



Paramount Childcare Parent Handbook

Please read this ~Handbook~ thoroughly, as it covers very important policies and procedures that not only govern our childcare contract agreement, but also pertain to the care of your child. There may seem to be a lot of information, if you have any questions regarding my policies, please do not hesitate to ask. We will go over this book during your interview, but this copy is for you to reference back to. There will be a yearly revision to this ~Handbook~ and the accompanying contract. All families that have children enrolled in Paramount Childcare and Early Learning Center agree to all handbook terms. Paramount Childcare reserves the right to make changes to the policies and procedures, as we deem necessary.

DEAR PARENTS,

What I as a provider should expect from you, the parent:

Open communication. Explain clearly and carefully your wishes and expectations about how your child will be cared for. Also provide updates on problems and progress that your child is making. Good communication helps us work together in the best interest of your child.

Agreement on Terms or Arrangements. You should fully understand the terms of the contract and the policies and procedures that you as the parent are agreeing to.

Honesty and Trust. This includes being honest about how you believe the arrangement is working. Although you need to be vigilant in order to safeguard

your child, you should trust me as your childcare provider to do the best for your child. Show your trust by asking questions rather than jumping to conclusions when apparent problems develop.

PHILOSOPHY

Paramount Child Care & Early Learning Center believes that child-centered play best allows children to develop skills, explore and learn. The school's program aims to develop the whole child and his/her physical, social, emotional and intellectual growth. Paramount Child Care & Early Learning Center creates a balanced environment of freedom through child-directed free play and structure through adult-led activities within the daily routine. We believe a child's early experiences enrich and stimulate future growth. Children deserve to be treated and respected as individuals in an environment that welcomes reason, exploration, question, and imagination. We respect each child's need for love, security, acceptance, warmth, and stimulation. We pride ourselves in being Meridian's first urban daycare/preschool center!

Goals

While in our care your child will have the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of activities, which promote all learning aspects of development. Paramount Childcare and Early Learning Center provides children the comfort and experience of belonging to an extended family. Our approach to childcare is child centered and child directed. Children are offered choices whenever possible. We **believe** that Play-based centers are the most developmentally appropriate for young children. Teachers setting up an environment in which children can learn by open exploration define play-based curriculum. Play-based centers allow children to explore themes through self-directed activity that allows children to build confidence in their physical and social abilities. Paramount Childcare and Early Learning Center strives to create an atmosphere for the children that is mutually rewarding to both the staff and the children.

License & capacity:

Ages: 6 weeks-12 years

Ratios: We use the following teacher to student ratios;

6 weeks to 12 months: 1:4, with a maximum group size of 12.

12 months to 24 months: 1:6, maximum group size of 12.

24 months to 36 months: 1:8, maximum group size 16.

3 years to 4 years: 1:9, maximum group size of 18.

4 years to 5 years: 1:12, maximum group size 24.

6 years to age 12: 1:18, maximum group size 36.

Hours of Operation:

Paramount Childcare and Early Learning Center is open from 6:30 AM until 6:00 PM Monday through Friday. No childcare will be provided on Saturday and Sundays or on the following holidays:

New Year's Day
Independence Day
Memorial Day
Labor Day
Thanksgiving day
The day after Thanksgiving
Christmas Eve
Christmas Day

*If a holiday happens to fall on a Saturday Paramount Childcare will be closed the Friday before, and if it falls on a Sunday Paramount will be closed the Monday following.

The above are paid holidays for Paramount Childcare and Early Learning Center if they fall on a contracted day for your child. There will be no adjustments to tuition for holiday closures. Please have a backup childcare provider for these occasions. Paramount Childcare and Early Learning Center is not responsible for finding alternate care for your child.

Payment Procedures:

Rates:

Tuition Fees: All payments are due in advance for care that will be provided to your child. Our tuition is collected through an automated payment system through Mybrightwheel app. Payment options are every week (Friday), Bi-weekly (Friday) or Monthly (1st of the month).

Enrollment Fee: A \$75.00/child or \$100.00/family non-refundable registration fee is due upon enrollment.

Annual Supply Fees: A \$75.00/child or \$100.00/family is due each April to cover facility supplies.

Late Payment Fee: \$10.00 per day that payment is not received

Returned Check Fee: \$20.00, and additional costs incurred, along with my late fee if a check is returned to Provider.

No Payment: You will be liable for cost fees, late fees and any cost for loss of wages if there is a small claims case or collection agency fees.

Vacation: After 6 months of continuous care there will be a one-week vacation that will be applied to your account for the contracted scheduled days. Vacation can be used once per calendar year. Vacation request forms must be turned into the office 2 weeks before vacation is to occur. Your child may not be in attendance during the use of vacation. There will not be a refund given if vacation is requested after the billing cycle has already been generated. A credit can be applied to the next billing cycle. If part time, your vacation must fall on the days you are in attendance at Paramount Childcare.

Family Discount; If two children, oldest receives a 5% off tuition. If three children then oldest receives 10% off tuition, middle child would receive 5% discount of tuition.

Registration Requirements

State law and Paramount Childcare and Early Learning Center policy requires that the parent complete and submit the following forms prior to your child's first day at the center.

1. Childcare Enrollment Contract
2. Identification and Emergency Information
3. Immunization Record
4. Permission to Participate (in center activities)
5. Tuition/Brightwheel payment processing Agreement

Failure to provide the required forms may result in delaying your child's participation in the program.

Full Time: Childcare contracted on a set scheduled time 4 - 5 days per week.

Part Time: Childcare contracted on a set scheduled time 3 days per week or less. Part Time Childcare occupies a Full-Time position. Should a potential client need a full-time position, termination notice may be given with the option of parent paying the full-time rate to preserve the child's slot. Daycare can only be guaranteed to children that attend full time, or part time and pay full time rates.

Before/After School: Includes breakfast and afternoon snack. Care will not begin before 6:30 AM or end later than 6:00 PM. There will be a \$25.00 per day fee associated with in service/school closure days. There will be a \$10.00 per day charge associated with early release days.

Requests for Changes to Schedule

Enrollment in each classroom is typically at or near capacity. Changes or additions to the days that a child receives care must be approved by the Director and will be accommodated, as space is available. All requests for changes to the child's schedule must be made in writing to the Director. The parent or guardian should submit schedule changes as much time prior to the change taking effect as possible to improve the chances of having the change approved.

Drop Ins: All drop in requests must be brought to the Director. If the ratio for the classroom is not at capacity for the day we can accommodate the request. An invoice for the additional day will be added to the current billing cycle.

Open Door: You are invited and welcome to visit Paramount Childcare and Early Learning Center anytime your children are present. You are asked to avoid visiting during Rest Time as much as possible. Parents are also free to call at any time. If I do not answer the phone, please leave a message, and we will call you back as soon as we are finished with the current activity.

Security

Paramount Childcare and Early Learning Center and utilizes secured doors on all entrances into the center and classrooms. At the time of enrollment, we will provide parents with the codes to access the center. The door codes are confidential. Paramount Childcare asks that parents do not share with anyone who is not a current family or an authorized person to pick up a child of our facility. Maintaining the integrity of the door codes is essential to the health and safety of the children, as such; the door codes may change periodically.

Withdraw Notice: We request two-week written notice to the owner prior to withdrawal date.

Matters of Money:

All payments are due by 6:00 PM on the chosen day **prior** to childcare services being provided. After 6:00 PM, the late fee will be assessed. If payment is not made within 3 days at drop off, your child will not be accepted into care until payment, including all late fees, is made. If a period of 1 week passes without payment received, the contract will be terminated, the position filled, and the collection process begun. You will be responsible for any costs related to collection of the childcare fees. These costs will include late fees, day of loss wages, cost fees and childcare fees. Cash or Check are accepted and a receipt will be given upon request. A year-end statement of all childcare fees paid will be provided through the Mybrightwheel app. A fee of \$20.00, plus any additional costs I incur, along with my late fee will be charged to you for a returned check. All future payments will then be made debit or credit card. Childcare fees are due

regardless of whether or not your child attends. You are paying for a position, as well as a service. No refunds are given for late arrivals or early departures. There is a \$3.00 per minute late fee that will be processed for any children not picked up by 6:00p.m. All childcare services will be contracted. **The contract is a legal document obligating Paramount Childcare and Early Learning Center to provide a service for you and obligating you to pay our facility for that service. There are other requirements in the contract. I urge you to thoroughly read the contract/handbook and realize that it is legal and you will be held liable for each item of the contract. By signing it, you are accepting it in all its terms.**

Daily Doings

Curriculum

At Paramount Childcare and Early Learning Center, we facilitate children's learning using developmentally appropriate practices that support growth through play, exploration, daily routines, environment, and through meaningful interactions with peers and teachers. We also promote learning by building a sense of community within the classroom, designing an environment that is inviting and navigable by a young child, and allows the child to make meaningful choices within established boundaries. We also encourage children to become critical thinkers by engaging in dialogue and extending learning experiences that can address multiple disciplines simultaneously. We accept and promote the uniqueness of each child and work individually with each student to determine his or her best learning styles and methods.

Drop Off/Pick Up:

After checking your child into their appropriate class via mybrightwheel app, please drop your child off with their teacher. Please make sure to

No child will be allowed to leave with anyone except the parent, unless indicated on the alternate pickup/emergency list, without written permission from the parent. Anyone that is not on the pick-up list will be required to show proof of Identification. Please make the alternate pick up person aware of the requirements. It is normal for your child to cry on arrival, especially for the first few weeks. Please make your goodbye brief and tell your child exactly when you will be returning. The crying usually stops within seconds of your departure. You are welcome to listen outside the door. Never leave without telling your child goodbye. Please be in control of your child during drop off and pick up times. This is a time of testing when two different authority figures are present (parent and provider) and this situation will be tested at one time or another to see if the rules still apply. Children of all ages adjust to transitions from one activity to another differently. Most do not like to be too rushed and most do not like to wait too long once they are ready to depart. If the person picking up the child appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, another authorized person will be called to pick-up both the child and the adult. Court Order: If there is a court

order keeping one parent or guardian away from the child, I must have a written note from the custodial parent or guardian in my file to that effect. Otherwise, I cannot prevent the non- custodial parent from picking up the child. Failure to pick up your child by 6:30 p.m. without notification may result in staff calling Child Protective Services. Prior to such a call, staff will attempt to contact parents or an emergency contact for the child.

Discipline and Guidance:

We maintain a positive discipline policy, which focuses on prevention, redirection, love, consistency and firmness. We stress two main patterns of behavior: respect for other people and respect for property. The children are explained the rules of the center frequently, so they are all familiar with the guidelines. When the need for discipline does arise, we will do our best to personalize the method to meet the needs of the individual child. Please keep in mind that there WILL be disagreements between children. One of the benefits of building strong relationships between center staff, children, and parents is the ability to work through strategies with Paramount families.

Young children have a hard time expressing their feelings. Sometimes they hit, throw toys, bite, etc. We rely on redirection and distraction while encouraging appropriate behavior and positive guidance.

The following types of discipline are prohibited:

1. Corporal punishment, threats of corporal punishment, or physical punishment of any kind
2. Punishment of withholding; food, toilet training, or excessive isolation
3. Exposing a child to extremes of temperature
4. Demanding excessive physical exercise or excessive rest
5. Abusive, profane, verbal abuse, threats, or derogatory remarks about the child or the child's family

Supervision:

At no time will a child be left unattended, including naptime. If a child becomes ill, they may be separated a small distance from the other children. The health and safety of each child is our primary concern and we will remain alert to safety needs, attempt to anticipate possible hazards and take necessary precautions and preventive measures wherever possible. Children may not be dropped off on the street outside or sent in alone. At pick up time, the parent/guardian is asked to make contact with their teacher or designee before departing, after which we are no longer responsible for your child.

Communication with Teachers:

Parents are encouraged to maintain open communication with their child's teacher. While teachers are always accessible to parents during drop off and pick up times, this is not the time to initiate in-depth conversation with your child's teacher about any behavior concerns. We ask that parents request a meeting with the Executive Director and the teacher to discuss their concerns.

It is important for parents to communicate with their teacher whenever there is something going on with their child that may affect their behavior at school. Examples may include a recent death in the family, a divorce, loss of a family pet, a parent out of town, or anything that the parent feels could potentially influence the child's behavior while at school. Parents are encouraged to keep staff informed in order to provide the best possible care for the child.

Parent Concerns:

Paramount Childcare and Early Learning Center asks that parents discuss any concerns they have with other enrolled children with the Director. It is inappropriate for parents to involve themselves with the discipline of another enrolled child. It is natural for children this age to experience some disagreement with other children. Paramount Childcare and Early Learning Center expects that families will have confidence in the ability of staff to resolve any issues that may develop between children.

Meals:

We provide a nutritious breakfast, lunch and snacks. Please let us know in advance if your child is not permitted to have specific foods due to allergies or religious beliefs.

Activities:

Age appropriate activities are scheduled with flexibility allowed to respond to the needs of the individual child and day. We will offer times for outside play, crafts, stories, instruction, and naps appropriate to the child's ages, interests, and abilities. Paramount Childcare and Early Learning Center will provide your child with tender loving care, understanding, patience and guidance in a happy family setting. We will provide preschool curriculum, developing large and small motor skills. We do many arts and crafts where the focus is on the process, not the product. Free play is an important part of a child's early years. It is here that they learn social skills that will be needed the rest of their lives.

Water Activities:

We enjoy water play activities in wading pools and sprinklers. Please supply a bathing suit (and cover-up if needed) and pre-apply sunscreen when the weather permits such activity. Activities in bodies of water two or more feet in depth shall be supervised by persons who are currently certified as lifeguards. We will supervise children closely and shall be able to clearly see all parts of the swimming area including the bottom of pools. Children that are unable to swim will be restricted to shallow areas only. Wading pool on the premises is emptied and sanitized daily. The use of saunas, hot tubs and spas by children is prohibited.

Dress Code:

Please dress your child appropriately. The activities may be messy. Do not send your child in clothing that you do not want stained. You also need to supply a complete change of clothing in case of an accident. If the child has no spare clothing, the parent will be called to bring some. Please send them in shoes that fit, and are ready for play!

Toys:

Please do NOT send any toys from home with your child. If your child needs a special soft toy or item for sleeping, it will be allowed, but it will remain put away until Rest Time. Paramount Childcare assumes NO responsibility for lost, stolen, or broken toys from home. Should the child deliberately destroy facility toys or other property through misuse or willfulness, the parent will be required to replace it.

Naps:

Infants are on their own schedules and may nap as frequently as they need. Pre-school children nap or rest together after lunch. All children will rest during this time. If your child does not regularly nap, staff will provide your child with a quiet independent activity to do while the other children nap. When children enroll, they must bring a small blanket and crib sheet used for naps. Parents must launder these and return them at least weekly. Children may bring a special blanket, pillow, and/or sleep toy from home. Parents are responsible for upkeep on these special items. PLEASE CLEARLY LABEL ALL BLANKETS, SHEETS, AND PILLOWS WITH THE CHILD'S NAME. Any pillows should be in a pillowcase and be able to fit inside the child's cubby.

Toilet Learning:

Paramount Childcare and Early Learning Center will assist you in toilet training your child with the understanding that it will be successful only if we work together. Teachers will use cotton underwear or pull-ups supplied by the parent. Send your child ONLY in easy on/easy off clothing until they are able to completely undress and dress themselves. We do not launder soiled items and will send them home in a plastic bag. Please replace any clothing sent home the next day.

Transportation:

At times, we may plan a field-trip or it may be necessary for me to transport your child by van. A permission form is provided upon enrollment. All traffic and safety laws will be followed. No child will ever be left unattended in a vehicle. If I do not have your permission to transport your child, you are expected to pick up your child immediately and make alternate childcare arrangements for that day.

Holidays/Birthdays:

We honor major holidays and all children's birthdays. If you would like to bring a special Treat (no peanut products) for the children, please arrange this with the provider. You are more than welcome to participate in ANY activities we have planned.

Immunization Records

As part of our State licensing requirements, we must have evidence that each child has received the standard childhood immunizations. This evidence is required prior to admission. Infants are likely to receive most of their immunizations during the period of time they attend the center. Failure to maintain current immunization records on all children is an infraction of State licensing requirements, which can result in penalties and fines against the center. For this reason, and to ensure the health and safety of our children, it is the center's policy that parents must provide evidence of immunizations at appropriate age intervals as recommended by the American Pediatric Association.

The Director is required to keep current immunization records. Parents must provide a written notice of any temporary delays in receiving immunizations. The Executive Director will audit immunization records periodically and may request updated records. If requested to provide updated immunization records, parents will have 14 days to comply with the request. Failure to comply may cause a temporary suspension from care. Once the parent provides the information to the Director, the child may return to the center.

Paramount Childcare and Early learning Center understands that some families have religious or personal beliefs that prevent them from giving their child the recommended immunizations. While we respect the beliefs of those families who choose not to immunize their children, Paramount Childcare and Early learning Center must take every precaution to protect the health and safety of all enrolled children.

Other Confidentiality:

The information you supply to Paramount Childcare and Ealy Learning Center will be kept confidential. I will, at all times, respect your privacy. Before any of the information is released to outside persons, the parents will sign a release form.

Changes to Policies:

Changes may be made to these policies as needed with no notice. The policies, contracts, consents, and forms will be reviewed and updated, if needed, yearly. Please give written notice of any changes that may occur, especially of name or address, or of updated immunizations.

Termination of Care:

Care can only be terminated with 2 weeks notice by the parent. Paramount Childcare and Early Learning Center reserves the right to immediately end care for non-payment, failure to respect teachers, behavior of the child, which is

harmful to the physical or emotional well-being of the other children, or failure to abide by facility policies. If you terminate care without giving appropriate notice, you will be responsible for payment of the final 2 weeks of care whether or not your child attends, and your card on file will be charged for the amount do.

*Provider has the right to terminate a contract without notice in the case of harm to other children or a dangerous situation due to that child has caused intentionally or otherwise.

Child Abuse/Neglect:

We are mandated to report child abuse. If we have suspicions that a child is being abused or neglected, we will make a report to the local children's services agency. Safety of children is our primary concern.

Supplies:

CHANGE OF CLOTHING

Each child should have an extra full set of clothing (pants, shirt, socks and underwear). Please make sure that the extra clothes are suitable for the season and still fit. Each piece of clothing should be clearly labeled with the child's name.

BREASTMILK / FORMULA

If your infant requires a special diet of breast milk or formula, please provide enough clearly labeled bottles to last through the day and in the event of an emergency.

DIAPERING

All children who are not yet completely potty trained must have a full supply of diapers and wipes daily. Diaper rash creams should be included if necessary.

SECURITY ITEMS

If your child requires a favorite blanket, toy or other item in order to take a nap, please provide it and make sure it is clearly labeled. Please don't forget to take it home with you at pick up time!

APPROPRIATE CLOTHING

In addition to comfortable play clothing, we encourage you to have children wear sturdy play shoes. Tennis shoes are best. Velcro fasteners are preferred. Please make sure your child has appropriate outerwear such as coat, hoodie, hat, mittens, swimsuit, cover-up and sunscreen.

DONATIONS

Donations of gently used toys, craft supplies, unused diapers or unopened snacks are always appreciated.

Health Matters

Sick Days:

In the event that your child is ill and needs to miss a day, please call 1 hour before arrival time. Tuition cannot be refunded for sick days or made up on another day that your child is not regularly in attendance.

Illness:

When a child becomes ill while in our care, but does not require immediate medical attention, we must determine whether or not exclusion from Paramount Childcare is required. We base our decisions on the policies outlined in two publications by the American Academy of Pediatrics: Caring for Our Children and Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools. There are 3 things to consider in determining if a child needs to be excluded from care:

- Illness prevents the child from participating in the normal daily activities of his/her classroom routine
- Illness requires a level of care that is greater than we can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children
- Illness poses a risk of spread of disease to others

If any of these criteria are met, the child will be excluded, regardless of the type of illness. You will be called, and asked to pick your child up from our care within one hour. It is the parent's responsibility to coordinate alternative care for when your child is sick and unable to attend their scheduled day at Paramount Childcare.

In addition to the above three points, temporary exclusion (removal) from child care is recommended when the child has any of the following conditions:

- Appears to be severely ill
- Has a fever of 101 degrees or higher taken axillary (armpit) and behavior changes or other signs and symptoms (sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea). An unexplained temperature above 100 degrees, axillary in a child younger than 4 months should be medically evaluated by a professional.
- Diarrhea – defined by more watery stools, decreased form of stool that is not associated with changes of diet, and increased frequency of passing stool that is not contained by the child's ability to use the toilet – until the diarrhea resolves.
- Blood in the stools not explained by dietary change, medication, or hard stools
- Vomiting more than 2 times in the previous 24 hours, unless the vomiting is determined to be caused by a non-communicable condition, and the child is not in danger of dehydration
- Abdominal pain that continues for more than 2 hours or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs and symptoms
- Mouth sores with drooling
- Cough that is severe, rapid or difficult breathing, wheezing, cyanosis (blue color of skin and mucous membranes)

- Rash with fever or behavioral changes
- Pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye mucus drainage (signs of a bacterial infection), often with matted eyelids after sleep and eye pain, or redness of the eyelids or skin around the eye, until treatment has been started
- Tuberculosis, until the child's physician or local health department states child is on appropriate treatment and can return
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has been started
- Strep throat, or other streptococcal infection, until 24 hours after treatment has been started
- Head lice or nits
- Scabies
- Chicken pox, until all lesions have dried or crusted (usually in about 6 days)
- Pertussis, until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment
- Mumps, until 9 days after onset of parotid gland swelling
- Measles, until 4 days after onset of rash
- Hepatitis A virus, as directed by the local health department and pediatrician
- Any child determined by the local health department to be contributing to the transmission of illness during an outbreak

If it has been decided that a child does need to be excluded from Paramount Childcare, the procedures are as follows:

- Care for the child will be provided in a place where the child can be comfortable and feel safe, away from the other children
- Parents will be called to pick up the child as soon as possible, but within one hour. Emergency contacts will be contacted if child has not been picked up within the one hour allotted time.
- Family is asked to seek advice/diagnosis of the health professional, if a medical visit is deemed necessary
- Contact the local health department if there is a question of a reportable communicable disease
- Sanitize toys and other items the child may have been exposed

Document actions in the Brightwheel app with date, time, symptoms, and actions taken. In an emergency situation, the Paramount Childcare Center will call 911.

Medications:

Medication can be given to children while in our care when the following steps are followed:

- A medical form must be completed and signed by the parent each day medication is required. The form must include the name of the child, name of the medication, the dosage amount, the times to administer and the parent's signature. Daily written permission is required. Please note any side effects, special instructions, and purpose of the medication and the name and phone number of the prescribing doctor.

- A staff member must receive the medication and fill out medical form in prep kitchen each morning.
- Labeled medications brought to the childcare facility by the parent/guardian in the original container (with a label that includes the child's name, date filled, prescribing clinician's name, pharmacy name and phone number, dosage/instructions, and relevant warnings).
- If it is an over the counter medication, it must be in the original container.
- Over the counter medicine can be administered for pain but cannot be given to reduce a fever or other illness symptoms.

Medication administration will be documented in The Brightwheel app with the time and dosage given to the child.

Medical Emergencies:

Although supervision is constantly given, we cannot be by the child's side at all times to prevent falls, tripping, bumps, blows from other children, etc. If the child is injured in a non-life-threatening way, the director will assess the child and provide home first aid. If the injury is more serious, the parent will be notified so the child can be transported to the hospital or doctors office. (I.e. needs stitches, broken arm, or dislocation, etc.) All costs associated with injuries to the child will be the responsibility of the parent. In case of a medical emergency, we will attempt to contact you immediately. If we are unable to reach you, I will start calling the people designated as your emergency contacts. If we are unable to reach you or your emergency contacts. If immediate intervention is required, we have staff on site certified in infant, child, and adult CPR and First Aid and will take appropriate action including calling 911 and having your child transported to the nearest local Hospital. You or your family's insurance is/are responsible for the cost of medical help or treatment due to accidents or illness while in childcare.

Emergencies:

Fire: There are several fire extinguishers located in our facility. If there is a fire that cannot be extinguished quickly, the children will be evacuated immediately before calling 911. We will practice fire drills randomly so the children will be prepared in the event of a fire. The fire evacuation plan is located on file and you are free to view it at any time.

Power outage: There are flashlights located in the kitchen. If the power remains out for some time, there are non-perishables located in the kitchen that will be used to eat. If the weather is inclement and the facility is getting too cold for the children, you will be called to pick up your child.

