



Parent Handbook

2023



Table of Contents

Section 1: Introduction

- 1.1 Welcome to BrightPath (p. 3)
- 1.2 Program Philosophy (p. 3)
- 1.3 Core Values (p. 4)
- 1.4 Accreditation (p. 4)
- 1.5 Curriculum (p. 4)

Section 2: General Policies

- 2.1 Days and Hours of Operation (p. 7)
- 2.2 Emergency and Inclement Weather Closing Procedure (p. 7)
- 2.3 Arrival and Departure (p. 8)
- 2.4 Absences (p. 8)
- 2.5 Clothing and Supplies (p. 8)
- 2.6 Toys and Electronic Devices from Home (p. 9)
- 2.7 Communication (p. 9)
 - 2.7a Our Customer Experience Team (p. 10)
 - 2.7b Parent Code of Conduct (p. 10)
- 2.8 Positive Guidance Policy (p. 11)
 - 2.8a Biting (p. 12)
 - 2.8b Dismissal (p. 12)
- 2.9 Babysitting (p. 12)
- 2.10 Nap/Rest Time (p. 13)
- 2.11 Outdoor and Water Play (p. 13)
- 2.12 Field Trips (p. 13)

Section 3: Health and Safety

- 3.1 Medical Records (p. 13)
- 3.2 Communicable Illnesses (p. 14)
- 3.3 BrightPath Licensed Health Care Professional (p. 14)
- 3.4 Medications (p. 15)
- 3.5 Meals (p. 15)
- 3.6 Food Allergies (p. 15)
- 3.7 Emergency Evacuation and Drills (p. 16)
- 3.8 Firearms Policy (p. 16)
- 3.9 Child Abuse and/or Maltreatment (p. 16)

Section 1: Introduction

1.1 Welcome to BrightPath

Choosing a childcare center for your child is one of the most difficult and important decisions that you will make. We are pleased that you have chosen us and will work very hard to provide the highest quality program for you and your child.

BrightPath is a program designed with your child in mind. Although children follow predictable stages of growth, socialization, and intellectual development, we feel that each child must be recognized as an individual shaping his own patterns, adjusting to his environment, choosing his interests, and jogging at his own pace. Our mission is simple - *to give every child the best start in life* - and we will assert 100% of our efforts each day to accomplish it.

The following material and information will hopefully provide you with a better perspective about our program, commitment, and philosophies. We look forward to working with you to provide the best program for your child.

1.2 Program Philosophy

We believe that young children learn through direct experience. Our objective is to provide an enriching environment in which children can gain these experiences while feeling safe and secure. Children attending BrightPath centers are cared for in a bright, safe, loving environment designed to be developmentally responsive. Materials are carefully chosen to provide stimulating and imaginative fun, expand intellectual skills, and allow for a wide range of physical ability.

One of the hallmarks of high-quality childcare is communication between educators and families. We place great emphasis on integrating the family into the educational process. You will be provided with a detailed overview of our curriculum, daily updates, and monthly newsletters. In addition to extensive informal interaction, formal Family Teacher Conferences are held three times per year. Families are always welcome in our classrooms to read a story, share a special interest, or just to visit.

One of the most critical components to accomplishing our mission and successfully implementing our philosophy is maintaining the highest quality staff possible and providing them with the resources and support to be successful. A child's first school experience is very special and important. For many, it will dictate how they view learning for many years to come. The staff at BrightPath understand how crucial the first years of life and learning are for young children. Our staff is made up of qualified and caring professionals who welcome the opportunity and challenge of educating your children. Ongoing professional development provides opportunities for learning and valuable exchanges of professional ideas and teaching strategies.

1.3 BrightPath Core Values

Care

We take care of the children entrusted to us and our dedicated staff. All are appreciated, and diversity is valued.

Service

We provide exceptional service and are integral to supporting families raising children.

Quality

We maintain the highest standards in care and safety and provide exceptional early years education.

Value

We provide outstanding value for our families.

1.4 Accreditation

BrightPath strongly supports and endorses the values and philosophy underlying The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). NAEYC accredited programs have demonstrated commitment to providing a high-quality program for young children and their families. While the accreditation process examines the total program, the greatest emphasis is placed on the quality of interactions between staff and children, and the developmental appropriateness of the curriculum.

With programming grounded in the principles of NAEYC, BrightPath maintains national standards of excellence in childcare and preschool programming. Families and the community are assured that BrightPath has met standards that exceed state licensing requirements. We are a comprehensive, professional childcare center complying with educational, developmental, environmental, and social criteria as required by NAEYC.

1.5 Curriculum

The BrightPath Curriculum, BeeCurious, regards children as competent and capable individuals, creating opportunities for curiosity and wonder to become a reality; resulting in children who explore, discover, create, adapt, persevere, collaborate, lead, learn. Educators will be intentional in all interactions and create engaging learning opportunities through connecting, listening, observing, asking questions, inviting, facilitating, and collaborating with children.

Educators will plan different activities based on the identified interests and inquiry leads of the children, organized according to the topics of building connections and creative discovery, physical literacy, STEM discovery, environmental stewardship, and global citizenship. Each day brings new learning opportunities as children are provided a framework within which they will make both self-directed and guided choices.

Each day, educators will also implement activities that have a standardized component with respect to the academic skills being targeted. These are organized under the topics of Math Discovery and Language and Literacy encompassing NYS Early Learning Guidelines and NYS Prekindergarten Learning Standards.

This approach to learning involves hands on exploration, guided questions, and meaningful conversations, documentation of meaningful learning moments to launch further learning, individual learning discoveries and scaffolded learning activating a child's curiosity.

Benefits of this approach include the blossoming of child engagement, increased motivation to learn, and development of a love of learning. Our approach also encourages responsibility, decreases negative behaviors, promotes thoughtful actions, encourages pursuits of goals, and empowers independence.

Infants (6 weeks - 18 months)

Our Infant program focuses on meeting each child's individual needs in a caring and trusting learning environment. Our educators understand that each child and family is unique, which is why we take the time to get to know your infant before they even start in our classrooms. We encourage families to visit with their child in our classrooms so that we can form a trusting bond with both the child and parent. This also helps us develop an understanding of each child's at-home habits and routines before they start so we can provide a smooth transition from home to school. We do not attempt to adapt the child to a preset routine or schedule. Each child is on their own eating, napping, and active schedule within our infant classrooms. While interacting with the children in their care, our educators are constantly making observations of the infant's skills and development to intentionally plan for their individualized developmental needs. Curriculum activities are tailored to each infant to best support their development physically, linguistically, cognitively, emotionally, and socially.

Toddlers (18 months - 3 years)

Our Toddler program supports process-oriented art and sensory experiences that promote the exploration of materials and the encouragement of creativity. Through these hands-on experiences, children learn different ways to manipulate materials and create products of self-expression. Our learning environments are designed to promote independence and freedom of choice while toddlers develop an understanding of the world around them. Children develop problem solving skills and an understanding of cause and effect through hands-on learning opportunities while also building language, motor, and social skills.

Preschool/PK3 (3 years - 4 years)

Geared toward the developmental milestones and curiosities of younger preschoolers, BrightPath's preschool program provides a variety of learning experiences based on our current theme of study and an array of play-based activities. Our curriculum is based on what our

children already know about each study topic and what they wonder or would like to learn. Our educators adapt the available classroom experiences based on their students' interests in order to scaffold and engage them in learning in new ways that are meaningful to them.

PreKindergarten/PK-4 (4 years - 5 years)

Developing literacy skills in preparation for Kindergarten is one of the primary goals of our Pre-K program. To meet this goal, we infuse print and literacy experiences into each learning center throughout our classrooms. We also have a dedicated literacy center in each Pre-K room, which provides children with the opportunity to play games with letters and their sounds and use sensory materials such as play dough or sand to write letters. We believe children learn best through play-based experiences, so to teach them these important skills, we incorporate activities such as silly stories with reoccurring letter sounds and we play games that include letter identification. When children are having fun, are interested in the activity, and are using multiple senses, they learn and retain more information. For this reason, we do not use dittos or worksheets in our Pre-K program as they have been found to be less engaging and fun for children.

The curriculum for the older Preschool children is based on two-week-long studies with topics including the changing seasons, community helpers, animal habitats and adaptations, transportation, and wacky science experiments. We always start a new study by asking the children what they already know about the new topic and what they want to learn. Our teachers adapt the curriculum using different learning experiences to meet the developmental needs and interests of each student.

We foster the students' independence by encouraging them to choose which centers they would like to explore during our center time. You will find that our teachers move throughout each area while children are playing to promote social skills, language development, and higher order thinking. During this time, our teachers are also making observations of their students' development and they are planning future challenges which will further their skills as they prepare for Kindergarten.

New York State Universal Pre-Kindergarten is offered as a separate program at various locations. The UPK program will follow the school district curriculum and calendar. If extended day care or holiday care is needed, please see the Director in your building.

School Age (Kindergarten - 11 years)

BrightPath's School-Age Program supports the development of children's emotional, social, physical, and cognitive skills by referring to the five pillars of character: Respect, Trustworthiness, Honesty, Caring, and Self-Expression. It is through the promotion of these core values that children develop skills they will utilize for their entire lives.

Our School-age Program provides children with a wide variety of both instructional and self-guided activities. Instructional activities may include outdoor games such as basketball, baseball, dodgeball, and soccer, and indoor activities such as board games, cooking projects,

and science activities. Our program focuses on inclusion in a non-competitive atmosphere with no requirements other than to try your best and have fun in the process! Each of our centers provides the opportunity for homework completion with the help of our teaching staff.

Section 2: General Information

Our BrightPath Parent Handbook is designed to acquaint you with our programming and present our policies including sick children policies, operation during holiday and weather days, and nutrition, health, and safety. Please be advised that policies may be amended at any time.

It is the policy of BrightPath to ensure opportunity without discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, citizenship, religion, gender, gender identity, marital status, age, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, genetic information, amnesty, Veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law. BrightPath prohibits any such discrimination or harassment.

2.1 Days and Hours of Operation

BrightPath centers open Monday-Friday between 6:00-6:30 am depending on location. All centers close at 6:00 p.m. Late fees will apply for pick-ups after 6:00 p.m.

The center is closed on the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Indigenous Peoples' Day (Professional Development Day)
- Thanksgiving Day and the day after
- Christmas Day

*Rich's Family Center will be open on Juneteenth and Indigenous Peoples' Day but close on Martin Luther King Jr Day and Good Friday in alignment with Rich Products Company calendar.

2.2 Emergency and Inclement Weather Closing Procedures

In consideration of the needs of our families, we make great efforts to remain open in almost all situations. Should it be deemed necessary to close the center, in the case of severe weather or other emergency situation, communication will be sent to families via BP Connect and notification will be posted on Channel 2 WGRZ and Channel 4 WIVB. Families are responsible for tuition payment in the unlikely event the center is closed on your scheduled day.

If your school district is closed, there will be no UPK classes.

Should the center need to close in the middle of the day, the school staff will attempt to reach the child's families first to arrange for pick up. Should the staff be unable to reach the families,

all emergency contacts will be called until pick-up arrangements may be made. Staff will notify the families or emergency contact person at the time of the call of the pickup location should the children need to be evacuated from the childcare center. Families or emergency contact persons should report directly to the alternate location if one is indicated.

2.3 Arrival and Departure

Upon arrival and departure at BrightPath, families are responsible for bringing their child(ren) to their designated classroom. No child will be dismissed without personal contact with a staff member. Families must make sure that a teacher is aware of the child's presence and departure before leaving the center.

2.4 Absences

If your child will not be attending on a scheduled day, please notify the center by 9:00 am. This will enable the center to maintain appropriate ratios and help the classroom educators effectively plan for the day. *After School only - if your child becomes ill or is dismissed from his/her school during the day, it is essential that BrightPath be notified. If your child is expected in the afternoon and we are not notified of an absence, the school and/or parents will be immediately contacted to determine his/her whereabouts.

If your child is ill, we request that you notify the Center Director not only of the absence, but also of the nature of the illness. This enables our staff to track illnesses which may occur at our school and also notify families in the case of a communicable illness. This information will be shared on a "need to know" basis and BrightPath will take all measures necessary to protect your child's confidentiality.

2.5 Clothing and Supplies

Children should be comfortable all day. Please dress your child in play clothes that are easily fastened for independence.

Sneakers or rubber-soled shoes must be worn at all times except in infant classrooms. Open toed sandals, jelly shoes, or flip-flops are against health and safety regulations.

Outerwear should be in accordance with the weather. Children will play outside as often as possible, including during the winter months; please be sure they are dressed in proper clothing.

All children should have one extra change of clothing left at the center at all times. Younger children may need more.

Please label all of your child's clothing, boots, hats, mittens, etc. BrightPath is not responsible for lost or stolen personal items.

In addition to appropriate outerwear and extra clothing please provide the following for your child on a daily basis -

Toddlers and preschool:

- Thin blanket and crib sheet
- Small comfort items like a stuffed animal
- Water bottle or sippy cup
- Diaper cream (as needed)
- Sunscreen (as needed)

Infants:

- Sleep sack and pack n play size crib sheet
- Pacifier (as needed)
- Diaper cream (as needed)
- Sunscreen (as needed)
- Bottles
- Infant food and cereal

2.6 Toys and Electronic Devices from Home

Due to issues regarding sharing and distraction, along with the risk of damage or loss, toys and electronic devices from home (unless medically required) are not permitted to be brought into school unless specifically requested by the classroom teacher for use as part of the curriculum. Families are responsible for enforcing this policy with their child and are encouraged to consult the classroom teacher if their child is having difficulty with this policy. Electronic devices include but are not limited to walkie-talkies, cell phones, tablets, smart watches, gaming devices, etc.

2.7 Communication

There are many ways families and BrightPath are partners. Communication builds that bridge that connects that family to the center. BrightPath will use electronic media to communicate daily summaries of each child's activities. This same media will also be used for sending photos and videos as well as classroom announcements. General documents (ex: lunch menus, curriculum summaries, etc.) will also be communicated via electronic media and posted on Family Boards outside of the classrooms.

In the event a family does not have access to email, or otherwise wishes to receive printed copies of communications, please communicate this with the Center Director.

Online family satisfaction questionnaires are sent annually. These are a very important source for us to maintain the quality of our programs and we urge you to participate when requested. Additionally, we seek your input at any time and urge you to communicate any concerns or problems to your Center Director or Assistant Center Director immediately. Should you feel this leaves your concerns or problems unresolved, please do not hesitate to email your Area Director.

2.7a Our Customer Experience Team

As part of our goal to achieve 100% customer satisfaction, we have a Customer Experience hotline and email address through which you can ask questions or share your comments or concerns if your Center Director has been unable to resolve them to your satisfaction. Our Customer Experience Coordinators will work with you to ensure that you are heard and understood, and if necessary, they will engage with our leadership team to make sure that your feedback is addressed and resolved. We also recognize how important it is to you that our teachers and administrators receive compliments, so we encourage you to share those as well so that we can personally acknowledge when they are doing a great job.

Our Customer Experience Coordinators are available during business hours, Monday - Friday. Give them a call at 1-800-423-8088 or email at USCustomerExperience@BrightPathKids.com

2.7b Parent Code of Conduct

BrightPath recognizes the important role parents play in helping us maintain a safe, nurturing, and community-focused environment in which all children can learn, play, and thrive. All parents, caregivers, and visitors of BrightPath collectively agree to act in a manner that emphasizes mutual respect, fairness, and equality. Individual needs and differences are recognized as being part of this collective process, and all individuals are required to work out all concerns and differences in a clear and reasonable manner. BrightPath will not tolerate incidents of expressed bias, discrimination, prejudice, or harassment. All parents, caregivers, and visitors must agree to abide by the following Code of Conduct.

Parents, guardians, and visitors agree to:

- Support a friendly and nurturing environment
- Maintain positive communication during interactions
- Follow the recommended procedures of addressing concerns
- Refrain from gossip and public criticism of BrightPath's employees, the children in BrightPath's care and BrightPath families. Discussion of concerns and issues will be with management and staff and not with other parents in the centre or via social media channels such as Facebook, X or personal blogs.

If any parent, guardian, or visitor fails to abide by the Code of Conduct the following procedure will be followed:

1. The concern and any inappropriate behavior will be documented and communicated to the Director.
2. The Director will set up a meeting with all parties involved to gather more information and determine if the Code of Conduct was violated.
3. The information will be used to reach a decision, and should it be determined that there was a violation of the Code of Conduct the Director will consult with the Area Director.
4. If a breach of the Code of Conduct is verified, the Director and/or Area Director have the right to terminate care immediately.

Communication and Addressing Concerns: Open and clear lines of communication between Directors, Supervisors, staff, and parents/caregivers are essential to creating the type of environment we value at BrightPath. As such, we require parents to communicate with staff in an open, non-confrontational manner when expressing concerns about their child or the program. We expect that parents will voice their concerns in a professional and polite manner as soon as they arise. We also expect that parents will not get involved in other parents' concerns unless they directly involve them or their child.

Threats and Threatening Behavior: We have a responsibility to provide a safe environment for our personnel, the children we serve, and other adults. Therefore, we have a zero-tolerance policy regarding threats or threatening behavior in our Centres, whether the threat comes from a child or an adult, and regardless of who is the target of the threat. This includes, but is not limited to, threats to do physical harm to someone or threats to retaliate in any way. Violation of this policy may result in immediate withdrawal from the Center.

Appropriate Language: Parents/guardians and their guests must use appropriate language while on our property. Foul language of any kind is not permitted on Centre grounds, which includes our parking lots and playgrounds.

Physical and Verbal Punishment of Children on Center Property: We do not allow parents/guardians to use any type of corporal punishment on any child, whether enrolled in our program or not, while on Center property. This includes parking lots, playground, and within the Center. Further, while verbal reprimands may be appropriate, it is not appropriate for a parent/guardian to verbally abuse their child while on our premises. Doing so can cause undue embarrassment and emotional distress to a child. Violations of this policy may result in immediate withdrawal from our program. Parents/guardians are also prohibited from addressing or disciplining a child that is not their own. If you have a concern about the behavior of another child at our Centre, please bring your concern to the Center Director who will address your concern and resolve it.

Professional Relationships: We ask our employees to maintain professional relationships at all times with families, even in their personal lives. Due to the professional conflict of interest created, BrightPath employees are:

- not permitted to communicate or socialize with parents/guardians through social media outlets, such as Facebook, Instagram and X
- not permitted to solicit or accept offers of personal childcare services (babysitting, nanny services etc.) with parents of the center.

2.8 Positive Guidance Policy

BrightPath will provide a safe, secure environment for your child. Young children grow strong in all developmental areas when they trust the adults who care for them. Reasonable limits for safe, reliable, consistent patterns of behavior and realistic expectations of children are essential elements for positive discipline. BrightPath staff believes children who are loved and appreciated are children who adjust to their surroundings with few discipline problems.

Identifying and praising positive behavior, while redirecting the negative is both productive and successful. Each classroom environment will be responsive to the age and developmental needs and interests of the children. Room arrangement, materials, toys, and activities will be specifically selected to create an atmosphere of cooperation and support for each group.

Should particular problems or concerns arise regarding behavior in the classroom, BrightPath will contact parents for an individual conference. If parents have concerns, please call the center to discuss solutions with your Center Director and educators.

2.8a Biting

BrightPath recognizes that biting is a developmentally appropriate behavior for children in the infant-toddler classrooms. Families with children in these classrooms should expect that their child may be bitten or will bite another child. The staff understands that families are concerned and can be upset when their child is involved in a biting incident. We ask that you remember this is a developmentally appropriate behavior, and that the staff is working to identify situations which provoke or elicit this behavior so it can be prevented in the future. The staff will not punish or harshly discipline children for biting behavior; they will redirect the children to different activities in separate areas of the classroom. Families are expected to work with staff to identify methods and strategies to curb this behavior. Children older than 3 years of age may occasionally be involved in a biting incident as well, however it is not as common as in the infant and toddler classrooms.

Families will be notified by Incident Report that a biting incident occurred during the day. The staff may not discuss with either family the identity or medical history of the other child involved in the incident. This information is kept confidential and cannot be disclosed. Children may be sent home for biting at the discretion of the Center Director.

2.8b Dismissal

BrightPath reserves the right to dismiss any child at any time, with or without cause. While we make every effort to work with our families and support all of the children in our care, children may be dismissed for specific, consistent behaviors causing danger to themselves or others including but not limited to:

- Inappropriate actions (i.e., excessive biting, punching, kicking, abusive language, destruction of materials/equipment, flight risk)
- Inattention to safety rules, indoors and outdoors
- Excessive arguing and/or fighting

2.9 Babysitting

A finder's fee of \$2,500 will be paid to BrightPath in the event you hire or employ a BrightPath employee while they are employed at BrightPath, or within 60 days of their last day of

employment at BrightPath, for other than incidental babysitting.

2.10 Nap/Rest Time

Infants nap each day according to their own schedules. Infants are placed on their backs to sleep in cribs. Should other sleeping arrangements be required, we must have written permission from your child's doctor. Toddlers and preschoolers take naps during the early afternoon. We provide cots for all children to rest on. Children may bring a small blanket and stuffed animal for rest time. Infants may only use sleep sacks. Please speak with your Center Director and your child's teacher if you have special requests regarding naptime.

2.11 Outdoor and Water Play

BrightPath recognizes the importance of regular outdoor gross motor opportunities. With this in mind, we attempt to provide children with daily experiences of outdoor play. All children are provided outdoor time twice daily, weather and air quality permitting.

Water play occurs on a regular basis in the summer months. This includes sprinklers, water tables, etc. Please ensure your child has a bathing suit and towel at the center so he/she is prepared for the fun! Children are not permitted to swim in pools except in the case of School Aged children who often swim at town pools in the summer. Written parent permission will be required for off-site swimming pool use.

2.12 Field Trips

On occasion, BrightPath centers will supplement our curriculum with off-site field trips. Written parent permission will be required for all students to attend field trips. BrightPath reserves the right to distinguish when a child may not be able to attend a field trip due to field trip capacity, scheduling needs and/or behavior.

Lancaster East Families only: BrightPath provides opportunities for its students to participate in intergenerational activities on the campus of Greenfields Continuing Care Facility. These activities include but are not limited to arts and crafts, music and movement, sensory walks, sing-a-longs, ice cream socials, etc. If your child is in attendance at the Lancaster East center on a day an activity is scheduled for his/her class, your child will be included in the event. If a parent does not want their child to participate in an event, written notice must be provided to the director prior to the activity date. For a complete list of scheduled activities, please see the director.

Section 3: Health and Safety

3.1 Medical Records

All children must have a medical form completed by a licensed medical professional before admittance into our program. Immunization records must be completed and up to date. Medical

forms must be updated annually, or as additional immunizations are received.

Children’s medical records will be kept on file in the center office. Families are responsible for furnishing updated records as required by NYS Department of Health and OCFS. If a child is out of compliance or does not have proper paperwork on file, the child will not be able to attend until proper documentation is received by the center.

3.2 Communicable Illnesses

If you have any doubts about your child’s health, please keep your child home and contact your doctor. We are a school for healthy children. A child who is not well does not benefit from our program and can adversely affect the health of the class. If your child becomes ill at school, we will contact you so that your child can be picked up.

List of symptoms of which we must ask you to keep your child at home:

- A temperature of 101 degrees or any fever accompanied by:
 - Cough with a deep breath
 - Earache or draining ear
 - Spasms of cough
 - Sore throat
- A rash of any kind until diagnosed, treated, or declared harmless by a physician
- Diarrhea and/or vomiting
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Bronchitis
- Strep throat
- Head lice
- If they are unable to participate in normal daily activities

If your child is exposed to any communicable disease at school, we will notify you as soon as possible. If your child is home with a communicable disease, please call the center and let us know so that we can send the appropriate notice to the other parents.

3.3 BrightPath Licensed Health Care Professional

A licensed Health Care Professional is on staff on a consultant basis and will review medical records on an annual basis. She is also available as need to discuss individual health care needs.

If your child has any special health needs, such as an allergy to food or products, asthma, seizures, etc. an “Individual Health Care Plan” needs to be completed in conjunction with your physician, BrightPath Health Care Professional, and the Director indicating step-by-step instructions regarding your child’s medical condition. Children may not begin in care until proper documentation is received.

3.4 Medications

Written instructions for prescription and non-prescription medications from your child's health care provider must be provided on a Written Medication Consent Form including emergency medications. Families are responsible for keeping consent forms up to date. Only those BrightPath employees that are MAT certified will be allowed to administer non-emergency medications such as Tylenol, antibiotics, etc. **(Not available at all locations.** See your Center Director).

All medication must be in its original container. Prescription medications must include the child's name, pharmacy, pharmacy phone number, the health care provider's name, date filled, name of medication, dosage frequency to be given, and date to discontinue if appropriate. Parents must provide medication dispensing tools such as medicine cups or dosing spoons. They must be labeled with the child's first and last name in permanent marker.

Parents are required to fill out a Written Consent Form for over-the-counter topical medications, including sunscreen and diaper ointment as needed.

3.4 Meals

BrightPath provides nutritious meals and snacks that have been approved by a registered dietician and/or CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program). Morning snack, lunch and an afternoon snack are served daily. Menus and times are posted in each center.

Breakfast will be served to children who arrive **prior** to 8:00 a.m. If your child will be arriving after 8:00 a.m., please be sure he/she has eaten.

Milk will be served with lunch and water will be served with snacks. Bottles are permitted in the infant program only.

All meals are served family style, with the children sitting at tables with educators to promote good manners, eating habits, and social skills. BrightPath curriculum focuses on developing healthy, well balanced eating habits.

3.5 Food Allergies

Food allergies are a growing concern with children across America. A major issue such as this one needs to be taken very seriously, and it has always been the policy of BrightPath to make the safety and well-being of our children a top priority.

BrightPath is a **nut-free facility**. BrightPath will not serve any foods containing peanuts or tree nuts. This includes peanut butter & jelly sandwiches, peanut snack mix, peanut butter cookies, etc. No classroom projects that involve peanut butter will be conducted, such as pinecone bird feeders.

Due to high food allergies and sense of classroom community, families are prohibited from

bringing any outside food (i.e., donuts, yogurt, cereal bars, etc.) into the center for their child to eat individually at the classroom table.

Because many children have food/ingredient allergies, we must ask families not to send in homemade treats for celebrations. Our staff closely monitor all store-bought food that is brought into the classroom and take every precaution to keep children with allergies from coming in contact with those foods. If you would like to provide a non-food special treat for the day, your child may bring in stickers, bubbles, coloring pages, or another small item to share with his or her friends. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

If your child has a food or ingredient allergy, please contact your Center Director and refer to the BrightPath Food Allergy Action Plan.

3.6 Emergency Evacuation and Drills

BrightPath conducts monthly fire and emergency evacuation drills. Families, staff, and children will not be made aware of the drill dates or times.

BrightPath also conducts Shelter in Place and Lockdown drills biannually. Families will be made aware of the date and time of these drills via BP Connect.

In the event of a real fire or emergency in which the center must be evacuated, **all** children and staff members will be routed to a safe, off-site location. Please check with your Center Director for the designated location.

3.7 Firearm Policy

Firearms and weapons are prohibited at BrightPath. BrightPath centers will post signs providing notification of such prohibition as required by the Office of Children and Family Services.

3.8 Child Abuse and/or Maltreatment

As childcare providers, we are mandated by law to report any suspicions of child abuse or neglect to the Erie County Child Protective Services via the NYS Mandated Reporter Hotline.