

BVS Family and Child  
Enrichment Center, LLC  
FAMILY HANDBOOK

2023-2024 School Year

(Revised: 05/13/2024)

# **BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC**

## **WELCOME**

Dear Family,

We are honored that you have become a part of the BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center family. We share a small amount of your child's life and are privileged to be given the opportunity. Our goal is to impact our children's lives educationally, emotionally, and socially so they have a strong foundation for their educational careers.

We look forward to working as a family to help each child reach goals set for them throughout their time at BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC. We strive to provide a challenging academic program and a secure, personal environment of care for each student. We hope to exceed our Family's expectations and want to take this time to welcome your Family personally.

Thank you for choosing BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC. We look forward to providing your child with a caring and enriching environment.

Sincerely,

*Wendy Demers*

Director

# ABOUT US

## Philosophy

To help each child learn, grow, and prepare for grade school. We identify and use topics that excite each child and make learning a fun experience instead of a task. Just as each child is different in personality and appearance, they also differ in their learning style, motivation, and ability. These differences must be embraced and encouraged through child-directed activities while maintaining a structured curriculum. The curriculum structure covers core concepts and is not limited in time frame, appearance, approach, or activities. We believe success and growth come from encouragement and praise. Our teachers focus on building every child's self-esteem and confidence through positive feedback and rewards. We nurture their natural strengths. A child see the world around them with wonder and awe, and we believe in encouraging their natural curiosity. It takes a village to educate a child; parent involvement is strongly encouraged in daily center activities and special events.

## Mission

The Reggio Emilia Philosophy is based upon the following set of principles:

- \*Children must have some control over the direction of their learning
- \*Children must be able to learn through experiences of touching, moving, listening, and observing.
- \*Children have relationships with other children and with material items in the world that they must be able to explore.
- \*Children must have endless ways to express themselves.

## Vision Statement

BVS is committed to strengthening the foundation of future citizens and families through intentionally teaching to inspire a love of learning, healthy relationships, self-awareness, and a sense of community.

## Certification and Programs

NH Quality Recognition and Improvement System: Granite Steps for Quality, Step 3

School Choice Leadership Award

NAEYC Accreditation

Pyramid Model Implementation Program

Strengthening Families Certified

## Definition of Family

In this handbook, we refer to the Family as a parent, legal guardian, sponsor, or anyone else who provides for the child's well-being, best interest, and responsibility of the child in our care.

## **Foster Care Supports**

At BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC, we provide a nurturing and inclusive environment for all children in our care, including those in the foster care system. We recognize that foster care children may have unique experiences and needs and are committed to supporting them during their time with us.

## **Hours of Operation**

Childcare services are provided from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday. These hours may vary depending on staffing in each classroom.

## **Holidays**

We are closed for certain holidays. Please see attached closing dates and early closures.

## **Admission & Enrollment**

All admission and enrollment forms must be completed along with the enrollment fee and first tuition payment before your child's first day of attendance. This includes state documentation surrounding authorized pickups, enrollment forms, enrollment contracts, and health records. This includes vision and hearing screenings, lead screening, and the latest physical and immunization records.

An enrollment fee of \$100 is due at the time of enrollment. This fee is non-refundable.

A week before your child's enrollment, a one-week tuition deposit is required as parents pay ahead for the following week. You will receive an invoice through Brightwheel!

Our facility admits children from 6 weeks to 5 years of age based on availability and openings.

Children will be admitted regardless of race, culture, sex, religion, national origin, or disability. We do not discriminate based on special needs. We will provide a safe, supportive environment for your child.

## **Inclusion**

BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC believes children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance, and belonging in childcare. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage all children's full and active participation in our program based on their capabilities and needs.

## **Non-Discrimination**

At BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC, equal educational opportunities are available for all children, without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, or parent/provider political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation or special needs, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state, local, or civil laws. Educational programs are designed to meet the varying needs of all students.

## Family Activities

Each Family is a child's first teacher. We value families as partners in the growth and development of children in our program. We encourage parents and other family members to be involved in the program, visit children's classrooms, participate in events, and provide feedback on the program. We offer various ways in which families can participate in helping us establish and reach our program goals.

\*Please see the list of Family Activities at the end of this booklet.

## Supporting Dual Language Learners

At BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC, we celebrate and embrace the rich diversity of our young learners, including those who come from bilingual or multilingual backgrounds. We recognize that Dual Language Learners (DLLs) have unique strengths and needs, and we are committed to providing a nurturing and inclusive environment where they can thrive.

Our educators will support your child in their language development journey. We understand that young children may switch between languages as they learn, which is a natural part of their linguistic development. Our staff respects and values the languages spoken at home and encourages the children to express themselves in their preferred language.

To support your child's language development, we incorporate English and their home language into our daily activities and interactions. We believe that maintaining and developing proficiency in their home language is essential for preserving cultural heritage and fostering a strong sense of identity.

We also work closely with parents and families to ensure effective communication and collaboration when supporting you. We welcome any input and resources parents can provide to help us better understand and support their child's language development needs.

We aim to create a warm, inclusive, and supportive environment where all children, regardless of their language background, can learn, grow, and thrive together.

## Confidentiality

Unless we receive your written consent, BVS will not release information regarding your child except when required by our regulatory and partnering agencies. All records concerning children in our program are confidential. Upon request, records will be available to:

- Administrators and teaching staff who have consent from a parent or legal guardian to access the records.
- The child's parents or legal guardians
- Regulatory authorities

## Staff Qualifications

BVS hires teachers who comply with state requirements and qualifications as a base minimum. Typical staff certifications are as follows:

Position Title	Education/Certification	Experience
Lead Teacher	Bachelor's degree in early childhood education and above or equivalent.	Two years
Associate Teacher	Associate degree in early childhood education/CDA	One year
Assistant/Aide	Credential	

Educators participate in a hiring orientation process and must participate in ongoing training. These include child growth and development, health and safety requirements, engaging environments, developmentally appropriate practices, assessment and developmental screening, positive guidance, family relationships, cultural competence & diversity, and professionalism.

We strongly discourage families from entering into employment arrangements with staff (i.e., babysitting). Any agreement between families and BVS staff members outside the programs and services we offer is a private matter, not connected to or sanctioned by BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC.

## Child-to-Staff Ratios

At BVS, we supervise children at all times. All caregivers receive scheduled breaks, which reduce fatigue and help ensure alertness.

We maintain the following standards for child-to-staff ratios:

Age	Child to Staff	Maximum Group Size
≤ 12 months	<u>4 to 1</u>	<u>12</u>
13-35 months	<u>6 to 1</u>	<u>14</u>
3-year-olds	<u>8 to 1</u>	<u>11</u>
4+ year-olds	<u>12 to 1</u>	<u>24</u>

Source: National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education.

# About our Programming

## Secure Attachment

We believe in keeping infants and toddlers with the same teaching staff for at least nine months. Students thrive in organized environments with routines and consistency. A well-supported classroom is crucial for young children as it gives them a sense of security and allows children to develop secure attachments. Through consistency, students understand the day-to-day happenings and how the classroom is structured. During this period, the children can build strong connections with their teachers and, in turn, develop a sense of trust in the teachers. This trust will help the children be more confident in their exploration and engagement.

## Communication & Family Partnership

**Daily Communications:** Daily notes from center staff will inform you about your child's activities and experiences at the center. Messages will be sent home via Brightwheel and, in some circumstances, hard copy.

**Bulletin Boards:** Located throughout the center, bulletin boards provide center news, upcoming events, faculty changes, holiday closing dates, announcements, etc.

**Newsletters:** Monthly newsletters provide center news, events, announcements, etc.

**Email:** We encourage you to provide an email address you regularly use so that we may send you announcements, event invitations, newsletters, and general updates via Brightwheel.

**Family Visits:** Family participation is encouraged. Visit our classrooms, volunteer, go on a field trip, or eat with your child. Signing in is required for the safety and protection of our children.

**Family Celebration Nights:** BVS schedules family nights around holidays and seasonal celebrations. These nights include snacks, drinks, and fun-filled, age-appropriate activities for families. These celebrations allow families and children time to share, learn, and have fun. Families can be a part of their child's learning experience and connect with other families.

**Conferences:** Family & teacher conferences occur twice each school year. During these conferences, we will discuss your child's strengths, likes and dislikes, and learning styles. We will work together to set goals for your child's growth and development. Teachers will offer conferences upon completing each assessment; you may request additional conferences regarding your child's progress at any time. At these conferences you will receive any written assessment we use. If you are unable to attend these conferences, a copy of the assessment will still be provided to you. We encourage you to communicate any concerns with your child's teacher or the administration team at any time.

## Open Door Policy

We are delighted to have family members participate in our program. Parents/Guardians are welcome to visit the program any time during the day, call the center whenever the need arises, or email us. The infant room welcomes parents/guardians to nurse or feed their infants.

The Open Door Policy does not mean BVS staff will leave the doors unlocked. External doors are always locked for the safety and protection of the children. Entryways can only be accessed with security codes or answered by a staff member.

Our team will always do their best to speak with parents/guardians. We encourage families to check in with our teaching staff at morning drop-off or evening pick-up. Since staff days are devoted to caring for children, it is usually impossible to have long discussions when teachers are in ratio. If a situation requires a more extended discussion, we kindly ask you to arrange an appointment, and our staff will take the time to meet with you!

### **Publicity**

Occasionally, BVS staff will take photos and videos of the children at the center for use within the center or on our website. Written permission will be obtained before the use of photographs.

Unless the Family indicates that they want their child to participate, we will not use pictures and names of children for publicity.

## **CURRICULA & LEARNING**

### **Learning Environment**

We provide a rich learning environment that is Reggio Emilia inspired. The curriculum is developmentally appropriate to the specific ages in each classroom. Our flexible daily routine allows children to advance at their own pace. We strongly believe that learning happens through play. Learning and exploring are hands-on and are facilitated through interest areas. Our program is designed to enhance children's development in the following areas: creativity, self-expression, decision-making, problem-solving, responsibility, independence, and reasoning. We encourage openness to those different from us and the ability to work and play with others.

### **Family Partnership**

At BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC, we value Family-Teacher partnerships, as we understand and celebrate that the Family is the child's first teacher. We can help children develop a strong sense of self, develop a positive attitude toward learning, and connect with the curriculum through dedicated collaboration. We encourage you to discuss your Family's values, beliefs, and dreams with our teaching staff. This type of conversation will help our team ensure your child's wishes help us influence our curriculum and conversations.

We also trust that you will bring any of your concerns surrounding your child to any member of our team whenever you need to. We are here to address your questions surrounding child development, assessment, your child's needs, family support, transitions, behaviors, or anything else that may arise. While we encourage you to speak openly with our staff, we recommend finding or scheduling a time when our attention is dedicated to you, and we are not in ratio.

### **Family Involvement**



To help better represent your family dynamic, culture, or values, we invite you to be a part of our classrooms! We invite you to come alive with your talents, second languages, skills, or experiences through our Strengthening Families Approach. If you are interested in volunteering to be a part of your child's classroom, please reach out to your child's teacher.

## Curricula & Assessment

Curriculum: BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC uses a Reggio Emilia inspired curriculum. As part of this curriculum, teaching teams gather information about each of their child's developmental abilities and evaluate progress to modify and adjust what we do in our classroom to deliver individualized instruction. This evaluation is communicated to families periodically during the school year using various formal and informal tools, forms, and resources.

Please see copies of daily schedules and lesson plans posted in each classroom for information about your child's day.

## Assessment:

Goals of assessment: 1.) Track and monitor each child's developing skills to have informed conversations with parents, know if there is a need to call in outside resources to assist the child with gaining skills, and modify programs to meet the child's current needs. 2.) The program will evaluate the current teaching practices and curriculum. This information will be used to inform planning for overall program improvements. 3.) To ensure we are using assessment information to influence the daily happenings within each classroom, including teaching varied abilities, considering children's interests and needs, and teaching to each child's level.

## Observations

Our staff utilizes observation to help assess individuals and groups here at BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC. We believe that through "ordinary moments," we can observe children's play and conversations to identify better the need for individualizing lesson plans or classroom experiences. These formal and informal observations help our staff introduce lessons, tools, open-ended questions, or other methods to meet each child's individualized needs in their education experience. Observations may also assess an individual child's progress and growth in the classroom environment and help guide conversations with families.

## Developmental Screening

BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC encourages families to become familiar with the AQS-3 tool. Many local pediatricians provide families with information to complete the ASQ-3 developmental screening. The ASQ-3 tool assesses communication skills, motor skills, problem solving (cognitive) skills, and social skills. We will complete the ASQ-3 at the following milestones: 2 months, 6 months, 12 months, 18 months, 24 months, 30 months, 36 months, 48 months, and 60 months. Our staff will provide each family with a copy of the ASQ-3 to complete independently.

Once completed, the teachers and Family will share the findings and create future goals for the child.

## **Transitions**

Your child's transition into childcare should be a positive and exciting learning adventure. We will work with you and your child to ensure a smooth transition occurs as new routines and people are introduced.

### **The transition from home to the center**

Before your child's first day, you can tour the center, meet with your child's peers and teachers, and communicate any anticipated concerns. At this time, please share the best communication methods the teacher may use to reach you.

### **The transition between learning programs**

Children are transitioned to the next program based on age, developmental readiness, state licensing requirements, and space availability. Current and future teachers will meet with you during the transition to propose a plan to introduce your child to the new program.

### **Transition to elementary school**

Transition activities such as a field trip to a local elementary school, creating a mural of special friends, and special times at our center will be part of your child's education at our center. We will provide you with information on local schools, what to expect, and ideas on how to talk to your child about going to elementary school.

## **Electronic Media**

Our daily routine does not include viewing electronic media (television/TV, video, DVD) or using computers. Still, we may use a television show without advertisements as a teaching aid and discussion stimulator from time to time. All Electronic Media will be screened before use and will consist of non-violent and high-quality educational material. Our focus is to provide your child with a positive experience and an increased understanding of the world. New Hampshire rules prohibit screen time (TV, videos, and computers) for children under two.

## **Multiculturalism**

Multiculturalism is vital for all children because it sets social goals and promotes respect for everyone and our environment. We utilize family traditions, books, music, games, and a wide range of activities as aids to teach our children respect for our world and the diversity of life in it.

## **Celebrations**

Our holiday policy encourages an enhanced understanding of and respect for different cultures and beliefs of children, families, staff, and the community.

## **Rest Time**

Infants sleep according to their schedule and are put to sleep on their backs. Caregivers/teachers directly observe infants by sight and sound and check on sleeping infants every 10 minutes.

After lunch, all children participate in a quiet rest time. Caregivers/teachers must directly observe these children by sight and sound, including when engaging with other children who may be awake.

We allow one small blanket and one crib-sized sheet during rest. One small resting buddy is also permitted during this time. Blankets and sheets are sent home every Friday to be cleaned and returned the following Monday.

## Supervision

Teachers must supervise children in their care by keeping them in sight all the time. Supervision by sound is permissible in classrooms serving children over four if teachers frequently check on children out of direct sight.

## Toilet Training

The most crucial factor in making the toilet learning experience successful and as low-stress as possible is a family/teacher partnership that supports the child. Research indicates that children cannot successfully learn how to use the toilet until they are physically, psychologically, and emotionally ready. Many pediatricians say that most children under 24 months of age are not physically capable of regulating bladder and bowel muscles. Most positive toilet training occurs after children show signs of physical control or awareness of their bodily functions and when they demonstrate an interest or curiosity in the process. We are committed to working with you to ensure that toilet learning is carried out to be consistent with your child's physical and emotional abilities and your Family's concerns.

At BVS, we begin the toilet training process after the children enter our Maples classroom. A few signs we look for are:

- The child's diaper is dry for more than 2 hours.
- The child can get on and off the toilet or use a stool.
- The child can pull their pants down and back up again with the help of a staff member.
- The child can communicate that they need to use the bathroom.

BVS will need the following from you:

- Many pairs of underwear and pants. Accidents may be frequent at first.
- A pull-up only for rest time

## GUIDANCE

### General Procedure

BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC is committed to each student's success in learning within a caring, responsive, and safe environment free of discrimination, violence, and bullying. Our center ensures that all students have the opportunity and support to develop to their fullest potential and share a personal and meaningful bond with people in the school community.

Thoughtful direction and planning prevent problems and encourage appropriate behavior. Communicating consistent, clear rules and involving children in problem-solving help children develop their ability to become self-disciplined. We encourage children to be fair and respectful of other people and property and learn to understand the results of their actions.

Upon hire, staff must read our protocols, policies, and family handbook to understand discipline, expulsion prevention, and positive guidance. They are required to sign documentation of their agreement and understanding.

## Discipline Policy

Staff is to use a positive guidance approach with children. At BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC, we understand children learn through exploration, experimenting, and testing limits. We allow children to know how the world works through support and discussion through this lens. Our teachers are trained to guide children through redirection, positive guidance, and modeling. Children will gain knowledge that will positively influence the world around them. Teachers will NEVER use physical punishment, psychological abuse, or coercion when disciplining a child.

Prohibited Practices are as follows:

- Corporal Punishment, including spanking.
- Shaking, jerking, squeezing, or physical indication of disapproval
- Shaming or verbal abuse
- Labeling children as “bad.”
- Using false threats, bribes, or choices
- Withholding food, drink, diapers, or activity times
- Potty Shaming
- Biting
- Retaliation of action
- Unwanted touches that cause distress

## EXPULSION PREVENTION

BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC is committed to ensuring that all children attending our program have access to a quality early childhood education that provides a safe and developmentally appropriate experience and nurtures positive learning and development. We will involve the child’s family in our efforts to support their successful inclusion in our program. BVS will make every effort to successfully include and maintain children in our program if the parents/guardians show us they are willing to be active participants in correcting their behaviors. If we see the parents/guardians not wanting to be active participants, we will work with them to figure out a pleasant exit strategy for all involved.

- Consistent Physical Harm
- Consistent Mental Abuse
- Consistently Destroying Property

If the decision to expel a child from the program is made, the considerations are strictly based on our abilities to assist the child. They are NOT based upon the behavior or misconduct of the Family.

BVS will not exclude

### **What is expulsion?**

The complete and permanent removal of a child from an educational system, e.g., childcare center (Gilliam & Shahar, 2006).

Terminating a child or family's enrollment in the regular group setting because of challenging behavior or a health condition. (Caring for Our Children; National Health and Safety Performance Standards Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs, 3rd edition)

### **What is suspension?**

Reduction in the amount of time a child may be in the regular group setting, either by requiring the child to cease attendance for a particular period or reducing the number of days or amount of time a child may attend. Requiring a child to participate in the program in a special place away from the other children in the regular group setting is included in this definition. (Caring for Our Children; National Health and Safety Performance Standards Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs, 3rd edition)

### **What are challenging behaviors?**

Any behavior that makes it difficult for a young child to succeed in a group environment. Such behaviors interfere with a child's ability to interact with others positively, disrupt the learning process, or even pose health and safety risks. Such behaviors often frustrate adults because the behaviors do not respond to typical behavior intervention strategies. (Izen and Kalinowski, 2010)

- Any repeated pattern of behavior that interferes with or is at risk of interfering with optimal learning or engagement in pro-social interactions with peers and adults. (Powell, Fixsen, Smith, & Fox, 2007)

### **Steps that BVS takes to prevent expulsion (details below):**

- The teachers use positive behavior teaching techniques and best practices. We include the family in this process as soon as a persistent challenging behavior is observed.
- BVS will reach out to community organizations that support children and their families when behavior becomes persistent.
- BVS has implemented and used The Pyramid Model Framework and its strategies to help prevent challenging behaviors in the classroom.

### **First steps towards success:**

BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC teachers are set up to redirect challenging behaviors in a way that guides and promotes positive outcomes for both the child and the teacher. These different techniques include but are not limited to:

- Turning a “no” to a “yes.”
- Redirecting to appropriate behavior
- Reinforce appropriate behaviors around the child.
- Providing positive attention when challenging behavior ends and teaching new skills.
- Teaching more proper skills and focusing on reinforcing appropriate skill.
- Creating clear classroom expectations and rules.
- Using visual supports (predictable schedule, classroom routines, individual routines, emotions, helper chart in the classroom to support the child’s needs).
- Creating a quiet area in the classroom for the child to take some time to themselves.
- Teaching Peer Social behaviors (friendship skills, taking turns, problem-solving).

Teachers are asked to document challenging behaviors each time they occur, how the behavior is handled, and the situation's outcome, and then share them with the families and the director. The teachers continuously communicate with parents and exchange techniques to better support the child at home and school. We can contact outside resources after these techniques have been used over trial and error and the challenging behaviors are still occurring.

### Who can help?

When the teachers cannot provide positive results from these different strategies, they will ask for the Director's assistance. The Director may consult with outside agencies specializing in challenging behaviors. BVS works closely with the Preschool Technical Assistance Network (PTAN), the Early Childhood Learning Center (ECLC), and Community Partners.

PTAN is a grant-funded statewide technical assistance and support network that promotes quality, developmentally appropriate, and culturally competent early childhood education and special education programs. Contact: **(603) 206-6800**

The mission of the ECLC is to foster early foundations for lifelong learning and social growth. We provide a welcoming, healthy, safe, confidence-inspiring environment where individuality is nurtured, and independence is encouraged. Together, students, staff, and families foster meaningful relationships and a vibrant community. Contact: **(603) 664-5586**

Community Partners provide quality developmental and mental health services to meet the needs of families and individuals in Strafford County. Contact: **(603) 516-9300**

### Challenging Behavior

Children are guided to treat each other and adults with self-control and kindness.

Each student at BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC has a right to:

- Learn in a safe and friendly place.
- Be treated with respect.
- Receive the help and support of caring adults.

When a child becomes verbally or physically aggressive, we intervene immediately to protect all children. Our usual approach to helping children with challenging behaviors is to show them how to solve problems using appropriate interactions. When discipline is necessary, it is clear, consistent, and understandable to the child. We maintain a zero-tolerance policy for bullying. If you have any concerns about this, please report them to the Director of the Center.

## **Pyramid Model**

The staff at BVS uses the Pyramid Model Framework to support our children's Social and Emotional Development by teaching them the appropriate social skills they will use to develop friendships and regulate emotions.

The Pyramid Model is designed to provide strategies for encouraging healthy social-emotional development and a strong foundation for all children, with increasing levels of support for children who need additional interventions.

Each staff member participates in professional development opportunities that support the use of the Pyramid Model in the classroom and with our families.

BVS has created four Program Wide Expectations for the center, classrooms, and home. They are:

We are Safe  
We are Kind  
We are Responsible  
We are Learners

These expectations will look different for every classroom and will provide consistency as they move through the BVS program. Behavioral expectations and rules are important because children are less likely to engage in challenging behavior when they know what to do, how to do it, and what is expected.

## **Physical Restraint**

Physical restraint is not used or permitted for discipline. There are rare instances when we need to ensure a child's safety or that of others, and we may restrain a child by gently holding them only for as long as necessary to control the situation.

## **Notification of Behavioral Issues to Families**

If a child's behavior/circumstance is of concern, communication will begin with the parents as the first step to understanding the child's needs and challenges. We will work together to evaluate these needs in the context of our program.

On rare occasions, a child's behavior may warrant the need to find a more suitable care setting. Examples of such instances include:

- A child appears to be a danger to others.
- Medical, psychological, or social service personnel may determine that continued care is harmful or not in the child's best interest.

- There is an undue burden on our resources and finances for the child’s accommodations for success and participation.

If all other behavioral intervention strategies have been used by the BVS staff and their partners and exclusion is deemed in the best interest of the child, the program will consider expulsion measures. At this point, BVS administration will assist the family in finding an appropriate and alternate placement for their child.

\*BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center complies with all federal, state, and civil laws.

## TUITION AND FEES

### Payment

Payment is always due in advance with no deduction for absences, holidays, or closures due to inclement weather, power outages, or other situations beyond our control. Payment is due weekly by 9 am on Thursday via check, cash, or Brightwheel.

### Tuition Increase

BVS will provide at least a 2-week notice for any increase in tuition.

### NH Child Care Scholarship Program

BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center will accept families eligible for the NH Child Care Scholarship Program. You will be responsible for a weekly co-pay if DHHS does not pay your tuition in full. If interested in learning more about this program, visit: <https://www.nh-connections.org/families/child-care-scholarship/>

### Late Payment Charges

Late payments can pose serious problems for our programs. Therefore, we have put procedures in place to reduce their impact.

**If payment is not received by 9 am on Thursday of each week, a late fee of \$25 will be added to your account after 9 am on the same Thursday.** Your account must be up to date so your child can be welcomed back on Monday.

Please meet with Donna, the owner and executive director, regarding any special arrangements that may be needed.

### Returned Check Charges

All returned checks will be charged a fee of \$35. This charge may be collected electronically. Two or more returned checks or rejected transactions will result in your account being placed on “cash only” status.



## Late Pick-up Fees

Late pick-up is not a standard program option at BVS. **Late fees of \$2 per minute per child** will be assessed beginning at 5 pm. That fee is paid directly to the team member with your child; it does not go to BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC. You will be asked to sign a Late Pick Up Form that includes a warning, a meeting with the Administration, and then removal from our program.

## Additional Fees/ Credits

- **A non-refundable enrollment/ registration fee of \$100 is due annually in August.**

# ATTENDANCE & WITHDRAWAL

## Absence

If your child is absent or arrives after 9 am, please call us at (603) 905-9183 or send a message via Brightwheel. BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC is a learning center, and it is important to us that your child be in the building by 9 am to participate in **curriculum** and learning opportunities.

## Vacation

While we recognize the value of family vacations, the center does not provide credit for vacation days.

## Withdrawal

When a child is being withdrawn, the center must give written notice two weeks in advance. If you decide to leave without notice, you will be responsible for any tuition owed for those two weeks.

## Transfer of Records

Whether transitioning to the next program setting or a new classroom, your child's records will be transferred internally.

If your child is transitioning to a new school, a written request from you with instructions on where the records should be sent is required. Please allow 72 hours to receive your files.

## Closing Due to Extreme Weather

Should severe weather (e.g., snow, storms, floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, blizzards, loss of power, loss of water) prevent us from opening on time or at all, we will notify the families on WMUR, Bright Wheel, and our Facebook Page. BVS follows SAU 74 for closings and delays.

If it becomes necessary to close early, we will contact you or your emergency contacts as soon as possible. It is your responsibility to arrange your child's early pick-up.

## Closing Due to Pandemic

Should BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC need to close due to a pandemic or viral outbreak such as COVID-19, we will take extreme measures to ensure your child's, Family's, and safety. These include, but are not limited to, masking, daily temperature checks, social distancing,

closures, a change in our operating hours, and a change of specific policies. Families will be responsible for their full tuition, but BVS will attempt a reduction if possible.

## **DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP**

### **General Procedure**

We open at 7 AM. Please do not drop off your child before your registered hours unless you receive approval from the teacher or Director. Parents are expected to accompany their children and check in with their child's teacher. The teacher will sign them into Brightwheel.

Please turn cars off during drop-off and pick-up times unless extreme heat or cold weather conditions exist.

If a quick drop-off is necessary, please utilize the drop-off lane. If there is no space, park in designated parking spaces, NOT in front of the dumpster.

We close at 5:00 pm; please allow enough time to arrive, sign your child out, and leave by closing time.

### **Door Code Entry Policy**

Upon enrollment, families are given the door code, which is changed each June. You may share the code with alternate pick-up family members and friends.

BVS asks that you not share this code with children, siblings, or anyone trying to enter the building. Direct them to call the BVS office or inform a staff member inside the building.

BVS takes the safety of your family, children, and our staff very seriously. Disregarding these policies will lead to immediate dismissal from the program.

### **Cell Phone Usage**

The times you spend in the center dropping off and picking up your child are the primary windows of time we have to communicate with you about your child. To make the best use of these opportunities and be attentive to your child and other children, we ask that you NOT use your cell phone while visiting the center.

### **Authorized & Unauthorized Pick-up**

Your child will only be released to you or those persons you have listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. If you want a person not identified as an Emergency and Release Contact to pick up your child, you must notify us in advance, in person or in writing. Your child will not be released without prior written authorization. The person picking up your child must show a picture ID as verification. Please notify your pick-up person of our policy.

We will need copies of any court-ordered custody agreements to safeguard your child. Without a custody agreement, we cannot prevent the release of your child to a parent.

If a child has not been picked up after closing and we have not heard from you, attempts will be made to contact you and those listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. Provisions will be made for someone to stay with your child as long as possible, but if we cannot reach you or a person listed

as an Emergency and Release Contact after one hour, we will call the local child protective services agency.

### Right to Refuse Child Release

We may refuse to release children if we have reasonable cause to suspect that any person picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way that may endanger the child. To protect your child, we may request that another adult listed as an Emergency and Release Contact pick up the child, or we may call the police to prevent potential harm to your child. Recurring situations may result in the release of your child from the program.

## PERSONAL BELONGINGS

### What to Bring

- **Infants:** Enough prepared bottles for a day's use, at least eight diapers per day, and at least two changes of clothes per day. All bottles must be prepared, labeled, and dated. Please ensure all personal items are labeled with your child's name.
- **Toddlers:** Diapers and wipes, at least two changes of clothes or more per day if going through the toilet training program.
- **Preschoolers:** at least two changes of clothes.

All items brought from home MUST be labeled with your child's name (e.g., clothes, bottles, diapers, crib sheet, blanket, etc.) to prevent misplacement or loss. We are not responsible for lost or damaged items. Sheets and soiled clothing will be sent home as needed for laundering and return to the center.

### Cubbies

Upon enrollment, each child will be assigned a cubby. Cubbies are labeled with your child's name and picture. Please check your child's cubby daily for items to be taken home. Our classroom cubbies hold essential items such as extra clothes, jackets, winter gear, a small backpack, and a small lunchbox. Space is limited, so please leave any additional items at home.

### Lost & Found

You can look for lost items in your child's classroom. Please note that we are not responsible for lost personal property.

### Toys from Home

We request that you do not allow your child to bring toys from home into the center.

## NUTRITION

### Foods Brought from Home

BVS asks that families provide lunchbox meals while their child is in attendance. The lunchbox should fit inside your child's cubby and come with an ice pack and any utensils they need. Our

meals during the school day are breakfast (if your child will be here between 7-8 am), two snacks, and a lunch. If you want your child to have milk with their lunch, please send it inside their lunchbox in a thermos. Please see the table below for ideas or inspiration to make your child's lunch.

<b>Good Lunch Box Suggestions for a Balanced, Nutritional Lunch.</b>	
Bean & cheese dip Tortilla chips (crackers) Tropical fruit salad Broccoli Milk	Chicken strips Whole Wheat Roll Orange wedges Cucumber Milk
Cheese quiche Fresh fruit cup Green Beans Milk	Whole Wheat Macaroni & Tuna Salad Apple Slices Carrots Milk

### Food Allergies

You must notify us in writing if your child has a food allergy. We will let the other families in your child's classroom know that someone in the classroom has a food allergy and not to bring in the specific food allergen(s).

Food allergies can be life-threatening, and each child with a food allergy should have an action plan for emergency care completed by the family physician.

If your child needs an epi-pen, it must be in the original package with the original prescription label.

### Mealtime

A caregiver trained in first aid for choking is present at all meals.

Staff will communicate the child's food and the amount with families of infants and children with special feeding needs or upon request. This information can be found within the child's daily sheet on the Bright Wheel App.

### Infant Feedings

Infant feedings follow these procedures:

- Infants will be held for bottle-feeding until they can hold their bottle. Bottles will never be propped.
- Infants are fed "on cue" to the extent possible (at least every 4 hours and usually not more than hourly) by a consistent caregiver/teacher.
- Breastfeeding is supported by providing a place for nursing mothers to feed their babies. Bottles containing breastmilk must be clearly labeled with the child's full name and the date the milk was expressed.
- Labels on all milk containers should be waterproof.
- Solid foods will only be introduced after the Family has tried the food at home to ensure no allergies.

- The prepared formula will be used within 2 hours of preparation and within one hour from when feeding begins.
- See below for CDC breast milk storage guidelines:

Type of Breast Milk	Storage Location and Temperatures		
	Countertop 77°F (25°C) or colder (room temperature)	Refrigerator 40°F (4°C)	Freezer 0°F (-18°C) or colder
Freshly Expressed or Pumped	Up to 4 Hours	Up to 4 Days	Within 6 months is best Up to 12 months is acceptable
Thawed, Previously Frozen	1-2 Hours	Up to 1 Day (24 hours)	NEVER refreeze human milk after it has been thawed
Leftover from a Feeding (baby did not finish the bottle)	Use within 2 hours after the baby is finished feeding		

### Breastfeeding Friendly Policy

Breastfeeding is widely acknowledged as the best way to nourish an infant, with many benefits for babies, their mothers, and the larger community. The staff at BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center recognize the role that child care providers play in helping mothers continue to breastfeed while their infants are in care, and we are committed to fully supporting breastfeeding mothers and their infants in the following ways.

- BVS welcomes mothers to nurse their babies or express milk at our center at any time during the day and provides them with a safe space to do so. Our nursing space is located in the lower-level kitchen. This space has a rocking glider, a side table for holding milk supplies, resources for new mothers, and a privacy-locking door. BVS also provides refrigerator and freezer space for storing breast milk in the pines room.
- We work with mothers to maximize opportunities for nursing babies and updating a child’s feeding schedule on the Brightwheel app to avoid any overlap or gaps in feedings.
- To ensure adequate time for end-of-day feedings with your baby, please plan to arrive at least a half hour before your pick-up time.
- We educate families in the correct handling of human milk, including proper storage times and techniques, recommended containers, and labeling.
- We train staff to feed breastfed babies appropriately. Infants are held while fed, and feedings are paced, led by the infant, and never rushed.
- BVS works with families to create individual feeding plans for each infant and continues

to regularly consult with families to update feeding plans.

- We feed infants on demand based on their hunger and safety cues.
- We support exclusively breastfed infants and will not offer any other foods without written permission from the family.
- BVS provides the family with resources and information about breastfeeding and support organizations, such as WIC and postpartum support. You will find this information in the nursing area located in the lower-level kitchen.
- We offer referrals to organizations or experts for breastfeeding support if desired.
- We train staff to support breastfeeding mothers, and continuing education is required in breastfeeding-related topics.
- BVS strives to normalize breastfeeding for children and families by offering pictures, books, toys, and educational materials related to breastfeeding.
- We promote breastfeeding as the optimal way to feed babies with all families and provide education on the benefits of breastfeeding and the importance of exclusive breastfeeding to families.
- BVS supports our breastfeeding employees by providing reasonable breaks and a private space to nurse or express milk.
- We communicate the above breastfeeding friendly policy with all staff enrolled families and prospective families.

### Children 24 Months and Older

- No child shall go more than 3 hours without a meal or snack.
- Children are encouraged to self-feed to the extent that they have the skills. Children are encouraged but not forced to eat a variety of foods.

## HEALTH

### Immunizations

According to the current schedule recommended by the U.S. Public Health Services and the American Academy of Pediatrics, immunization is required, [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org). Every August, we check with the Public Health Department or the American Academy of Pediatrics for updates on the recommended immunization schedule. Our state regulations regarding the attendance of children who are not immunized due to religious or medical reasons are followed.

Unimmunized children are excluded during outbreaks of vaccine-preventable illness as directed by the state health department. BVS will contact the family immediately to have the child picked up. The child will be asked to stay out of the program until the NH State Health Department deems it safe.

All caregivers, teachers, and staff must be current with all immunizations routinely recommended for adults by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

## Physicals

According to the current recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, routine physicals are required, [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org). A copy of your child's physical should be received before but no later than ten days after your child begins the program. Families are responsible for ensuring that their child's physicals are kept up-to-date and that a copy of the child's health assessment results is given to the program.

## Illness

We understand that it is difficult for a family member to leave or miss work, but you may not bring a sick child to the center to protect other children. The center has the right to refuse a child who appears ill. You will be called and asked to retrieve your child if your child exhibits any of the following symptoms. This is not an all-inclusive list. We will try to keep your child comfortable, but they will be excluded from all activities until you arrive.

- Illness that prevents your child from participating in activities.
- Illness that results in a greater need for care than we can provide.
- Illness that poses a risk of spreading harmful diseases to others.
- Fever (100°F or higher under the arm, 101°F or higher in the mouth, 102°F or higher in the ear) accompanied by other symptoms. Diarrhea – stools with blood or mucus and uncontrolled, unformed stools that cannot be contained in a diaper/underwear or toilet.
- Vomiting – green or bloody, and more than twice during the previous 24 hours.
- Mouth sores caused by drooling.
- Rash with fever unless a physician has determined it is not a contagious disease.
- Pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge until on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Impetigo until 24 hours after treatment.
- Strep throat until 24 hours after treatment.
- Head lice until treatment and all nits are removed.
- Scabies until 24 hours after treatment.
- Chickenpox until all lesions have dried and crusted.
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough) until five days of antibiotics.
- Hepatitis A virus is present until one week after administering immune globulin.
- Tuberculosis, until a health professional indicates the child is not infectious.
- Rubella, until six days after the rash appears.
- Mumps until five days after onset of parotid gland swelling.
- Measles until four days after the onset of rash.
- Has a physician or other health professionals written an order that the child is separated from other children.
- Positive COVID: Per DHHS, your child must stay out for 10 days after testing positive.

Children or staff who have been ill may return when:

- They are free of fever, vomiting, and diarrhea for 24 hours.
- They have been treated with an antibiotic for 24 hours.
- They can participate comfortably in all usual activities.
- They are free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling (not related to teething) unless:
  - The child's physician signs a note stating that the child's condition is not contagious, and a bandage can cover the areas without seepage or drainage through the dressing.

- If a child has a reportable infectious disease, a physician's note stating that the child is no longer contagious and may return to our care is required.

## Head Lice Policy

If your child has head lice, either nit (eggs) or live adult louse, we ask that you keep them home and treat them immediately. If we discover either at school, we will call to have your child picked up for treatment.

Your child may return to school after treatment and all nits (eggs) are removed.

## Medications

- (A) Our center does not administer prescription or over-the-counter medication to children unless we have the proper authorization forms.
- (B) All medications should be handed to a staff member with specific written instructions for administration. Medications should never be left in the child's cubby or with the child to administer independently. Our staff will ensure that the drug is recorded along with the directions and proceed to dispense the medication as directed.
- Prescription medications require a note signed by the Family and a written order from the child's physician. The label on the medicine meets this requirement. The medication must include your child's name, dosage, current date, frequency, and physician's name and phone number. All medications must be in the original container (you may request pharmacies fill your prescription in two labeled bottles). Please specify the dosage and time(s) to be administered for each medication.
  - Non-prescription medications require written permission and instructions signed by the child's primary care physician. The written authorization must include your child's name, dosage, current date, frequency, and medications in the original container. Non-prescription medication should not be administered for more than three days unless a written order by the physician is received.
- (C) Non-prescription topical ointments (e.g., diaper cream or teething gel), sunscreen, and insect repellent require a note signed by the Family. This note must specify the length of time the authorization is valid, which cannot exceed 12 months.

## Communicable Diseases

When an enrolled child or an employee of the center has a (suspected) reportable disease, our legal responsibility is to notify the local Board of Health or the Department of Public Health. We will inform families about exposure so children can receive preventive treatments. Included among the reportable illnesses are the following:

- Bacterial Meningitis
- Botulism
- Chicken Pox
- COVID Variants
- Diphtheria
- Haemophilus Influenza (invasive)
- Measles (including suspect)
- Meningococcal Infection (invasive)
- Poliomyelitis (including suspect)



- Rabies (human only)
- Rubella Congenital and Non-congenital (including suspect)
- Tetanus (including suspect)
- H1N1 Virus
- Any cluster/outbreak of illness
- Tuberculosis

## Cleanliness

Our staff works to ensure the cleanliness of the classrooms and bathrooms. They utilize the NAEYC Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfecting Table to influence the frequency and suggested methods to ensure our environment supports healthy practices. At BVS, we believe in using non-chemical cleaners and fragrance-free options. The center utilizes fragrance-free castile soap and water to clean the environment naturally. Our ventilation system also uses a Silver Ion Filter to help sanitize incoming air.

All our toys, materials, and supplies consist of non-toxic products.

## Tooth Brushing

Children over the age of one are encouraged to brush their teeth daily. Upon enrollment (or age eligibility), children will receive toothbrushes and covers. Children are provided with the opportunity to brush their teeth after “lunch.” For children over 24 months, organic toothpaste is used with written parental consent.

## SAFETY

### Clothing

Please dress your child in practical clothing that allows for freedom of movement and is appropriate for the weather. Your child will participate in various activities, including painting, outdoor play, sand, water, and other sensory activities. Our playground is an outdoor classroom, and daily programs are conducted outside whenever weather permits.

One concern is the risk of children’s clothing becoming entangled with climbing or sliding equipment, leading to choking or other serious harm. As a precaution, all drawstrings from children’s clothes should be removed.

Sandals and flip-flops are inappropriate for center play and make it difficult for your child to participate in some activities.

### Extreme Weather and Outdoor Play

Outdoor play will occur unless a heat or cold advisory occurs.

## Communal Water-Play

Communal, unsupervised water play is prohibited. Supervised children are permitted to engage in water play. Precautions ensure that communal water-play does not spread contagious infectious diseases.

## Injuries

Safety is a significant concern in childcare, so daily safety inspections are completed inside and outside the center area to prevent injuries. A trained caregiver will administer first aid if your child sustains a minor injury (e.g., scraped knee). You will be alerted through the Bright Wheel app and receive an incident report outlining the incident. You will be contacted immediately if the injury produces swelling or needs medical attention. Each classroom is equipped with a first aid kit that meets state regulations.

In a severe medical emergency, the child will be taken to the hospital immediately by ambulance while we try to contact you or emergency contact.

## Biting

Biting is a normal stage of development that is common among infants and toddlers – and sometimes even among preschoolers. It is something that most young children will try at least once.

When biting happens, our response will be to care for and help the child who was bitten and help the biter learn more appropriate behavior. Our focus will not be on punishment for biting but on effective behaviors that address the specific reason for biting.

Notes will be written to the Family of the child who was bitten and the biter's Family. We will work with the families to keep them informed and develop strategies for change.

## Respectful Behavior

All children and families will be treated with respect and dignity. In return, we expect the same from all of our families. We will not tolerate hostile or aggressive behavior. We reserve the right to ask you to control your behavior or remove your children from our care if this occurs.

In the event of difficulties arising between a family and BVS Staff, we will try to alleviate the problem with the following:

- 1. Open Communication:** We encourage all parties to express their interpretation, understanding, and feelings regarding any situation that has taken place openly. Families and Staff are encouraged to contact the Administration team members if they are uncomfortable in a situation or communication. We hope that all parties use a solution-driven approach.
- 2. Actively Listening:** We hope all parties actively listen and try to see the other's point of view in communications. By using active listening, individuals can connect with limited interruption and open communication.
- 3. Be open to Solutions:** Sometimes, compromise is necessary. BVS will make every effort to take family needs and perspectives. We ask that you allow us to help you understand our knowledge of child development in the process.
- 4. Our Ultimate Goal:** To agree on an option that benefits both sides to some extent. We want all parties to walk away with the underlying conflict resolved.

## Smoking

The poisons in second and third-hand smoke are especially harmful to infants and young children's developing bodies. Therefore, the indoor and outdoor center environments are non-smoking areas. The use of tobacco or vaping is prohibited on the center's premises.

## Prohibited Substances

The use of illegal drugs is prohibited on the center's premises. Possession of illegal substances or unauthorized, potentially toxic substances is not permitted.

Any adult who appears inebriated, intoxicated, or otherwise under the influence of mind-altering or polluting substances must immediately leave the premises.

## Child Custody

Without a court document, both parents/guardians have equal custody rights. We are legally bound to respect the wishes of the parent/guardian with legal custody based on a certified copy of the most recent court order, active restraining order, or court-ordered visitation schedule. Without court documentation, we will not accept the responsibility of deciding which parent/guardian has legal custody.

## BVS Administration and Court Appearance

If a member of the BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center staff is asked to appear in court as a witness by a family, the family must provide a written request detailing the court appearance. The family will reimburse BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center \$500 daily, plus travel expenses. All arrangements must comply with school policies.

## Suspected Child Abuse

We are required by law to report all observations of child abuse or neglect cases to the appropriate state authorities if we have reasonable cause to believe or suspect a child is suffering from abuse or neglect or is in danger of abuse or neglect, no matter where the abuse might have occurred. The child protective service agency will determine appropriate action and may investigate. It then becomes the agency's role to determine if the report is substantiated and to work with the Family to ensure the child's needs are met. Our center will fully cooperate with any investigation and maintain confidentiality concerning child abuse or neglect reports.

# EMERGENCIES

## Lost or Missing Child

In the unlikely event that a child becomes lost or separated from a group, all available staff will search for the child. If the child is not located, the Family and the police will be notified.

## Fire Safety

Our center is fully equipped with alarms, lights, rolling cribs, fire extinguishers,

Our fire evacuation plan is reviewed with the children and staff yearly.

### **Emergency Transportation**

Suppose your child needs to be transported due to a medical emergency. If no other authorized person can be contacted and the need for transportation is essential, an ambulance will be called for transport. A proper escort will accompany the child until a family member or emergency contact arrives.

## **CENTER POLICIES**

Our center policies are not included in this handbook but are reviewed yearly and updated as needed. They are available for review upon request to the center director.

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# Family Handbook Acknowledgement

Please sign this acknowledgment and return it to the center before enrollment.

This handbook may be updated occasionally, and notice will be provided as updates are implemented.

Thank you for acknowledging the policies and procedures we have established for the safety and welfare of all children in our care. We look forward to getting to know you and your family.

I have received the BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC Family Handbook, and if needed, I have reviewed the family handbook with a member of the BVS staff. My responsibility is to understand and familiarize myself with the Family Handbook and ask center management to clarify any policy, procedure, or information contained in the BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC Family Handbook that I do not understand.

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Recipient Signature

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Date

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Recipient Name

---

Center Staff Signature

---

Date

## FAMILY ACTIVITIES

We offer a variety of ways for families to participate in the growth and improvement of our program. We encourage families to take an active role.

**Family Events:** Several events bring our entire community together throughout the year. Watch for the announcements!

- Holiday Gatherings
- Annual Family Picnic
- Annual Art Show
- Fall Festival and Walk

**Classroom Activities:** Enjoy and help your child's class with these unique activities.

- Share a meal with your child.
- Chaperone field trips
- Read to children at arrival or pickup
- Volunteer in the classroom
- Donate requested items
- Welcome new families
- Contribute to class Potluck Meal
- Family Teacher conferences

**Family/Parent Workshops:** Our menu of family workshops changes annually. Below is a list of workshops we typically offer when requested. We try to provide these in the early evening or on Saturdays. See the monthly calendar for scheduled topics. We welcome requests for workshop topics.

- Positive Guidance and Loving Discipline
- Toilet Training
- Safety in the Home
- Childproofing Your Home
- Brain Development
- Nutrition and Exercise for Small Bodies
- Supporting Your Child in Times of Stress
- Food Allergies
- How to Prepare for a Conference
- Warning Signs for Developmental Delays
- Value of Reading to Your Child
- Everyday Math