



## **PARENT HANDBOOK**

### Our Mission

We are dedicated to nurturing an environment for all, by fostering healthy habits, engaging activities, and a loving atmosphere that forms the foundation for success. While our unwavering dedication aims to cultivate not only childcare, but the seeds of potential within each child and team member, laying the groundwork for future generations of successful, compassionate individuals.

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# ABOUT CULTIVATE CHILDCARE

## **Forms**

All required forms must be completed, signed, and returned to Cultivate Childcare before any child can be enrolled. Immunizations must be current, and documentation must be given to the director. Cultivate Childcare will keep copies of the immunizations and will refuse service to children whose immunizations are not current. We do not accept immunization exemptions.

## **Enrollment Fee**

To secure your spot you will be required to pay a non-refundable \$100 registration fee. That registration fee holds your spot for up to 30 days past your original enrollment date on the top right corner of the enrollment packet or the date that you are offered a spot.

## **To the Child**

The goal of Cultivate Childcare Nursery Care and Prep is to provide children with an environment that is both loving and positive. Cultivate Childcare will create an enriching curriculum that emphasizes the emotional, physical, social, and intellectual needs of each child.

## **To the Parent**

Cultivate Childcare Nursery Care and Prep wants parents and guardians to be aware of and discuss their children's needs and concerns, because it is extremely important to us that parents know what their children are doing throughout the day and to know why.

## **Confidentiality**

Any information pertaining to your child and all our records will be kept confidential.

## **Communication**

It is very important to keep the lines of communication open between the staff and parents of the children attending Cultivate Childcare Nursery Care and Prep. Parents will have access to an app called Brightwheel which will allow them to monitor their children's activities including: Bottles, Diaper Changes, Naps, and Miscellaneous activities. Parents will have the ability to message teachers directly through the app. Parents can also contact the staff using the daycare phone and email.

### **Our Objective**

Learning through play and exploration is encouraged within the Cultivate Childcare approach to early childhood development. Children are active learners and are given unlimited opportunities to explore and problem solve in their daily work and play. Curriculum topics and projects emerge from the interest of the children. Teachers carefully listen, observe, and document children's work and growth.

### **Hours of Operation:**

6:30 a.m.- 6:00 p.m. Monday - Friday

Closed on Federal Holidays and the day after Thanksgiving.

### **Drop Off Times**

If your child is not in the building by 9:30 AM and there has not been any communication to our staff by 9:30AM we will assume that they are not going to be attending for the day and their spot will be forfeited when we adjust staffing at 10:00AM.

We understand that there are certain reasons that a child will not be dropped off at a normal time (Ex. A doctor's appt) but all of these late drop offs need to be communicated and approved by the director or assistant director. If you have communicated a late drop off time with us please have your child at the center within 30 Minutes of that time to avoid their spot for the day being forfeited.

If you pick a child after 3:00, we ask that they remain out of the center for the remainder of the day as we are adjusting our ratios to get our staff out.

### **Late Departures**

Our closing time is 6:00 p.m. All children must be picked up by this time. If you are late, a charge of \$10.00 per minute per child will be assessed after 6:00 p.m. for the first five minutes of being late and \$20.00 per minute thereafter. The fee will be assessed up to the minute that the parent and child are in the building. Children cannot return to the center until this fee is paid.

### **Ages**

We welcome children ages 6 weeks through 5 years (or until they attend Kindergarten). Additional ages may be added for summer and afterschool programs.

### **Licensing Rule**

We will report to the Department of Social Services through the State of SD any changes of circumstances which may affect ability to comply with licensing rules.

# OUR STAFF

## Program Requirements

Child care workers must be 18 years of age and supervised by a director/program planner. Secondary child care workers must be at least 14 years of age and must work under direct and constant supervision of an adult. The person who plans and implements the program must have an appropriate degree and experience. Volunteers used to fill staff member positions will meet the requirements of the position.

Neither Staff member nor Volunteer will:

- Have substantiated report of child abuse or neglect
- Have felony conviction within the past 5 years
- Have a name located on the sex offender registry
  - A sex offense
  - A crime of violence
  - A crime against children

## Training

Training of staff is ongoing and designed with the care of children as the primary focus. Staff are required to participate in an initial orientation program, CPR training, and 10 continuing child care education hours each year.

## Staff Development

Staff members are provided, at no charge, ongoing education that is approved and documented through national, state, and local agencies to ensure cutting edge skills and development of passion for success that is carried forward to your child.

## Staff Identification

All staff members are easily identifiable by logoed name tags or logoed t-shirts, daycare type attire, or the adults in the classroom. All staff members are fully accessible for any questions that you may have.

## **Investigation of Staff**

Every employee is required to submit to a pre-employment Investigation as a security measure for your child's protection. Cultivate Childcare and the state of South Dakota Department of Social Services requires that all employees are screened with:

1. A central registry screening with screens for any substantiated investigations of child abuse or neglect by Child Protection Services
2. Fingerprint check conducted by the department of criminal investigation

### **Neither staff member nor volunteer will:**

**-have a substantiated report of child abuse and neglect**

**-have a felony conviction within the past 5 years**

**-have a name located on the Sex Offender Registry**

## **Therapy Dog**

Beau is a Golden Doodle, and he is currently Good Canine Certified and is used as a therapy dog for the center. Golden Doodles are known to be great therapy dogs because of their intelligence, calm personality, and they are hypoallergenic.

Therapy dogs in the classroom provide both physical and emotional health benefits for the students. According to one study published by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), having a dog present in the classroom promotes a positive mood and provides significant anti-stress effects on the body.

One other amazing benefit of having a therapy dog in the classroom is the effect on their social and emotional development. Loving and lovable, dogs are friendly companions and good listeners who make no judgments. This leads to a reduction in negative behavior and aggression and can even help them develop a greater capacity for empathy.

If you would like to have your child opt out of interactions with Beau, please let a manager know.

If your child has an interaction with Beau, the teachers will instruct them to wash their hands after they are finished. We also do not allow Beau to be around the kids while they are eating or in the food prep areas.

# FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENT

## **Payment**

Payment must be made by automatic withdrawal. Payment will be processed each Friday for the following week's services. A payment that is late will be subject to a finance charge of \$10.00 per day that it is late as well as a Non-Sufficient Funds fee of \$35. If payments are consistently late, you may be asked to leave the center.

## **State Billing**

We accept state assistance. The family will be required to cover any amount that is incurred over what the center is reimbursed by the state. A weekly amount will be calculated based on the certificate sent to the centers. At the end of the month, the amount the state paid will be reconciled. If the parent paid tuition and the state reimbursement does not cover the full tuition charged, the parents will be sent a one-time payment through Brightwheel. The payment will be due within 30 days.

## **Rate Increase**

Due to the increase in cost of business we reserve the right to increase our rates. You will be alerted of this increase a minimum two weeks before it is in effect.

## **Absences**

No credit will be given for absences. The tuition is paying to secure the spot rather than the service. You will not be able to make up for absences. This includes part time schedules switching their day off. If you would like to bring your child on their registered day off, a tuition charge for a drop-in day at the rate of \$80.00 will be applied regardless of how many days that week they have attended. This will include absence due to illness or exposure to illness that the state deems a requirement to be exempt from the program.

We request that you notify the center by 9:30 AM if your child will be absent or arriving late. Failure to communicate any changes by 9:30 AM may result in the forfeiture of your child's spot for the day.



### **Sibling Discount**

Families that have multiple children enrolled in the center full time will qualify for a 5% discount on their tuition bill each week. The center reserves the right to terminate this discount at any time.

### **Summer Schedule**

In the event that a family would like to reduce their enrollment from full time to part time for the summer, they can request to move to a 2 day a week schedule. The family will communicate with the director requesting what days of the week they would like to reserve for the duration of the summer via Brightwheel Admin Messaging. The management team will take all of the requests and do their best to accommodate the requested schedules. Any summer schedule changes would need to be done for a minimum of 6 weeks. In order to go back to a full-time schedule, the parents must give a two-week notice.

### **Termination/Withdrawal**

A two-week notice must be given to the director prior to withdrawing a child from Cultivate Childcare. This allows the child and the center to prepare for a change in attendance. Center attendees may be asked to withdraw from the program for the following reasons, list is not fully inclusive:

1. Non-payment of fees
2. Children's pattern of behavior, which is dangerous to others or that, requires special attention, which the staff is unable to provide
3. Lack of compliance, by parents, to center policy
4. Failure to provide updated immunization records within 30 days of immunization due date
5. Refusal to pick up a sick child within a reasonable amount of time after notification by center staff

# SECURITY AND SAFETY

## **Open Door Policy**

You are always welcome to come by and observe your child's progress and interaction with the staff and other children. Please remember that your child's behavior may change during the visit.

## **Pick-up Authorization**

Cultivate Childcare Nursery Care and Prep require that each child must have a pick-up authorization completed in writing dictating who may and may not pick up your child. This can be written in their enrollment packet or sent as a message through Brightwheel. For your child's safety, we will be very strict with this regulation. All authorization changes must be made prior to pick up and the person picking up your child will need to show a photo I.D.

## **Fire, Tornado & Lock Down Safety**

Cultivate Childcare will conduct at least 2 fire, tornado, and lock down drills a year. All staff will be trained in evacuation procedures and will escort the students from their classroom to the nearest exit. In the event of a tornado, the children will be escorted from their classroom to one of the interior walls and be made to retain the appropriate position until told otherwise. Evacuation plans are posted in the center.

An Emergency Preparedness Plan is available upon request.

## **Alcohol/Drug Policy**

Children will not be allowed to be picked up by parents that have been drinking alcohol or otherwise seem impaired. You will be asked to call for a ride or a cab will be called at the parent's expense. If this occurs after hours late fees will apply.

## **Building Owner "Hold Harmless Provision"**

Parent acknowledges that the owner of the building in which Cultivate Childcare operates, and such owners' agents and employees, have no part in the operation of Cultivate Childcare and Parent hereby releases the owner, its agents and employees from and against any loss, damage, or liability incurred by Parent and/or Parent's child(ren), arising out of Cultivate Childcare's operation of the daycare facilities.

## **Reporting Child Abuse/Neglect**

On or before the first day at Cultivate Childcare, all staff members and volunteers are required to read and sign a statement which defines child abuse/neglect and states reporting requirements. Any staff member who feels that a child at Cultivate Childcare may have been abused/neglected is required by law to immediately report to the Director, the Department of Social Services, or the law enforcement agency. The Director must then ensure that the alleged abuse/neglect will not recur, pending investigation. The director will be assigning the staff member to a non-child-caring role or by temporarily suspending him or her until the investigation has been completed. Continued employability of any staff member or volunteer involved in an incident or child abuse/neglect will be evaluated.

## **Shaken Baby Syndrome**

Shaken Baby Syndrome is caused by the brain moving back and forth inside the skull and being bumped, bruised or twisted. Cultivate Childcare Daycare requires any care provider, employee, or substitute who provides care and supervision to children, to be trained in recognizing what shaken baby syndrome is, how it is caused, what the symptoms of the syndrome are, and how to prevent shaken baby syndrome. To meet this, training on this topic is provided through the orientation.

## **Transportation**

Our drivers are licensed and undergo rigorous background checks. They are trained in safety procedures and must follow all traffic laws. Ensuring the safety of children is our top priority, and we maintain appropriate child-to-adult ratios during transportation to guarantee their well-being.

Children will use age-appropriate restraints, and parents may be asked to provide car seats if needed. Our vehicles are regularly inspected and equipped with safety features. Emergency procedures and open communication with parents are in place to handle any unforeseen incidents.

Parents are informed about field trips in advance, and staff supervise them. We are committed to complying with all laws and regulations governing transportation and child safety. This policy is regularly reviewed and updated to ensure its effectiveness and adherence to legal requirements.

By following this policy, we are dedicated to providing a secure and comfortable transportation experience for the children in our care.

# SPECIAL DAYS

## Holidays

No credit will be given for scheduled holidays. Holidays do not affect weekly tuition charges. The center is closed for federal holidays and the day after Thanksgiving. Those days include:

New Years Day - Martin Luther King Jr. Day - Presidents Day  
Memorial Day - Juneteenth - Independence Day  
Labor Day - Native American Day - Veterans Day  
Thanksgiving - The Friday after Thanksgiving - Christmas Eve  
Christmas Day

In addition we will be open New Year's Eve: 6:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

If the scheduled holiday lands on Saturday, we will be closed on the Friday before the holiday. If the scheduled holiday lands on Sunday, the center will be closed the following Monday.

## Celebrating Birthdays

On your child's birthday, you may bring peanut free treats, but we will try to keep the party to a minimum.

## **Inclement Weather**

At Cultivate Childcare NurseryCare and Prep, the safety and well-being of our staff and families are of paramount importance. We understand that inclement weather conditions can impact our ability to operate safely. Therefore, we have established the following inclement weather policy:

### **Closure Criteria:**

**Blizzard Warning:** If a blizzard warning is issued for Minnehaha and/or Lincoln County, the center will be closed. We prioritize safety and encourage families and staff to stay home to avoid hazardous conditions.

**Windchill Warning:** If a windchill warning is in effect and is expected to last past 10:00 am the center will also be closed. Traveling under such conditions can be extremely dangerous.

**No Travel Advised:** If a "no travel advised" notice is issued for Minnehaha and/or Lincoln County, the center will be closed. This guidance from local authorities is a strong indicator of hazardous travel conditions and the potential risks involved.

**Management's Discretion:** Management reserves the right to close the center for other inclement weather circumstances if they determine that it is in the best interest of the safety of our staff and families.

In the event of a closure due to inclement weather, notifications will be sent out promptly through Brightwheel messaging and alerts. It is essential for families and staff to monitor their notifications to stay informed about any closures.

If the center is closed due to circumstances beyond our control, such as heavy snow or icy conditions, tuition fees will remain the same. Our commitment to ensuring the safety of everyone involved remains unwavering.

In cases where a blizzard warning or a "no travel advised" notice is implemented after the center has already opened, we will make the decision to close within two hours of the posted time of the warning or notice. The safety of our community is our priority, and we will act swiftly to ensure everyone's well-being.

# NUTRITION

## Food and Allergic Reactions

Cultivate Childcare requires staff to be trained in the area of food and allergic reactions. We require all parents to complete an enrollment application and if there are allergies, to list those allergies. When a parent lists any allergy, they are required to complete a document that lists the allergy, what the allergy is related to (food, pets, etc) ; what the signs and symptoms of distress are if the child have an allergic reaction; and what the process is for assisting the child should they be in distress do to a reaction. Each staff person who is associated with this child (teacher, cook, etc.) is provided an overview of the situation, an overview of the allergy document and the instructions for preventing a reaction; and instructions for handling a reaction.

## Menu Information

If your child has an allergy to a food, a form must be filled out and a copy will be placed in their file. If your child has any other nutritional needs, please notify a staff member in writing and we will do our best to see it is met. However, we will not be able to make exceptions for food dislikes. Sack lunches/snacks can be brought from home and will be stored in the refrigerator until lunchtime.

The following meals will be served:

Morning Snack

(7:00-9:00)

Lunch

(11:00-12:30)

Afternoon Snack

(2:00-3:00)

Our meals are provided via catering service. We will post a monthly menu outside our kitchen facility. Parents can request a copy of the menu from any staff members. Meals will be balanced according to the current food guide recommendations.

Formula/breast milk and baby food for infants and toddlers must be provided by parents/guardians. We will not accept open containers of baby food upon arrival. Milk and water is provided by the center only in "sippy" cups for infants and toddlers. All infants will be held during bottle feedings unless they are able to hold their bottle unassisted. Infants are fed on demand based on their schedule. Parents will be required to provide bottles for infants. We request that you provide 3 bottles per child.

# CURRICULUM

## **Program 6 weeks- 5 years**

Our safe, nurturing environment will stimulate emotional development and provide security. Our curriculum is designed to provide developmentally appropriate activities to meet each child's physical, intellectual, and social needs. Parents will be updated with their child's activities via Brightwheel.

### **Physical Fitness**

Cultivate Childcare will provide age appropriate physical activities to children from trained staff throughout the day. This will include practicing fine and gross motor skills and balancing it with periods of rest.

### **Toys from Home**

Our center is equipped with many educational and fun toys for all the children. To prevent children's toys from getting lost or broken, we ask that all toys be left at home. If your child brings a toy from home the center is not responsible for it being damaged or lost.

### **Supplies to Bring From Home**

Required: Diapers, Wipes, Formula, Bottles, Baby Food if needed

Optional Items: Sleep Sac, Blankets, Pacifier supports each child's growth and well-being.

### **Daily Schedules**

Parents can find the daily schedule for each room hanging on the bulletin board in each room.

# DISCIPLINE

## **Discipline**

A positive attitude will always be our guide when correcting inappropriate behavior. As much as we would like to operate perfectly, behavior problems will arise. To help deter this we use the approach to redirect to another activity. When setting limits, we will be consistent, firm, and most of all fair. Discipline will never utilize humiliating or frightening techniques. Discipline will also never be peer administered.

## **Biting Policy**

Biting is the most common problem with children ages infant through 3 years. Experts attribute this to the lack of ability to verbalize. Biting is generally recognized as being developmental in all children and cannot be completely avoided. Due to health issues, parents are told that their children bite. It is the policy of Cultivate Childcare that there will be no disclosure of the individual children's name. The purpose of the following biting policy is not to discipline, but rather to modify and improve the behavior. Please understand that each incident may be handled in a slightly different manner, as each child is unique and special with different needs and abilities.

It is the goal of Cultivate Childcare to provide the safest and best possible environment for the positive development and growth of each child.

## **The Biter**

### **First Biting Incident:**

- The biter is given an age-appropriate chewy instrument to bite on and told in a firm manner, "No bite - biting hurts!" in an assertive voice.
- Parents of both parties will be notified by incident report.

### **Second Biting Incident:**

- In addition to the above, the biter will be placed away from the group for an individual activity for one minute per age of child.



**Additional Biting Incidents may result in:**

1. The parents of the biter may be called in addition to the written incident report.
  - The parents may be requested to participate in a mandatory on-site meeting with staff within 24 hours.
  - The parents may be required to contact their family physician for medical evaluation to rule out non-development or behavioral reasons for chronic biting.
  - The biter will be moved to a different classroom.
  - As a last resort, the chronic biter may be expelled from Cultivate Childcare, especially where there is no improvement and/or parents support and input.

**Treatment of Victim**

1. The area bitten will be carefully examined for breakage of skin.
2. The area will be washed with soap and water.
3. The victim will be given lots of tender loving care and support.
4. The parents will be notified by an incident report.

# HEALTH ISSUES

## When Not to Bring Your Child to Cultivate Childcare

1. Fever of 100.5 degrees or above within the last 24 hours
2. Diarrhea-more than 3 stools in one hour or within the last 24 hours
3. Vomiting-within the last 24 hours
4. Pink Eye-child must be out of Cultivate Childcare until 24 hours after first treatment
5. Chicken Pox-7 days from onset and pox have been scabbed over
6. Head Lice- until child and the home have been treated and no more bugs are found
7. Any other communicable disease
8. A sore throat as indicated by refusing food or drink
9. When your child is requiring one on one attention
10. When your child has any open sores caused by a rash

## When your Child Will be Sent Home from Cultivate Childcare

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>1. Develops a fever of 100.5 degrees or above</b>                     | <b>11. Measles</b>                        |
| <b>2. Vomiting</b>   | <b>12. Mumps</b>                          |
| <b>3. Diarrhea- 3 or more stools in an hour</b>                          | <b>13. Pin Worms</b>                      |
| <b>4. Symptoms of Pink Eye</b>   | <b>14. Ringworm</b>                       |
| <b>5. Symptoms of Chickenpox</b>   | <b>15. RSV</b>                            |
| <b>6. Head Lice</b>  | <b>16. Scarlet Fever</b>                  |
| <b>7. Any other symptoms we feel needs to be examined by a physician</b> | <b>17. Shingles</b>                       |
| <b>8. Hand, foot and mouth disease</b>                                   | <b>18. Oral Thrush</b>                    |
| <b>9. Impetigo</b>   | <b>19. COVID-19</b>                       |
| <b>10. Croup</b>   | <b>20. Requiring one on one Attention</b> |

Parents may not bring their children back to Cultivate Childcare before 24 hours without a signed statement from a physician indicating that your child is not contagious to the other children. All communicable diseases will be reported to the Department of Health. If children come to Cultivate Childcare and develop an illness that makes them unable to participate in daily activities, the parents will be called and required to pick them up. Children need to be removed within one hour from the time of the call. If we are unable to reach them, we will call the emergency contact. Children that are ill will be separated from the other children.

Picking up your child- Must be picked up 1 hour. If it is past then you will be required to pay a late fee.

## **Health Requirements**

Happy, healthy children are an important part of our program. We are required by the state licensing regulations to have an accurate immunization record on file. We ask that state required shots be fulfilled within 6 months of their due date. Cultivate Childcare may refuse service if immunizations are not current, and Immunization exemptions are not accepted. If a child is behind on immunizations the parents will need to provide a note from a physician stating that the child is in the process of catching up on their vaccinations. Cultivate Childcare will follow state guidelines for the reporting of contagious diseases.

## **Medications**

Medications will only be administered with the written consent of the parent or guardian. All medications will be placed in a container out of the reach of children. A medication sheet must be on file and signed by the parent/guardian. Medications must be in the original container and marked properly with the child's name, date, dose, and physician prescribing the medication. All medication must be given to the Child Development Specialist responsible for your child. This includes over-the-counter. We are unable to keep a center supply of medication on hand for possible illness (Tylenol, cough medications, etc).

## **Disposal of Bio-Contaminants**

Cultivate Childcare Daycare requires all staff to be trained in the area of Universal/Standard Precautions are guidelines issued to prevent disease transmission for people in all walks of life, including childcare providers. The Universal/Standard Precautions require person to have a barrier between any infectious substance and the workers skin, eyes, nose, and mouth Cultivate Childcare Daycare requires any care provider, employee, or substitute who provides care and supervision to children to follow the U/S precautions recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in handling any fluid that might contain blood or other body fluids. U/S Precautions require treating all blood and fluids that may contain blood or blood products as potentially infectious.

I certify that I have read, understand, and agree with the contents of the Parent Handbook.

**Parent Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_