors.

Medication Policy

Absolutely no medication will be given to any child unless an Authorization to Dispense Medication Form is filled out and signed by parental person.

Any medication brought into the center must be in its original container with the original label. Labels for prescription medication must include legible directions for use, expiration date, child's name, physician's name.

Our staff will document the dose, name of child, time and date administered, and signature of the staff administering on the Authorization to Dispense Medication Form.



Storage of medication: Medications should be brought to the center in an original store box and or prescription box.

- **Refrigerated medicines:** will be stored in the refrigerator in a non-absorbent container marked "Medication"
- **Non-refrigerated medicines:** will be placed in a non-absorbent container marked "Medication" and stored in a locked cabinet.
- **NO** medication should be left in diaper bags, backpacks or lunch bags and given directly to director/supervisor upon arrival at the center.

Enrollment Fees and Payments

At the time of enrollment families set up their ACH information for invoicing.

**Please note that BBLC is not set up to receive anything other than ACH payments to keep costs minimal and using a card will result in a fee of \$25.00 per transaction which is the responsibility of the family.*

How to Setup ACH with ProCare

Bright Beginnings Learning Center invoices on a monthly basis currently. Monthly tuition payments are to be made through automatic pay in the ProCare app. If this is not an available option for your family, please make arrangements with management.

Tuition is **DUE** the 10th of every month and is considered late if not received within 7 days.

If payment is late (regardless of method), you will be subject to a \$40 service fee. This \$40 fee will be applied each week until the balance is paid.

Services will be suspended for all accounts that become delinquent, and enrollment may be discontinued until your account is brought current. We do not accept cash or check payments. Automatic Checking Debit only. If payments are consistently late, you may be given a two week notice and asked to seek other childcare options.

If an overpayment is made on an account- a refund can be made upon request to the Director or Board of Directors.



Bright Beginnings Learning Center: The Parent Handbook Form

I have read and agree to all of the above policies and procedures for BBLC.

Parent Print Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Director Signature: _____ Date: _____

****Please Sign and return this form to Bright Beginnings Learning Center****

