



# ***PARENT INFORMATION HANDBOOK***

*Revised December 2023*

*Infant, Toddler and Pre-School  
0 months – 5 years*

*University of Waterloo*

*519 - 888 - 4567, ext. 84975 or*

*519 – 888 - 4975*

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[www.brightstartsearlylearning.ca](http://www.brightstartsearlylearning.ca)



# **Welcome to Bright Starts Co-operative Early Learning Centre Inc.**



Bright Starts Co-operative Early Learning Centre Inc. opened January of 2014, providing high quality early learning and child care to the University of Waterloo faculty, staff, students and the surrounding Region. Located on the North Campus of the University of Waterloo, behind the Optometry building at the corner of Columbia St. and Hagey Blvd., Bright Starts CELC is an amalgamation of three of UW's long standing child care centres: Hildegard Marsden Nursery, Klemmer Farmhouse and Paintin' Place. In October 2009, the University of Waterloo announced a commitment to build a new child care facility on campus. Families from all three centres agreed to amalgamate. The amalgamation was needed to support the development of improved child care facilities and increasing demand for more child care spaces. The three child care centres elected amongst its members, three individuals from each centre to create a Board of Directors for this new facility, followed by representation from UW's Faculty, Staff and Grad Associations. Bright Starts became incorporated under the Ontario Co-operative Corporations Act in July 2011. Bright Starts CELC was able to successfully open as a result of much planning, collaboration and support of many wonderful partners and Bright Start's volunteers.

Bright Starts CELC has a licensed capacity to care for 165 children aged 0 months - 5 years, with an additional 26 spaces for Kindergarten children. Our programs are fully licensed and inspected by the Ministry of Education, Child Care Quality Assurance & Licensing Early Learning Division, the Region of Waterloo Public Health Services, and the Waterloo Regional Fire Department.

## ***Program Statement and Philosophy***

Bright Starts Co-operative Early Learning Centre Inc. strives to promote a positive, safe, loving, nurturing and home-like atmosphere where the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of our children is of the utmost importance. We encourage mutual respect, patience and creativity in an inclusive environment while viewing children as competent, capable, curious and rich in potential. Using *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years (2014)* to guide our programing and pedagogy. We provide a positive framework to support our children and families in an environment that promotes belonging, engagement, expression, and well-being.

Bright Starts CELC believes in supporting positive and responsive interactions among our children, parents, staff, and educators. We encourage a partnership with parents where relationships are respectful of structure, culture, values, language and knowledge. Integrating parent and family presence in a meaningful and authentic way throughout all elements of our program is important to us. We value parent's unique perspectives and welcome their skills, talents, traditions, and experiences.

We view children as individuals who bring their unique ideas, knowledge, and experiences about their physical and social world to the classroom. Children begin to make sense of their world from the moment they are born. They are active and social learners who are influenced by family, gender,

culture and previous experience. We are committed to developing children who love and believe in themselves by nurturing self-confidence and encouraging children to communicate and interact in a positive way. We encourage children to articulate their needs to others and help them to appreciate and empathize with the needs of those around them.

We appreciate that children have a variety of learning styles, methods of understanding and constructing knowledge. For this reason, we plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported. We believe that allowing children to actively explore, investigate, take manageable risks, and engage in creative problem-solving, is critical for their physical and mental health and well-being. Through our Emergent approach to play-based learning, we believe that children learn best by doing; exploring the world, and interacting with adults and peers. Their explorations require flexibility and inventiveness. Children react to the outcomes of their investigations and create strategies for discovery. Play is their platform for inquiry and exploration. Through observation, reflection and provocations, our educators create a positive, relevant and meaningful learning environment that takes into account each child's unique needs and interests. They provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences both indoors and outdoors, during active play, rest and quiet times. Educators ask questions and build on children's interests and ideas to foster knowledge, understanding, and a sense of wonder about their physical and social world. In partnership with parents, we encourage children to become aware of their bodies for self-care, nutritious foods, physical activities and rest, in addition to their need for social and emotional engagement. Through these approaches we balance opportunities for children to interact and communicate in positive ways; to support their abilities to overcome challenges, make choices, problem solve, and self-regulate their emotions and behaviours.

In our on-going commitment to the health, safety, nutrition, and well-being of each child, we provide:

- A clean and safe environment;
- Meal plans based on Canada's Food Guide recommendations;
- Access to drinking water throughout the day;
- Limited transitions and unnecessary disruptions to play;
- Safe play environments that reduce hazards that may cause injury.

Our educators familiarize themselves with all information concerning medical conditions & medication requirements, exceptionalities, allergies, food restrictions, and parental preferences in respect to diet, exercise, and rest time.

We appreciate how important it is for both parents and educators to have regular information about children's experiences at home, in the community, and in our early learning environment. Communication is paramount; we encourage two-way dialogue and use various tools for communication between parents and educators. It's important to us to create and maintain a trusting, respectful bond between parents, staff, and children to provide optimal care for each child. By partnering with parents through ongoing communication, we ensure interconnected, positive support for every child.

Involving community partners is an instrumental part of creating a positive and supportive environment. We engage in constructive relationships with community agencies; they provide resources, information, and classroom support to better meet the needs of our children, families, and

educators. We work collaboratively with our local universities, community colleges, and high schools to offer opportunities for student training and experiences. Partnering with these institutions provides us with additional knowledge and resources to further support our program. We also welcome volunteers from the community as well.

Our dedicated Early Childhood Educators are all registered through the [College of Early Childhood Educators](#) and adhere to a [Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice](#). Our educators are trained in First Aid and CPR and are carefully selected and screened to provide a safe, secure, healthy and inviting environment. With a sustained commitment to ensuring a quality program, we support, encourage and provide opportunities for our educators to participate in continuous professional learning. Investing in our educators in order to remain current in knowledge, skills and professional values is important to us. Through ongoing reflection of their practice, they identify ways in which they can grow professionally.

Bright Starts CELC actively participates in ongoing assessments of our environment to measure the impact of the strategies set out in our program statement. These strategies include, but are not limited to:

- On-going two-way communication with parents;
- Daily program documentation;
- Observations and reflections;
- Monthly team discussions and reflections;
- Semi-monthly one-on-one meetings between employees and managers;
- Annual environmental reviews and observations;
- Annual parent surveys & annual work environment surveys;
- Staff performance reviews with goal setting;
- Staff and team meetings that focus on professional development and support.

Goals are developed from this information to support continuous, quality improvements within our program.

It is essential for us to provide a nurturing environment with experiences that encourage all of our children to reach their full potential. Our program at Bright Starts CELC reflects our philosophy and program statement. To ensure consistent implementation across Bright Starts CELC, all staff, students, and volunteers review the program statement prior to interacting with children. At a minimum, this statement will be reviewed annually by staff, educators, and the Board of Directors. Any modifications will be reviewed by educators to ensure timely implementation.

This Program Statement highlights the guiding principles for our practice. It is continuously brought to life through vibrant prominence in our program.

### ***Guiding and Supporting Documents***

[Minister's Policy Statement on Programming and Pedagogy](#)  
[How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years \(2014\)](#)  
[Think, Feel, Act: Lessons from Research About Young Children](#)  
[Early Learning for Every Child Today](#)

## ***Prohibited Practices***

Young children benefit from an affirming approach that encourages positive interactions with other children and adults, rather than from a negative or punitive approach to managing unwanted behaviour. Rather than setting out practices to be used to manage children's behaviour, Bright Starts CELC has set out in our program statement how we will support warm, positive, supportive interactions and relationships between children, families, staff and the community.

The provision of prohibited practices forbids corporal punishment and other harmful disciplinary practices to protect the emotional and physical well-being of children. These practices are never permitted at Bright Starts CELC.

***No employee, student or volunteer shall permit a child receiving care at Bright Starts CELC to experience any of the following while under the care of Bright Starts CELC:***

- (a)** corporal punishment of the child;
- (b)** physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
- (c)** locking the exits of the child care centre for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures;
- (d)** use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
- (e)** depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
- (f)** inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

**All children will be supervised by an adult at all times; no child will be supervised by a person less than 18 years of age. Students and volunteers do not have unsupervised access to the children in attendance at Bright Starts CELC nor can they be counted in the staff:child ratio.**

## ***Our Board of Directors***

Our Board of Directors plays an important role at Bright Starts CELC. The Board provides representation to ensure various points of view are considered when policies are established/changed, fees and the annual budget are prepared, as well as discussing strategic planning for future needs of the centre. The Board is responsible for working with the Executive Director in the overall operation of the centre, in cooperation with all Members. All positions are elected by the General Membership. The Board of Directors consists of at least two-thirds of its members to be parents of children in care at Bright Starts, and are affiliates or spouses of affiliates of the University of Waterloo (faculty, staff, post-doctoral researchers and students). Employees and Members of the corporation may only attend meetings of the Board of Directors by invitation or prior approval from the Board. Meetings occur generally once per month with elections occurring annually. Notice of all meetings will be posted in advance. Agenda items may be submitted to the President, Secretary or Executive Director at least one week prior to the meeting.

Board committees meet on a causal, as-needed basis; our committees consist of but are not limited to:

- Finance
- Personnel and Policy
- Health and Safety
- Nominating
- Communication
- Fundraising

Parents who are interested in learning more about this aspect of Bright Starts CELC, our policies and procedures manual, by-laws and constitution are available upon request from the Executive Director. We encourage all parents to participate whenever possible.

## ***Days and Hours of Operation***

Bright Starts CELC is open 51 weeks per year, Monday to Friday 7:30AM – 5:30PM

Bright Starts CELC closes when the University of Waterloo is closed. This includes but is not limited to the following observed holidays: New Year's Day, Family Day, Good Friday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Civic Holiday, Labour Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas and Boxing Day. We close for approximately 1 week during the December/January holiday break. Specific dates will be announced well in advance of the closure. We also close for 1 or 2 additional days to enable our staff to participate in professional development during the working workday. These dates will be determined annually, and parents will be given sufficient notice prior to the centre closing.

## ***Wait List***

A Wait List Policy has been developed to provide a clear overview of how Bright Starts CELC determines the order in which children on the wait list are offered admission into the program and how wait list information is managed.

## **Wait List Policy**

In accordance with the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 parents/caregivers are provided with their child's wait list status when requested, and are able to review the centre's Wait List Policy at any time. Bright Starts CELC's Wait List Policy will be made available in the Parent Handbook and on the website.

### **Applying to the Centre**

- Parents/caregivers must apply to the wait list by submitting an online application through [OneList Waterloo Region](#).
- Through the online application, some details regarding the program are available for parents (including the type of care available: infant, toddler, preschool, half day, full days). Once the application has been completed on OneList, an application date is automatically generated in the online system which will help to determine your child's status on the wait list at the centre. In addition, once the application is completed an email notification is generated to the centre wait list administrator, advising them a new application has been completed. The wait list administrator will login to view the application and will send out a welcome email to the parent confirming that the application was received, and an idea of the potential wait list time, within 1 week of receipt of the application.
- Parents are able to login to their online application at any time to view their current applications, update any information, or withdraw their application. There is no fee charged to parents to apply to the wait list and parents/caregivers can apply to up to 7 child care programs online.

### **Waitlist Management**

- The centre wait list administrator reviews wait list information online through the OneList Administration site on an ongoing basis. Any conversations with parents/caregivers on the wait list are noted in the comments section of the wait list application within the online Administration site for reference purposes.
- In the event that a parent/caregiver inquires about the status of their application on the wait list, administrators will provide information about the program and spaces that are available, or may be coming available, but personal information about wait list applications is never disclosed to maintain privacy and confidentiality for all families.
- As child care spaces become available at the centre, administrators follow up with parents to offer child care spaces in priority order. Bright Starts CELC offers priority rankings for admission as follows in priority order of oldest application date, considering the age of the child and the child care space that is available: Priority 1 - Bright Starts CELC staff with children waiting; Priority 2 - families with siblings already at the centre; Priority 3 - University of Waterloo affiliates (faculty, staff, post-doctoral researchers and students); and, Priority 4 - surrounding community of the Region of Waterloo.
  - Once a parent has been contacted regarding an available space, parents are asked to provide confirmation that they want to register within 48-72 hrs. Contact with a parent regarding an available position will be made by both phone and email.

- If a response is not received from a parent within the specified time frame, the administrator may remove the application on the OneList Administration site (*which moves the 'active' application to 'inactive'*).
  - Families that respond after the specified time has expired, and confirm that they want to register, would have their application moved back to 'active' on the OneList Administration site, with their original application date reinstated , and be placed in priority for the next available space, if the original space offered has been filled.
  - In the event that a parent or caregiver confirms that care is no longer required or just requests to be removed from the wait list, administrators can remove the application, noting the conversation with the parent in the comments section.
- Once enrolment forms are received and a start date is in place for the child, the child is 'placed' in the program and removed from the 'active' wait list online within the OneList Administration site.
  - Administrators follow up with applications that are older than one year to inquire if care is still required. If no response is received, a second follow up advises the parent that their application to the wait list has been removed.

### ***Enrollment, Registration and Withdrawal***

Bright Starts CELC provides care for the children of affiliates of the University of Waterloo (faculty, staff, post-doctoral researchers and students) and residents of the Region of Waterloo.

Upon registration and prior to your child's enrollment, a \$200.00 non base registration fee is due along with first month's base fees. The non base registration fee is refundable upon withdrawal from the program provided Bright Starts CELC is given 60 days written notice prior to the child's termination date. There are a number of registration forms to be completed. Children are not permitted to start in our program until all forms have been filled out in their entirety and returned. It is important that these records be kept up-to-date at all times. Should your contact numbers change, it is imperative to inform us immediately in order for us to contact you in case of emergency.

We have an open door policy and invite parents to drop by at any time. We also encourage parents to join us for play visits prior to their child's commencement at the centre. Spending as much time as possible during your child's transition aids both you and your child. These visits provide you with a day-to-day view of our program. It also provides an opportunity for you and your child to get to know the educators and help your child become familiar with his/her new environment.

When circumstances make it necessary to withdraw from Bright Starts CELC for any reason, please complete our [Withdrawal Form](#); **two months written notice** from the final date of attendance is required. Payment is required for the full monthly fee for the month in which the final date of attendance occurs. There are no pro-rated fees for partial months. If you are unable to provide this notice, your \$200.00 non base registration fee will be forfeited. With notice, you may choose to donate your non base registration fee or have it deducted from your final monthly base fee. If planning to



withdraw your child for a long-term leave of absence, i.e. maternity leave, sabbatical, two months' notice is still required. Should you be requiring care following your leave, it is the responsibility of the parent to place the child(ren) back on the [OneList](#) Wait System. For short-term leave of absences, i.e. one - two months' vacation, full fees will still be due for each month your child is away. This will guarantee your spot upon your return. If you wish to request a change to your child's program status i.e. full-time to part-time or visa versa, two months written notice is also required. Please keep in mind, change in program status requests cannot be guaranteed; however, every effort will be made to accommodate your child as soon as possible.

## ***Fees***

Bright Starts CELC uses a personally approved payment method of collecting monthly child care fees. Payments will automatically be withdrawn from an authorized bank account on the first day of every month. One month's notice will be given prior to any adjustments made to increase or decrease monthly child care fee payments. Parents are required to provide written notice to the centre's Executive Director or Manager regarding any changes to account information by the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the preceding month to allow time for processing. Accounts with non-sufficient funds will be charged a \$25.00 non base bank handling fee. If fees are not remitted by the first day of the month they are due, a \$25.00 non base late fee will apply. A further \$25.00 non base late fee will apply for every additional week payment is not received. If reimbursement of the outstanding fees is not received by the first day of the next month, child care may be denied unless special arrangements have been made with the Executive Director or Manager.

Bright Starts CELC's current [Fee Schedule](#) (linked) including base and non base fees is available in the office as well as on our website. **The full monthly fee is withdrawn regardless of the number of days in the month, absenteeism, vacation, inclement weather, childcare closure and/or statutory holidays.**

A non base **membership fee of \$50.00 per family** will be charged annually and added on to your regular monthly fees. As Bright Starts CELC is a co-operative child care centre, this membership fee provides you with voting privileges within the membership and allows you opportunity to join our Board of Directors. Notice will be given to families one month prior to the collection of the fee as per our pre-authorized payment agreement.

Families who are interested in learning about fee subsidies available through the [Region of Waterloo](#) may contact the Subsidy Office at 519-883-2200 or visit the Region's website. Information about bursaries for University of Waterloo undergraduate and graduate students is available through the following links [Student Awards Office](#) and [Graduate Studies Office](#).

Income tax receipts will be issued in February for the previous year's fees.

## ***Canada-Wide Early Learning & Child Care System***

In 2022, Ontario signed the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (CWELCC) with the Government of Canada. Significant new federal investments through this agreement will support: fee reductions, increasing the number of licensed child care spaces, addressing barriers to providing inclusive child care, and the early childhood workforce.

On September 7, 2022 Bright Starts CELC was approved to participate in the CWELCC program and on October 1, 2022 our child care fees were reduced by 25% retroactive to April 1, 2022. Regular monthly fees will be reduced an additional 25% beginning January 1, 2023. Further fee reductions are anticipated until fees are reduced to \$10 per day in 2025. Funding for the CWELCC System is provided by the Federal government and is being delivered through a partnership between the Ministry of Education and the Region of Waterloo.

### ***Safe Arrival and Dismissal***

To support the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care at Bright Starts CELC by providing staff, students and volunteers with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for ensuring the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care, including what steps are to be taken when a child does not arrive at the centre as expected, as well as steps to follow to ensure the safe dismissal of children.

It is important that parents communicate with Bright Starts CELC if their child will be absent/arriving later than usual or picked up by someone other than their parent/guardian.

Where a child does not arrive at Bright Starts CELC and a parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off (e.g., sent/left a voice message or advised the closing staff at pick-up), program staff must inform a Team Supervisor, Child Care Manager or Director and shall commence contacting the child's parent/guardian no later than 2 hours after their regularly expected time of arrival. Program staff shall attempt to contact the parents/guardians by phone, email or sending a message through our programs communication app, (Lillio). Program staff are to attempt to make contact through all methods/leave messages.

Parents/guardians are required to accompany their children into the centre, assist them with removal of outerwear, and bring them into their classroom. Do not send your child into the centre alone. If someone other than a parent/guardian and/or emergency contacts listed on your child's vital information form are to pick up your child from the centre, it is mandatory we receive prior written notice. Bright Starts CELC's staff will not allow children to leave the premises with someone they do not know or for whom written authorization has not been provided. If you must change your pick-up arrangements on short notice, you must notify the staff either in person when you drop off your child, sending a message through Lillio or later by telephone if circumstances change. Please notify the Executive Director or Manager in writing of any permanent change in arrangements for pick of your child(ren). Anyone with whom the staff are not familiar (including parents) or have not met will be required to present proper photo identification before the child will be released. When parents are

new to the centre, it is common to be asked to see your ID. Please be patient with the staff as they get to know your family.

Please review our full [Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy](#) (linked) to familiarize yourself with our procedures under the following circumstances:

- Accepting a child into care;
- Where a child has not arrived in care as expected;
- Releasing a child from care;
- Where a child has not been picked up as expected (before centre closes);
- Where a child has not been picked up and the centre is closed;

Bright Starts CELC's hours of operation are from 7:30am-5:30pm. At the end of the day, it is important to arrive prior to 5:30pm to pick up your child to ensure that everyone is able to leave for the evening on time. We understand our work days are busy and sometimes it can be difficult to be here by 5:30pm. Please remember that our staff have families, too, and commitments after their work day has ended. Parent ID cards will not permit access to the building after 5:30pm. If you are unable to access the building, then you are considered late. Non base late fees are charged at the rate of \$5.00 for the first 1-5 minutes a parent is late, followed by \$1.00/minute thereafter. You will be expected to make this payment in cash directly to the staff member who stayed late with your child. At 5:40 p.m. we will call your contact numbers to reach you. If we still cannot make contact with you, we will try your emergency contact numbers. After 30 minutes, an hourly rate will be charged at the Executive Director or Manager's discretion. All efforts will be made to contact the parents and/or emergency contact person. If the above-mentioned are still unreachable within 30 minutes of the centre closing, Family and Children's Services will be called.

### ***Ministry of Education***

Ministry of Education and Licensing information is available on the bulletin board in the front foyer. It is required by the Ministry to post our current Operating License as well as post any Serious Occurrences that take place within the child care centre. Serious Occurrences are posted on a "Serious Occurrence Notification Form." This form is posted for 10 days following an incident and provides information about the incident for parents to review.

For further information about the Ministry of Education and child care licensing please visit the [Ministry's Website](#).

### ***Inclement Weather and Emergency Centre Closures/Evacuation***

Bright Starts CELC may find it necessary to close the centre due to severe inclement weather when normal operation would pose a danger to our staff, children and their families. **If the University of Waterloo does not close** due to severe weather, Bright Starts CELC will still close if either the Public or Separate School Board closes. ***This does not include the Public or Separate School Board's decision to close due to frigid temperatures of -35 degrees Celsius or below.*** Bright starts CELC will remain open during School Board



closures due to frigid temperatures, as frigid temperatures do not affect the operations of Bright Starts CELC or travel for the majority of our participants and employees. The final decision to close the centre is the responsibility of the Executive Director in consultation with the President of our Board of Directors or his/her designate.

Due to unforeseen circumstances, i.e. storm damage, power outages, equipment failure, disaster in the nearby area or other temporary problems, Bright Starts may be instructed to close or evacuate by other regulatory bodies such as the Ministry of Education, the Region of Waterloo, local Fire or Police Department. Bright Starts CELC has an Emergency Management Policy and should such an event occur, parents, guardians or emergency contacts will be informed and asked to pick up their child(ren) as soon as possible. Please assist the staff by ensuring your contact information is up-to-date. If necessary, the children will be evacuated to an alternate facility where you may pick them up. **Our emergency shelter is the Columbia Ice Field located on Hagey Blvd across from the School of Optometry.**

### ***Communication Procedure for Centre Closures***

Where possible, a decision to close the centre will be made by 6:30am. The closure will be communicated through The University of Waterloo's [Daily Bulletin](#) and The Region's local news station [City News Kitchener](#). Bright Starts CELC's telephone service and [website](#) will also be updated to reflect the closure with additional communication sent to families via email and phone.



### ***Health and Illness Information***

All children, staff, students and volunteers must have up-to-date immunization records. Anyone not immunized against one or more diseases must have written exemption. Parents must regularly update their child's immunization records.

Communication is very important. Staff and parents need to share health information daily in order to minimize illnesses, germs, and diseases. Staff will make general observations about the child's health and well-being and record it on their daily attendance sheet and log book.

Bright Starts CELC's [Health and Illness policy](#) and the following information is consistent with the recommendations of Waterloo Regional Public Health. Children with fever, cough, shortness of breath, loss of taste/smell, joint pain, muscle aches, extreme tiredness, sore throat, runny/congested nose, headache, abdominal pain, pink eye, or loss of appetite should stay home until they do not have a fever and symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours unless the symptoms are related to a known cause or condition. 48 hours for nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea. The Ministry of Health offers a [general self-assessment](#) screening tool as a resource for families. Please seek assessment from a health care provider if needed.

***The following are our illness procedures:***

**DIARRHEA and VOMITING:** If a child has one episode of diarrhea or vomiting within a 24 hour period/while in attendance at Bright Starts CELC, the staff will watch for other signs of illness and will inform the parents of the episode at the end of the day. If other signs of illness are present or a child has two or more episodes of diarrhea and/or vomiting within a 24 hour period the child will be separated from his/her group and the parents will be contacted and asked to come pick up their child. Parents are required to keep their child at home until they have not had an episode for **48hrs**. In the event of an enteric (gastrointestinal) outbreak, the exclusion period may be increased.

**FEVER:** A fever is a sign of underlying illness, not an illness itself. How a child acts is the best indicator as to how they are feeling. If the child is showing signs of irritability, listlessness, drowsiness, or not able to fully participate in the program, the parents will be contacted and asked to pick up their child. A child will be separated from his/her group when the fever is accompanied by other symptoms (e.g., nausea, vomiting, rash).

Bright Starts CELC uses the armpit (axillary) method to check for fever in children while in attendance, but it's not as accurate as a rectal temperature. If an axillary temperature does not show a fever but a child feels warm and seems unwell, parents will be informed ([Caring for Kids website, Canadian Pediatric Society](#)). The above information combined with the following degrees show the procedure staff will follow when determining if a child should remain in care at Bright Starts CELC.

- 36.5°C to 37.5°C (97.8°F to 99.5°F) - Normal using the axillary method
- 38.3°C (101°F) Low grade temperature - Call parents so they are aware their child has a fever
- 38.9°C (102°F) Call parents to prepare for pick up or come now (parents choice)
- **39.4°C (103°F) Pick up IMMEDIATELY** - Call emergency contacts if not able to get a hold of parents

**Parents should not send their child to the centre if they have a fever prior to their attendance, nor should they administer medications to mask a fever/illness in order for their child to attend.**

**COMMUNICABLE DISEASES:** Bright Starts is required to post for parents and report to the local Health Department if a "person has or may have a reportable disease or may be infected with an agent of a communicable disease." Each communicable disease has its own guidelines for reportability/exclusion/treatment; parents are encouraged to ask if they are unsure whether or not their child should be excluded from the program.

Should you suspect your child has a communicable disease, please seek guidance from our child care staff regarding whether or not your child should be excluded from the program.

Please view our full [Health and Illness Policy](#).

## **Medications**

Parents are strongly advised to give prescribed medications to children prior to daily attendance if they can be administered without affecting their daily treatment schedule.

When it is necessary for a drug or medication to be given while in attendance, the medication must be administered to a child from its original container, as supplied by the pharmacist. The container or package must be clearly labeled with the child's name, the name of the drug or medication, the dosage of the drug or medication, the date of purchase and expiration and instruction for storage and administration.

All drugs/medications shall be accompanied by written authorization and instruction signed by the parent ([Administration of Prescribed and Non-Prescribed Medications Form](#)). Medication Forms must be accurately completed by the parent. If the above mentioned are not completed, the medication cannot be administered.

Bright Starts CELC will not administer non-prescription drugs. Non-prescription drugs should not be administered prior to a child's attendance to reduce a fever or mask other symptoms to keep a child at the centre when they should potentially be at home or visiting a doctor. Parents will be advised to seek professional medical care if symptoms persist which affect their child's day. An exception may be made for fever medication to be kept on file and administered if it is accompanied by a doctor's note for an already diagnosed ailment i.e. febrile seizures, (drugs will not be administered by weight unless accompanied by written authorization from a physician). If a child has fever medication on file it may be administered with parental consent by an assigned staff for a one-time emergency use, i.e. in order to reduce the risk of a febrile seizure until parents arrive (parents must be on their way). **Parents are not to leave any medication in their child's cubby.**



## **Weather Restrictions**

The Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014

requires licensed child care providers to ensure that their programs are arranged so that each child who receives child care spends time outdoors for at least two hours each day, weather permitting, unless a physician or parent of the child advises otherwise in writing. During the summer months, peak sun times are avoided when scheduling outdoor time.

Due to inclement weather, children may not be able to participate in or may have limited time for outdoor play.

***The following weather situations may occur and influence outdoor time:***

- rain/thunderstorm
- a smog advisory is in effect
- temperature higher than 32 degrees with or without the humidex
- temperature below -15 with or without the wind chill (-10 for infants)

## ***Sleep/Rest***

Bright Starts CELC understands while not all children need a mid-day nap, young children benefit from periods of quiet relaxation to balance their active play. Some children who are tired may take a relatively long time to relax and sleep, while others only require a short rest period. Children's needs may also change from day to

day or week to week. The need for rest and sleep varies greatly at different ages and even among children of the same age; however, rest is an important part of the day for all children.

Bright Starts CELC will meet the needs of every child individually while taking into consideration consultation with parents regarding their child's sleeping arrangements at the time of enrollment and at any other appropriate time, such as at transitions between programs or upon a parent's request.

For children under 12 months of age, in accordance with the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, O. Reg. 137/15 s. 33.1 (1) will be placed to sleep in a manner consistent with the recommendations as set out in the document "[Joint Statement on Safe Sleep: Preventing Sudden Infant Death in Canada.](#)" published by the Public Health Agency of Canada unless the child's physician recommends otherwise in writing.

Please view our full [Sleep Policy](#).

## ***Toys, Clothing and Personal Possessions***



We understand the necessity for each child to feel safe and secure in his/her environment and sometimes that may include a special toy or blanket. Please be sure to clearly label all your child's personal belongings with their name.

Clothing worn by your child should be suitable for play. We encourage children to wear smocks over their clothing during sensory and craft activities, however, children are active and they still find ways to get messy. Please be sure your child has a change of clothes every day including pants, shirt, underwear, and socks. All children will have a personal cubby where they can keep their personal belongings; part-time children may need to share a cubby. All children spend time outdoors for at least two hours each day, weather permitting, (unless a physician or parent of the child advises otherwise in writing). Our Canadian weather can at times be very unpredictable. Please be sure your child has appropriate outdoor clothing including, sun hat, splash pants, sweater or light jacket, and rain boots during the spring and summer months. Winter hats, 2 pairs of mittens, jacket, snow pants and snow boots should be provided for the fall, winter and early spring months.

## ***Field Trips***

Field trips are an important part of Bright Starts CELC. A consent form for excursions on campus i.e. walks to the lake and visits to the University labs, museums or gymnasium at Columbia Ice Fields are provided in the enrollment package. For any special excursions i.e. splash pad, which require preparation, cost to the parent or bus transportation, separate and additional consent will be required. Notice of these special trips will be provided well in advance. Children not ordinarily scheduled to be in attendance on the date a field trip is planned are more than welcome to participate, provided they are accompanied by an adult. Parent volunteers are welcomed and often necessary for special excursions. If you are interested in volunteering to help on a field trip, please let your child's teachers know. Parent volunteers will be required to provide a criminal record check with vulnerable sector check. Please note that infant and toddler programs will not have planned field trips where motor vehicle transportation is necessary.



## ***Meals and Snacks***

All children are served fresh, nutritious lunches and two snacks daily. Our kitchen employees have successfully obtained certificates in the Safe Food Handling Program through the Public Health Department. They maintain

a clean and safe environment and ensure the kitchen meets all Health Department Regulations. Our Kitchen Supervisor is responsible for the overall operation of the kitchen, including, meal planning and preparation, food purchase and storage, and meal and snack service. The Child Care and Early Years Act requires child care centres to follow the recommendations in Health Canada's document Canada's Food Guide. Please note that if a child has food allergies or food restrictions we will accommodate the best we can (e.g. offer a vegetarian option). However, parents may be required to provide appropriate food alternatives as necessary (e.g. soy milk, etc.).

We are an anaphylactic aware centre. Due to severe anaphylactic food allergies, it is very important that we are made aware of foods being brought into the centre. In order to eliminate the confusion regarding which products are safe, we are asking parents not to bring treats into the centre to share with other children. For children who bring their own food due to dietary needs, please speak to the kitchen staff to learn what anaphylactic allergies are present in your child's classroom.

The last Friday of every month is cupcake/birthday cake Friday where we celebrate all the children's birthdays in that month. Parents are always welcome and encouraged to join us for our special birthday celebrations. We understand that a birthday is a special and exciting time for a child; if your child would like to bring something to share with their friends, then a non-edible treat (e.g. stickers) that could go home with the children at the end of the day would be welcome. Thank you for your co-operation and understanding.





## ***Communication App***

Lillio is an electronic communication tool used by our educators to inform parents about their child's day.

Programs can expect:

- to receive a daily report containing information about how much your child ate and how long your child slept
- a summary of daily activities or special events
- a weekly individual photo of your child that illustrates a developmental milestone or a captured photo that describes what your child is doing in that particular moment

Please note the needs of our children come first and the dynamics of each program can vary daily and will influence the amount of time educators have to send photos and respond to emails through Lillio. It is preferred that messages requiring responses are communicated through the main office.

## ***Bright Starts CELC Building Access Control***

All exterior doors are enabled with authorized access control. Upon completion of registration, parents will be provided with secured access identification (ID) card and asked to sign our Secure Access Agreement allowing access to Bright Starts CELC through the main door only. A non-refundable non base fee of \$10.00 per ID card is charged. All ID cards must be returned upon withdrawal from the centre. Any lost ID cards must be reported to the office immediately and can be replaced for an additional \$10.00. For the security and well-being of our children, ID cards are not to be shared permitting others to have unauthorized access to the centre. If someone other than an authorized ID card holder will be picking up your child, then they will need to ring the buzzer and wait to gain access to the centre by a staff member.

A secured access entrance can create a false sense of security at times; especially if members hold the door open for others behind them. To minimize this risk, please always ask to see ID cards when allowing people access to the building behind you, always have your ID card with you and always present your ID card to the scanner upon entry (even if the door is held open for you). If a person cannot present an ID card DO NOT let them in. Inform them that they'll need to ring the bell and wait for a Bright Starts CELC employee to assist them. It is very important families enter and exit from Bright Starts CELC's 'main doors. Please do not enter or exit the centre from any of the playground gates or the back staff entrance. We understand this is an inconvenience, especially to those who park in Lot X, however it is extremely important to use the front doors only in order for us to maintain effective monitoring of those entering and exiting our building.

## ***Parking***

Parking is located and available in front of Bright Starts CELC for drop off and pick up of your child only. Parking is limited; we request that parents do not occupy these spaces any longer than necessary as others may be waiting. Please use the appropriate spaces and do not double park, park in fire lanes, or park in the designated wheelchair parking (unless you have a permit). Parents are not permitted to park in the designated drop off and pick up spaces for the day, your vehicle will be ticketed and/or towed. Lot X, located directly beside Bright Starts CELC, requires a UW parking permit. Visitor parking is available by purchasing a ticket from the pay and display machine for Lot X. A valid permit must be displayed at all times. Permits are sold to students on a per term basis. Students may use all student unreserved parking lots when they have purchased a valid permit/ticket. Permits are also sold to Faculty and Staff. Lot X is open and free from 4:30 pm Friday until 6:00 am Monday. For more information about parking on campus, please visit or call UW's [Parking Services](#) at (519)-888-4567 Ext. 33100

## ***Concerns***

If at any time a parent is not satisfied with their child's program or have a concern, we encourage those concerns to be expressed. We value and respect your views as a parent or guardian and as a member of the Co-operative. Your feedback plays a key part in the quality of care we provide. Below please see our Parent Issues and Concern Policy. Concerns around day-to-day classroom routines can be shared directly with your child's educator. This way we can work together to meet the needs of you and your child and continue to make improvements to our centre.

## ***Parent Issues and Concerns Policy***

### ***PURPOSE***

The purpose of this policy is to provide a transparent process for parents/guardians, the child care licensee and staff to use when parents/guardians bring forward issues/concerns.

### ***POLICY***

#### **General**

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our child care centre and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing with our program. As supported by our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, child care providers and staff, and foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children. Our staff are available to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction.

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by Bright Starts Co-operative Early Learning Centre Inc. and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties as quickly as possible.

Issues/concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally, or in writing upon request. The level of detail provided to the parent/guardian will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within 2-3 business days. The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

Investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial and respectful to parties involved.

### **Confidentiality**

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially, and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff, students and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for

legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society).

### **Conduct**

Bright Starts CELC maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated from any party.

If at any point a parent/guardian, provider or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to a Manager or the Executive Director.

### ***Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a child***

Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, is required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact the [local Children's Aid Society](#) (CAS) directly.

Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to CAS as per the "Duty to Report" requirement under the *Child and Family Services Act*.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaaid/reportingabuse/index.aspx>

**PROCEDURE**

Nature of Issue/ Concern	Steps for Parent/Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Bright Starts CELC in responding to issue/concern:
<p><b>Program Room Related</b></p> <p>E.g: schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding/sleeping arrangements, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the classroom staff directly</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a Child Care Manager should the issue or concern not be addressed and resolved with the classroom staff directly within 1-2 business days.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within 2-3 business days.</li> </ul>
<p><b>General, Centre or Operations Related</b></p> <p>E.g: child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a Child Care Manager</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Executive Director.</li> </ul>	<p>Document the issues/concerns in detail. Documentation should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the date and time the issue/concern was received;</li> </ul>
<p><b>Staff, Manager, or Executive Director Related</b></p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the individual directly</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a Manager regarding a staff member, the Director regarding a Manager or the Board of Directors regarding the Executive Director should the issue or concern not be addressed and resolved with the individual within 1-2 business days.</li> </ul> <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of any employee that puts a child’s health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the name of the person who received the issue/concern;</li> <li>- the name of the person reporting the issue/concern;</li> <li>- the details of the issue/concern; and</li> <li>- any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Student- / Volunteer- Related</b></p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a Child Care Manager</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Executive Director.</li> </ul> <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that puts a child’s health, safety</p>	<p>Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.</p> <p>Ensure the investigation of</p>

	and well-being at risk should be reported as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.	the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within 2-3 business days or as soon as reasonably possible. Document reasons for delays in writing.  Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.
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**Escalation of Issues or Concerns:** Where parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may escalate the issue or concern verbally or in writing to Bright Starts CELC’s Executive Board of Director’s.

Issues/concerns related to compliance with requirements set out in the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* and Ontario Regulation 137/15 should be reported to the Ministry of Education’s Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch.

Issues/concerns may also be reported to other relevant regulatory bodies (e.g. local public health department, police department, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Labour, fire department, College of Early Childhood Educators) where appropriate.

## **Contacts**

**Stacey Reid:** Executive Director, 519-888-4567 ext. 39360, [stacey@brightstartsearlylearning.ca](mailto:stacey@brightstartsearlylearning.ca)

**Karen Hinnigan:** Manager, Toddler/Camp, 519-888-4567 ext. 39360,  
[karen@brightstartsearlylearning.ca](mailto:karen@brightstartsearlylearning.ca)

**Bright Starts CELC's Executive Board of Directors:** [bscelc.waterloo@gmail.com](mailto:bscelc.waterloo@gmail.com)

**Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care Help Desk:** 1-877-510-5333 or  
[childcare\\_ontario@ontario.ca](mailto:childcare_ontario@ontario.ca)

**College of Early Childhood Educators:** 1-888-961-8558 [info@college-ece.ca](mailto:info@college-ece.ca)

**Family and Children's Services:** 519-576-0540

**Region of Waterloo Public Health:** 519-575-4400

**Ministry of Labour:** 1-877-202-0008

**Waterloo Regional Police:** 519-653-7700

**Waterloo Regional Fire Department:** 519-884-2121



***THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO READ OUR PARENT HANDBOOK. ALL OF OUR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES ARE AVAILABLE FURTHER UPON REQUEST. SHOULD YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE FEEL FREE TO APPROACH OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, A MANAGER OR ANY ONE OF OUR STAFF MEMBERS.***

***WE LOOK FORWARD TO HAVING YOU AND YOUR FAMILY WITH US AT BRIGHT STARTS CO-OPERATIVE EARLY LEARNING CENTRE INC.***

***NEED MORE INFORMATION? CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE AT [www.brightstartsearlylearning.ca](http://www.brightstartsearlylearning.ca)***

***CONTACT US:***

***MAIN LINE: 519 - 888 - 4975***

***UW EXTENSION: 84975***