



Family Handbook

**5650 US Hwy 377 S, Aubrey 76227
940-218-6183**

**808 Keaton Rd. N, Sanger 76266
940-458-0623**

**Policies are reviewed annually and updated as needed.
Updated: November 2021**

Welcome to The Bridge Enrichment and Learning Center (TBELC).

We are very excited to welcome your child into our center. This handbook has been written to describe the policies and procedures for our facility so that there are no misunderstandings, and that everyone is aware of the requirements and expectations of The Bridge, as well as the requirements of you, the parent/guardians. Please read this handbook carefully before enrolling your child and feel free to discuss any questions or concerns you may have.

Our Background

TBELC's heart and motivation is to build bridges between relationships, education and success through various programs and enrichment activities. We provide the tools necessary to inspire and encourage your child to excel in their lives. We are dedicated to providing an atmosphere that promotes advancement and achievement. We are proud and excited to offer the following enrichment activities, partnered with our curriculum, to help your child become a well-rounded student: music, martial arts, Zumba, Spanish, dance, theatre, arts, and piano.

We look forward to serving you, your child(ren) and our community with excellence.

Mission Statement

At TBELC it is our mission to provide *QUALITY* care, *SUCCESS* building skills, and *LEARNING* enrichment for each child to reach their greatest potential - spiritually, mentally, physically, socially, and emotionally.

Our Staff

Our staff are childcare professionals who are educated, trained, and experienced in child development and early care and education.

All staff are required to receive training annually. They are required to receive:

- Preservice training (required for staff without prior experience in early childhood and this training is a comprehensive orientation and is completed prior to entering the classroom).
- 30 hours of continuing education hours each year
- First Aid/CPR
- SIDS and shaken baby, child abuse and neglect, emergency preparedness, food allergies, building and premises safety, hazardous materials, communicable disease and immunizations, civil rights and CACFP
- Curriculum and assessment
- Age-appropriate classroom activities and behavior

All staff members are screened by completing the following:

- Background check
- Criminal history
- Fingerprint screen

As a licensed childcare facility, we operate under Texas Licensing Minimum Standards. You may view a copy of these standards on site or by visiting the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services at www.dfps.state.tx.us. It is our goal to not only meet but exceed all minimum standards. Our most recent licensing visit report can be viewed online and is posted on the Parent Information board located at the front entrance of the facility.

If you are displeased with something that has happened at the facility, please feel free to speak with the director. If you feel the situation has not been handled and you believe that minimum standards have not been met, you may contact our local licensing office at:

Texas Childcare Licensing
535 S Loop 288, Suite 2001
Denton, TX 76205
(940) 536-8130

Hours of Operation, Holiday Closings & Inclement Weather-Related Closures

TBELC is open Monday thru Friday from 6:30am - 6:00pm, year-round, except for the following observed holidays:

New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, President's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Thanksgiving and the day after, Christmas eve, Christmas Day and New Year's Eve. Closure dates can change depending on how the holidays fall.

If any of the listed holidays fall on a weekend, the center will be closed the Friday before or Monday after. A calendar will be sent to all families at the beginning of the academic school year with the closing dates for that year. We will also post notices throughout the facility as reminders to make additional arrangements for your child(ren)'s care.

Weather Related Closures

The safety and well-being of our staff and children are of the utmost importance to us. All closings and delays due to inclement weather will follow the Aubrey ISD schedule. For example, if Aubrey ISD opens at 10am, TBELC will open at 10am; If Aubrey ISD closes our facility will close, etc. You will be

contacted immediately once the local school officials have made their decision - parents will be notified via email, text, or the Remind App.

Emergency Contacts, Preparedness Plans and Child Abuse and Neglect

In the event of an emergency, TBELC staff will administer First Aid/CPR if needed and phone for emergency medical help. Parents will be notified as soon as possible following the incident that requires medical assistance.

Emergency Medical System	911
Child Protective Services	(817) 573-8612
Denton County DFPS	(940) 349-1600
Poison Control	(800) 222-1222
Denton County Fire Dept.	(940) 349-8840

Emergency Preparedness Plan

At TBELC, your child(ren)'s health and safety is our main priority. In the event of an emergency, we have specific plans in place. All staff are trained on these plans before stepping foot in a classroom and annually thereafter. Our priority is to get the children to a safe place. In case of emergencies, parents will be notified, when possible, to do so. Please read through these plans, and if you are a parent are in our facility when an emergency takes place, we ask that you participate accordingly.

In any emergency situation, the best course of action is to breathe and stay calm.

In all situations in these plans, "director" is referred to the Center Director, or designated person in charge, if the Center Director is absent. The director will notify child care licensing, the health department, EMS or fire as the situation dictates. In all situations of these plans, the director may delegate any portion of his/her duties to other staff members, volunteers, or emergency personnel as he/she sees fit.

1. Tornado/Bad Weather
 - a. Stay calm. Watch the children, not the situation.
 - b. Get roll sheet. Take your emergency bag and flashlight.
 - c. Take all children to the hallway located at the front of the facility. If the class is in the second building, take all children to the bathroom. Have children sit as close together as possible and have the children duck and cover. This will be familiar to the children as we practice severe weather drills.
 - d. Infant classroom: Place babies in one or two of the emergency

evacuation cribs and cover the top with a mattress from another crib. Place the mattress sideways across top of the crib and huddle next to it. Roll the cribs to the front hallway. The director will assist with infants.

- e. Stay in your designated area until advised that the weather has passed.
- f. It can be helpful to quietly sing songs with the children to help keep them calm.
- g. The director will monitor local weather stations and the weather alert radio for updates.

2. Communicable Disease Outbreak

- a. All staff members will vigilantly follow policies regarding diaper changes, toileting, handwashing, food preparation and general common-sense measures such as keeping surfaces clean, changing bedding, teaching children to cover coughs and sneezes, etc. to help prevent the spread of germs that cause illness.
- b. In the event of an outbreak, the director will notify the health department and childcare licensing to inform them of the situation and ask for instructions and guidelines to follow for specific illness.
- c. The director will inform all staff of instructions/guidelines and require them to follow.
- d. The director will notify all parents in writing within 48 hours as required by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and childcare licensing.
- e. All staff is to follow the school's confidentiality policy when speaking of the outbreak. Any violation of the policy will be grounds for immediate termination.

3. Lock Down

- a. The director will announce over the megaphone the secret code for "lock down" and will call 911. The director will supervise the front desk during the incident if possible.
- b. Upon hearing the code, or sooner, if you are aware that an intruder has entered the building or the vicinity, the teacher will calmly direct the children to a specific location where they will be instructed to remain quiet until advised otherwise. The children will know what to do as lock down drills have been conducted.
- c. *Infant Classroom:* Place children in two cribs with some quiet toys. Place another crib or two in front of your classroom door. This may cause an intruder to change his/her mind about entering your classroom.
- d. Get roll sheets and emergency bag. This is to stay with you throughout the duration of the lockdown.

- e. Close all classroom doors and lock if possible.
- f. Turn off lights.
- g. If you have reason to believe that no one else in the center is aware of the danger, and you can do so safely, calmly announce the secret code for "lock down".
- h. Whisper and remind children to remain quiet.
- i. Do a name to face attendance check silently.
- j. Keep the children and yourself safe, in place and away from all interior and exterior windows.
- k. Watch the children, not the situation.
- l. If the intruder enters your classroom, do not engage or argue with them.
- m. The director will ensure the building entrances and exit are locked and that no unauthorized individuals leave or enter the building.
- n. Await further instructions from the director or emergency personnel.

4. Accident

- a. Breathe and stay calm.
- b. Ensure all children are supervised. If you are alone, tell them to sit near you.
- c. Comfort the child by speaking in a low, quiet voice.
- d. Apply first aid as needed.
- e. Call the director if further assistance is needed, the director will contact 911 if necessary.
- f. If the injury is to the head or face, contact the director immediately - even if it is minor.
- g. Complete an incident report, have director sign immediately. The front office will notify parent/guardian at pick up.
- h. Keep the incident report confidential while it is in your care.
- i. In the event of a serious injury or illness involving an adult, contact the director, and they will contact 911 or the individual's emergency contact.

5. Illness

- a. Ask the child "what does not feel good"?
- b. Contact the front office and have the child's temperature taken. If the fever is over 100.4 degrees, the director will contact the parent/guardian.
- c. If no fever, make the child comfortable and monitor them.
- d. If the child complains of pain, ask him/her to point with one finger to where it hurts the most and investigate the spot for injury or discoloration and contact the director.
- e. Light vomiting or mild diarrhea: if no pain, contact the director after the third episode.

6. Explosion, Chemical spill, or Gas leak (if this occurs inside the facility, see procedures for fire and off-site relocation)
 - a. Close the doors and lock if possible.
 - b. Turn off air conditioner/heater.
 - c. Turn off all electronics.
 - d. Keep children seated on the floor and remain calm. Sing quiet songs and/or read stories.
 - e. Be prepared to evacuate if told to do so by the director or emergency personnel.
 - f. If you detect a strong odor, show the children how to lift and breathe through their shirts.
 - g. If told to evacuate, consider crawling to avoid strong fumes that are floating higher in the air.
7. Bomb threat, or other threat
 - a. Write down everything the person says.
 - b. Ask where the bomb is.
 - c. Ask when the bomb (or threat of) will "go off" or "happen".
 - d. Notify the director to call 911 immediately
8. Off Site Evacuation and Relocation
 - a. The staff's primary responsibility is to keep the children safe.
 - b. Always keep roll sheet and emergency bag with you.
 - c. If time allows, gather the children's belongings, including but not limited to: diaper bags, diapers, bottles, formula/food and coats.
 - d. Children will be evacuated to the relocation site by walking with the staff. Staff will use strollers, evacuation cribs, and walking ropes. Depending on the situation, the city may send emergency evacuation vehicles.
 - e. The director is responsible for keeping a charged cell phone with him/her and overseeing and directing the evacuation process. He/she is responsible for taking the emergency binder with parent contact information, first aid kit, emergency medication and cell phone. He/she is the last person to leave the building.
 - f. The evacuation and relocation area site are located at the following address:
 - i. Aubrey location:
 - ii. Sanger location:
 - g. After all children and staff have been relocated to the evacuation site, are safe and all needs have been met, the director will contact parents/guardians of the situation.
 - h. Staff will continue to supervise children. They will sing songs, fingerplays, stories, games, etc.
 - i. Staff will watch the children, not the situation.

- j. The facility verification process for allowing adults to pick up children from the evacuation site will be used. (Other than parents/guardians, only persons on the emergency contact form noted as an authorized pick up will be allowed to take children - ID will be checked).

9. Fire

- a. When aware of fire or when alarm sounds, staff will quietly say, "fire drill boys and girls, please line up at the door". This should be familiar to the children as monthly fire drills are conducted. Staff's primary responsibility is to get children safely out of the building. Do not attempt to put out the fire unless it is between you and a child or preventing exit.
- b. Always keep roll sheet and emergency bag with you.
- c. Take a quick headcount.
- d. Infant Classroom: Place infants in evacuation cribs, director will assist in evacuation.
- e. Proceed to proper fire exit and exterior meeting place as designated on the floor plan located in each classroom.
- f. Once evacuated, conduct a name to face count - if anyone is missing contact the director or emergency personnel immediately.
- g. The children must be kept safe (and out of the way of emergency vehicles and fire) and always supervised.
- h. Watch the children, not the situation.

The fire department or director will notify staff when (and if) it is safe to reenter the building or begin off-site evacuation procedures.

Director responsibilities include: the director will sound the alarm alerting everyone that there is a fire and notify the fire department. The director will grab emergency binder and proceed to the infant classroom to assist with their safe exit. If the cook is in the building, and not counted in ratio, he/she will assist the young toddler room. In the event of an actual fire, parents will be notified when safe to do so.

Fire drills are practiced (and logged) monthly. Children must be able to exit the building safely in under 3 minutes. Evacuation diagrams are posted in the entry of the facility, the hallway and inside each classroom. The designated evacuation area in case of fire is outside on the playground (behind the privacy fence) near the picnic table.

Emergency Bags

Upon any emergency, staff are trained to take the daily roll sheets along with their emergency evacuation bags so all children can be accounted for throughout

the situation. Emergency bags include parent/guardian contact information, first aid kit, water bottle and small (non-perishable) snack for each child enrolled in the class, and various activities to entertain children while waiting for parent/guardian.

In case of a true emergency and the center phone cannot be reached, contact (940) 808-4313.

Child Abuse and Neglect

All TBELC staff are mandated reporters and are required by state law to report any signs of suspected child abuse and/or neglect. All staff receives annual training on recognizing and preventing abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse. The staff may not notify parents when the police or CPS are called about possible abuse, neglect, or exploitation, unless recommended by police or CPS to do so.

Some examples of abuse and neglect: leaving a child in a vehicle unattended, not securing a child in a seatbelt or booster seat, unexplained marks or bruises on opposite sides of the body, and child hygiene issues.

If it is felt that parents/guardians need assistance, we encourage you to get help. Please contact the National Parent Hotline at (855) 427-2736 or visit www.helpandhope.org/find-help.html

The statewide abuse and neglect phone number is (800) 252-5400.

Gang Free Zone

Any area within 1000' of a childcare center is a gang free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher punishments.

Tobacco and Alcohol

We are a tobacco and alcohol-free environment. There is absolutely no smoking/vaping or drinking allowed on the premises. This rule applies to staff, parents/guardians, and any visitor on site. Please make sure any guests or alternative pick ups know that tobacco and alcohol are not permitted on the property.

Non-discrimination and Accommodations for Families

TBELC is operated on a non-discriminatory basis, according to equal treatment and access to services without regard for gender, race, religion, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or mental and physical disability. Children with disabilities are welcomed if this program is appropriate for the child.

Our program's policies and process in supporting families and children who may need additional accommodations, to include home language, differing abilities and cultural backgrounds. Parents have the right to be informed of all procedural safeguards and rights of appeal in a language easily understood by the public and in the parents' primary language. Please notify Center Management if you or your child require accommodations and we will ensure that we do our part in making sure your needs are met.

Below are ways that our program will partner with your family:

1. If specific therapies are needed during the day while the child is in our care, we will provide space to accommodate sessions.
2. Participation in all comprehensive meetings if needed.
3. Complete supporting documentation from authorized medical professional for any accommodations related to the child's physical or developmental needs.
4. Provide materials and resources in parent/child's primary language.
5. Provide opportunity for cultural inclusiveness by hosting cultural events throughout the year.

Health and Safety Policies and Procedures

Health and Illness

Children who are ill must not be brought to the facility. The health and safety of all enrolled children are very important to us. Please keep your child home if one or more of the following are present:

- The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in childcare centered activities including outdoor play;
- The illness results in a greater need for care than staff can provide without compromising the health, safety and supervision of other children in care;
- The child has one of the following (unless medical evaluation by a health care professional indicates that you can include the child in childcare related activities):
 - Temporal temperature above 99.5 degrees that is accompanied by behavior changes or other signs/symptoms of illness
 - Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness: lethargy, abnormal breathing, uncontrolled diarrhea, two or more vomiting incidents in 24 hours, rash with fever, mouth sores with drooling, behavior changes, or others.
- A health care professional has diagnosed the child with a communicable disease, and the child does not have a medical documentation that notes they are no longer contagious.

If your child shows any symptoms of illness while in care, you will be contacted to pick your child up. Your child will be cared for apart from the other children and given appropriate supervision and attention until you arrive. We understand that it can take time for parents to be reached while at work and leave work or make alternate arrangements when a child becomes ill, however we require children are picked up within one hour of notification.

If a doctor states that the child can return to school, you must provide a statement from the health care professional stating "the child no longer has an excludable illness" or "child is no longer contagious" - **a standard excuse from school is not sufficient.**

Children MUST be symptom free for 48 hours before returning to school.

Medication

Limiting medications dispensed away from home helps prevent medication errors, as such please inform your physician that your child is in full day, group care/preschool program and that you prefer to give medications at home, morning, and evening. If medication needs to be given at school, the following conditions must be met:

- Prescription medication will be accepted only if it is in its original container and has not reached the expiration date.
- Non-prescription medication may only be administered by following the manufacturers recommendation on the label. Medication must be in original container and accompanied with a copy of the information provided by the pharmacy.
- Before any prescription or non-prescription medication can be administered (including sunscreen) we must have written consent by parent/guardian. Please complete medication forms completely for each medication. Forms can be found at the front desk and given to management staff upon completion.
- Medication will be sent home after the last date that it is to be administered.

Immunizations

For Children

- Immunization records must be kept current and on file for all enrolled children.
- Failure to keep immunizations current will lead to termination of care.
- Since the risk of vaccine preventable disease is increased in group settings, ensuring appropriate immunization is mandated in Texas Licensing Minimum Standards unless your child is exempt. If exempt, documentation is required.

For Staff

The Bridge Enrichment and Learning Center, LLC. has implemented the following immunization policy for all of its staff in accordance to Texas Department of Health &

Human Services, Minimum Standards Rule 746.3611, which requires a policy that protects children from vaccine preventable illness. While the safety of the children in our care is paramount, and we recommend that our employees receive their immunizations, we do not require them to do so, conforming to state law. If this should change, notification will be provided.

We encourage the use of protective medical equipment to protect employees and children in care from exposure to possible disease. This includes gloves, masks and hand sanitizers. The protective medical equipment will be based on the level of risk the employees present to children by the employee's routine and direct exposure of children. Employees should not be in direct contact when they are ill or exhibiting signs of illness.

The center staff will monitor information provided to the public through the CDC and/or other sources to determine the level of risk the employee presents. There will be no discrimination or retaliatory action against any employee who does/does not receive immunizations for vaccine-preventable illness. The use of protective medical equipment will not be considered retaliatory when used by employees. The information related to whether or not an employee chooses to have immunizations will be kept confidential.

TB Testing: Requirements for tuberculosis testing vary throughout the state of Texas. Our region does not require testing for children or employees currently. If this should change, notification will be provided.

Vision and Hearing Screening

The Texas Health and Safety Code, Chapter 36, requires a screening or professional examination for possible vision and hearing problems for the children enrolled in our program. Children enrolled, who are 4 years old by September 1st of each year must be screened. If applicable, your child must have one of the following on file: the individual acuity and sweep check results, a signed statement (must include school name, address and phone number) from the parent that the child's screening records are current and on file at the school the child attends away from the center or an affidavit stating that the vision or hearing screening conflicts with the tenets or practices of a church or religious denomination of which the affiant is a member.

Please note, the center director and staff are certified to do vision and hearing screenings and will conduct them each February or March of each new school year at no cost to you. If your child enrolls later, or misses the screening date, you will need to provide the center with acuity results or one of the other listed options above withing 120 calendar days of enrollment.

Naptime

All children will have a rest period. No child is forced to sleep; however, we ask that they are quiet during nap time so as not to disturb other children who are resting. After an hour of rest, children who are still awake may participate in an alternative quiet activity. Naptime is approximately 2 hours, not to exceed 3. Infants are provided cribs. Cribs and crib sheets are changed and sanitized as often as necessary. Toddlers and Preschoolers are provided cots. Special blankets or "lovies" may be brought from home but should be clearly labeled with your child's name and are only used for nap purposes. Cots are sanitized regularly and as necessary.

Water Activities

These activities may include water tables, sprinkler play and wading pools (during summer months). Some classrooms have water tables for sensory exploration. Children are supervised closely during these activities and state ratios for water activities are strictly maintained when water play occurs. If you do not wish for your child to participate in water activities, please check the appropriate area on your enrollment paperwork. You will be notified in advance of "water days" in which sprinkler play, and wading pool activities will occur.

Accident and Incident Reports

Unfortunately, accidents do happen. Children are in care for many hours throughout the day and although we would love to keep them in a bubble and protected from all bumps, bruises, and scrapes, etc. - that is just not possible. We try very hard to supervise and protect them from getting hurt, bit, etc. as much as possible, however there may come a time when we cannot prevent an incident from occurring. If your child falls, bumps their head, gets stung by a bee, etc. you will be notified at pick up and asked to sign a report that documents the incident.

If the incident involves an injury to the head, or any other incident that is concerning or out of the norm we will notify you immediately to let you know of the incident and to identify that we will keep a close eye for any behavior changes to help ensure there is not additional area for concern.

Minor accidents, such as a scratch or scrape from a fall, will be cared for by the staff. We will provide routine hygienic measures, such as washing the wound, applying the appropriate dressing and TLC.

In the event of a serious incident or illness requiring medical treatment we will: contact 911 (or take the child to the nearest ER, if possible), give the appropriate first aid or CPR and contact the parent/guardian as soon as possible.

Animals

At various times, there will be activities planned that include animals. All animals on our premises have been seen and cleared by a veterinarian as well as have received required immunizations. A pet permission form is included in each enrollment application and parents are requested to sign and acknowledge the presence of pets/animals at our facility. You are also required to notify TBELC of any known allergies your child may have. Minimum Standards prohibit children from being in contact with the following animals while in care: chickens, ducks, reptiles such as snakes, turtles, lizards, and iguanas, and amphibians such as frogs and toads. If you have a special animal that could be involved in a fun learning experience for the children, please discuss with the Center Director.

Sunscreen and Bug Spray

In order for sunscreen and/or bug spray to be applied to a child in our care, a consent form must be signed by the child's parent/guardian. TBELC uses the Equate brand sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher and will be applied when your child is engaged in outdoor activities, especially in the hotter months of the year. If you do not wish for your child to use the Equate brand, you must provide an alternative brand or sign the form stating that you do not wish for sunscreen to be applied to your child. Sunscreen will be applied to any exposed skin including but not limited to face, tops of ears, nose, bare shoulders, arms and legs. A product such as Avon Skin So Soft is available to use to help prevent mosquito bites during the spring. A permission form allowing us to use these, and other topical products must be completed and signed by parent/guardian.

Technology

We allow limited TV viewing and technology use throughout the course of the day, not to exceed more than 2 hours for children aged 2 and older. Age appropriate, education TV shows may be played at drop off before children go to their classrooms in the morning and in the evenings before closing time. Occasionally children may have the opportunity to have time on the computer or tablet for educational activities.

Oral Health

Maintaining healthy teeth and gums is so important. As such, if you choose (and provide a toothbrush and toothpaste) your child will be provided the opportunity to brush his or her teeth after mealtimes. We also have additional resources regarding oral health that can be found in our parent resource center.

Food and Nutrition Practices

TBELC is a participant in good standing with the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) provided by the US Department of Agriculture and does not discriminate

based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. Complaints about discrimination can be directed to the USDA.

Our program provides breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack. These are served at:

Breakfast: 7:00 - 9:00am

Lunch: 10:45am - 12:15pm

Snack: 3:00 - 4:45pm

If your child arrives after a meal has been served, he/she will wait until the next mealtime to eat. If arriving after breakfast, please ensure that your child has been fed prior to arrival.

Children are encouraged to use mealtime as a time to share their experiences with each other and their teacher. Manners are taught and practiced during this time. No child is forced to eat anything although trying new things is encouraged. As a part of the CACFP, our meals meet all required components for a healthy diet as per the US Department of Agriculture. These components include dairy, fresh fruit, and vegetable, as well as protein and whole grain. The USDA and its sponsors inspect and evaluate our food services department 3-4 times each year. These visits are unannounced.

If you have any input or suggestions regarding the menu, please discuss with the Center Director or a member of management.

Food Allergies

Please list any food allergies for your child in their enrollment paperwork. If your child requires a special diet, you may be asked to provide these foods as well as a doctor's note outlining the requirements. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure that center staff are made aware of and updated on a child's food allergies. If necessary, a food allergy emergency plan is included in enrollment paperwork and must be completed by the child's doctor. These emergency plans will be kept in your child's file and posted in the kitchen where food is prepared and any classroom or area that your child may be in the facility.

Please inform the office, in writing if there is any change to allergies. The staff is updated accordingly and is required to attend annual training on preventing and handling emergencies due to food allergies.

Note that allergies to milk require a statement for substitute foods. It is vital that we are also notified of allergies to bee stings, peanuts, and any substance that could be life threatening to your child. Environmental allergies should also be brought to our attention.

For more information on allergies in children, please visit our parent resource center and/or the following websites:

<https://kidswithfoodallergies.org>

<https://foodallergy.org>

Infant Foods and Formula

Upon enrollment each parent with an infant will complete an Infant Care Instruction Sheet to inform staff of the type of food and formula their child should receive. This form will need to be updated frequently as a child's diet changes, or at minimum once every 30 days. Our program provides Parent Choice brand infant formula. If your child needs or prefers something different you will need to provide that. Bottles are fed to children according to a schedule arranged in consultation with the parent/guardian upon enrollment. Infants are held while being fed, and those who hold their own bottle are cuddled and attended to during self-feeding.

Breastfeeding

Parents may bring in breastmilk for use at the center. We can keep frozen breastmilk for up to three months. Defrosted breastmilk can be kept for one day in a refrigerator and fresh breastmilk for 2 days. Breastmilk must be brought in sanitary storage bags labeled with the child's name and the date it was expressed. Breastfeeding mothers may nurse in the Infant room as needed, and breastfeeding resources can be found at the parent resource center or by visiting:

<https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/index.htm>

<https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/pdf/BF-Guide-508.pdf>

Potty Training

We will assist in potty training your child with the understanding that it will only be successful if we work together. Once you have had a successful weekend at home potty training, we are more than happy to continue at school. Long weekends are a great time to start because you have extra time to work with your child at home. When your child is potty training, we ask that you send them in easy on/off clothing as your child will be learning to pull their own clothes up and down. Pull ups are required until your child has been accident free for two weeks. Diapers are very hard for a child to pull up and down independently. Once your child is in underwear, we require at least 3 changes of clothing to be kept in their cubby. Once a child is fully potty-trained, teachers will not assist the child with wiping. Parents are expected to teach their child how to wipe. Due to sanitary requirements, we are not permitted to wash soiled clothing and we will send any soiled clothing home in a plastic bag. Children that turn 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ years of age and are not fully potty-trained will be charged the premium "non-potty-trained" rate. Parents must understand that once a child reaches age 3, they are expected to be training/fully

potty-trained to be moved to the next class. Potty-training is a partnership, parents should not expect the teachers to be consistent while in our care, but there is no consistency at home.

Items from Home

Objects from home often cause chaos and can create safety situations for other children; therefore, children are expected to leave all toys and any other personal items (aside those required for school) at home. This also includes food. We have plenty of toys, books, and other age-appropriate items for your child to use during the day. Please understand that we are not responsible for any items brought to the program that are lost or broken.

Transportation and Field Trips

TBELC does provide transportation for our enrolled after school children. We provide morning drop off for Brockett Elementary and Early Bird Learning Center.

Enrollment/Tuition Policies and Procedures

To enroll in TBELC each child must have an updated enrollment packet on file withing a minimum of 3 days prior to your child's first day of attendance. All enrollment paperwork is required before your child may attend our program. Incomplete paperwork will not be accepted, and enrollment documentation is not considered complete until the following documents are received:

- Enrollment form
- Emergency Medical Care form
- Immunization Records
- Allergy Information
- Tuition Agreement
- Physician's Statement
- Parent Handbook Agreement
- Parent Orientation
- Discipline and Guidance Policy Acknowledgement
- Photo Release
- Enrollment Fee
- Supply Fee
- Sunscreen Permission Form
- Bug Spray Permission Form
- CACFP Student Enrollment Form
- Food Allergy Emergency Plan (if applicable)
- Infant Care Instruction Sheet (if applicable)

- Children's Information Form

Please note, that at any point in your child's enrollment, any information changes (contact numbers, address, parent/guardian email, custody situations, etc. you must notify the center immediately. If a staff member or management is not available to discuss with you, please send a message through Remind or via email at hbuckner@thebridgeelc.com

Tuition and Fees

Tuition payments are to be made weekly and due Friday prior to the start of the week. A grace period is given but must be paid no later than Monday close of business (6pm). Payments received after close of business (6:00pm) Monday will be charged a late fee of \$25.00. If tuition and fees are not paid in full by close of business Tuesday, your child will be unable to attend on Wednesday. Accounts that are not kept current are subject to disenrollment.

TBELC's fee structure will be announced at the start of each new school year (August). Fees are evaluated yearly, and parents will be given at minimum a two-week written notice of any changes. Multiple child discounts are available, please see center management for more information. Refunds are not typically given, but the owner/director will decide on a case-by-case basis.

Returned Checks

Any returned check will be charged a fee of \$35.00. If a check is returned unpaid, future payments must be paid in cash or money order.

Registration and Supply Fees

An annual enrollment and supply fee of \$100.00 must be paid at the time of enrollment for each child. This fee is due annually per child by your enrollment anniversary date. Registration fees are non-refundable.

Child Care Assistance (CCS)

TBELC has an agreement with Workforce Solutions for North Central Texas to accept childcare subsidies. The director must have authorization from CCS prior to your child beginning care. CCS co-payments must be made by the 4th of each month. If co-payment is not made by the due date a \$25.00 late fee will be enforced.

Drop-In Care

TBELC will provide drop-in care on an as needed basis if there is space available. Drop-in rate is \$50.00/day/child over 18 months of age. The drop-in rate for infants is \$60.00/child/day. Children who participate in drop-in care must have all completed enrollment paperwork on file.

Vacation

Each family is given one week of vacation each year. The time is available after your child has been enrolled for a full calendar year and paid their annual enrollment fee. Please request your vacation time at least two weeks prior to the absence. Vacation time can only be used if your child is absent from the center. Your account must be paid in full before vacation days can be used. Vacation days cannot be carried over into the next year.

Absences

Please notify us if your child will be absent on any day via phone call, text or Remind. No allowances, credits, refunds or make up days will be made for any absences, including illness.

Voluntary Withdrawal from Care

If a family would like to withdraw from care, a two-week written notice must be provided to center management. Parents are required to pay for the two weeks even if the child does not attend. If the program owes the parent any prepaid tuition the family will be provided a full refund within 5 days of the child's final day of care.

Dropoff Procedures

At drop off we ask that you do the following and the following will occur:

1. We ask that you please get out of your vehicle and walk your child to the door (post-COVID-19, parents will be required to walk into the building and sign their child in).
2. We encourage all children to be dropped off for breakfast each day.
3. Educational activities will begin at 8:30am.
4. Children may not be dropped off after 9:00am.
5. Consistent drop off times help establish good routines for your child which helps them prepare for their transition into kindergarten.
6. Children must be checked in on our BrightWheel Software program upon arrival to the center.

Please understand that it is normal for your child to cry upon arrival to childcare, especially the first couple of weeks. It is an adjustment period, and we will do our best to make sure your child's adjustment goes as smooth as possible. Please make your goodbye brief and let your child know when you plan to return. The crying typically stops within a short period of time after your departure.

Pick Up Procedures

Per Texas state law, parents have a right to access their child anytime, unless noted in court documents.

1. In the event that a parent is unable to pick their child up, they may authorize another legal adult to pick up. Authorized adults must be listed on the enrollment paperwork and provide a photo ID. Children will not be released to adults without a photo ID and a photocopy of that ID will be kept in the child's file.
2. We ask that you please get out of your vehicle and walk to the door to pick up your child (post-COVID-19, parents will be required to walk into the building and sign their child out).
3. Children must be checked out using our BrightWheel Software program.
4. Staff ALWAYS need to be made aware of departures, so please allow your child the opportunity to give their teacher a hug or goodbye wave.

*If any individual picking your child up appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol or exhibits questionable behavior when arriving to pick your child up, we will refuse to release your child to their care for safety purposes. We will call emergency contacts listed in the child's file and find alternative transportation for the child.

Late Pick Ups

Our center closes promptly at 6:00 every evening. Please keep in mind, if you are picking up late you will be assessed a fee starting at 6:31pm of \$10.00 plus \$1.00 per minute per child every minute after. This fee will be due with the following week's tuition. Please respect our closing time and keep pick up's brief if you are picking up right at 6:00pm. Our staff have obligations and families of their own to attend to after hours and should have the ability to do so at 6:00pm.

We do understand that emergencies and unavoidable things happen that may cause occasional late pickups, however all late pick ups will be documented. Please contact the center if you will be late.

Discipline and Guidance Policies and Procedures

Children will be treated with respect, courtesy, and patience. Guidance will be according to age and understanding level. Discipline must be:

1. Individualized and consistent for each child;
2. Appropriate to the child's level of understanding;
3. Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control, and;
4. A positive method of discipline and guidance that encouraged self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, including the following:
 - a. Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior;

- b. Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements; and
- c. Using brief supervised separation time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

If behavior issues arise, we will work together to try and resolve the problem. If no resolution can be reached, your child's care can be suspended or terminated if we feel that your child is a threat to themselves or to other children and staff.

Conscious Discipline

To assist with behavior and guidance, we as a program practice Conscious Discipline. This is a whole school solution for social-emotional learning, discipline, self-regulation, and classroom management. It is a concept that is new to our program, and we are continuously working on implementation into our classroom management styles. The Harvard School of Education completed a study and found that "Conscious Discipline provides an array of behavior management strategies and classroom structures that teachers can use to turn everyday situations into learning opportunities. This highly effective strategy has proven to increase self-regulation, sense of safety, connection, empathy and intrinsic motivation in both children and adults. The seven skills this technique teaches are composure, encouragement, assertiveness, choices, empathy, positive intent, and consequences.

Biting at Childcare

Biting is, unfortunately, an expected behavior for toddlers. Some children use this behavior as a means of communication. Biting can be harmful to other children and to staff. As a childcare, we understand that biting is a part of the experience. Our biting policy has been developed with both considerations in mind. Our goal is to help identify what is causing the biting and resolve the issues. If the issue cannot be resolved, this serves to protect the children who are being bit.

When biting occurs, state licensing requires that both parents are notified, however neither of the child's names (the biter and the one bitten) will be used or released to either parent.

For the child that is bit:

- First aid is given. The bite is cleaned with soap and water and covered with a band aid if the skin is broken.
- Parents are notified at pick up and bite is documented with an incident report that is kept in the child's file.

For the child that bit:

- Teacher will firmly tell child, "We do not bite, that hurts our friends"
- The teacher will place child in time out (1 minute/ year of age)
- Parent is notified at pick up with an incident report.

If biting becomes a problem, the child will be shadowed by a staff member to help prevent additional incidents, observed by a member of the staff to try and determine the cause of the behavior and the child will be given praise for positive behavior.

If biting becomes excessive:

1. If a child bites excessively within a one-week period in which the skin of another child or staff member is broken or bruised or the bite leaves a significant mark a conference will be held with parents to discuss the child's behavior and how we can partner together to prevent future occurrences.
2. If the child again presents excessive biting within a one-week period, the child will be suspended from care for two days.
3. If a child, after suspension presents excessive biting with a one-week period, the parents will be asked to make other arrangements for their child's care.

Communication about Behavior

It is important that good communication exists between parents and staff. If your child is experiencing a change in the home environment that may result in a change in behavior, please make us aware. Your child's teacher or center management will keep you informed of any behavior problems via phone call, notes home, email, etc. The safety and well being of all children must be protected. The staff will make every effort to work with children having difficulties, in order that they may participate safely.

If a child displays frequent disruptive behavior which is detrimental to the physical or emotional well being of other children, the staff and parent/guardian will meet to discuss the situation and will develop a plan of action for behavior improvement. If needed, the director may place a child on temporary leave if behavior is determined to be unsafe.

If consultation and action plans are not successful, and the staff and management team determine that enrollment in the program fundamentally alters the care for your child or others in the group, the center reserves the right to give notice of termination. Every program is not a good fit for every child or family.

Suspension of Care and Dismissal

If termination is deemed necessary, a two week notice before termination will be provided except in the following situations, in which care may be terminated immediately:

- Failure to comply with center policy
- Failure to comply with contract

- Destructive or hurtful behavior of the child that persists even with parent cooperation to stop the behavior
- Non-payment of fees or late and/or reoccurring late payment of fees
- Failure to attend for three days in a row without notification
- Failure to complete required forms or update forms as needed, or requested
- Blatant disrespect or aggressive behavior towards staff

Curriculum, Activities and Child Assessment

Teaching Strategies

At The Bridge Enrichment and Learning Center, we utilize a technology-based curriculum called Teaching Strategies. This platform allows you to stay informed about your child's progress and helps you to stay involved in their education. As a content-riched, developmentally appropriate curriculum, it delivers academic alongside social-emotional learning and cognitive development. It also brings meaningful interactions and learning to life in the classroom. Our curriculum is designed to aid your child's physical, intellectual, emotional, social and language development. We use a web-based tool that allows parents to monitor their child's progress. Our curriculum also utilizes the Ages and Stages Questionnaire, which allows us to learn about your child's strengths and weaknesses so that we can tailor our teaching practices to meet each child's individual needs. We believe that our curriculum at TBELC is what sets us apart from other daycares and preschools.

Child Assessments and Lesson Planning

The child is an active participant in the learning process and constructs meaning and knowledge from interactions, educationally planned activities, and play. We provide learning experiences which are both "developmentally and age appropriate. We provide meaningful and relevant learning experiences and use My Teaching Strategies developmental continuum to evaluate each child's individual progress. We observe and record our findings and share them during Parent/Teacher conferences which occur two times a year during fall and spring. Children will have many opportunities for practical life experiences and will be encouraged to develop their own basic life skills, especially the social/emotional skills of problem solving, conflict resolution, and self-regulation. Through our use of My Teaching Strategies' developmental continuum, lead teaching staff will follow the continuous cycle of documentation, assessment, and planning. Lead teachers shall create weekly lesson plans tied to individual objectives. They are required to select 3 objectives a week that tie to specific activities for which they will assess. Children can be assessed one-on-one or through various methods, such as reviewing video, utilizing checklists for whole class activities, or writing anecdotal notes. They will document these activities and enter assessment data into digital portfolios for each child through

Teaching Strategies. Reports will be reviewed, and the results will be used to inform the next week's lesson planning.

Daily Supplies

Please ensure that your child is prepared each day by providing for their needs. Ensure that they have enough diapers, wipes, formula, pacifiers, bottles, extra changes of clothes, and proper outdoor attire for the weather. Teachers will make every effort to let you know when your child is running low on supplies.

Physical Activity and Outdoor Play

Age-appropriate activities are scheduled with some flexibility allowed to respond for the individual needs of each child and for the day. Each day will be afforded an opportunity for large and small group activities, learning activities, art, music, quiet time and physical activity.

Large and small muscle movement is crucial in the development of children. As per Minimum Standards, outdoor learning is required two times each day for all ages. Our goal is to provide this opportunity both in the morning and afternoon, at minimum. The children enjoy their time outside and provides numerous benefits for their development. (Please see our resource center for specific information).

Infant Physical Activity and Outdoor Play

Infants will also go outside 2 times each day; weather permitting. Some of the activities include but not limited to tummy-time, reading and playing outside (getting dirty of course), picnics, sensory time, and bubble play etc.

Inclement weather will at times prevent us from going outside, some of these could include rain, high heat index, etc. As the health and safety of the children are a priority outdoor conditions are monitored daily, and judgment will be made by the director to outdoor learning participation due to inclement weather. Plan for every child in our program to go outside daily and dress them appropriately for the weather. Even on chilly days, jackets are required. On days when we are unable to participate in outdoor activities, other physical activities will be offered.

What to Wear

SEND ME IN CLOTHES I CAN PLAY AND LEARN IN! I WILL GET MESSY and that is ok! Your child should come dressed for the day with a fresh diaper (if applicable). Please dress your child appropriately and comfortably with the current season weather in mind. Keep in mind some of our activities are messy, we do try to keep the children's clothing as clean as possible by using bibs, cover shirts, etc., however accidents happen. Our art projects involve paint, crayons, markers, and glue. Our playground has dirt and mulch and

grass. It is important to keep additional clothing at the center, all children have a designated space for these items. Please label your child's items, specifically those they are using for outdoor activities. For safety of your child's feet, please no open toed shoes and if sandals are worn, please ensure they are secured to your child's foot (no slides or flip flops).

Family Expectations and Participation

Open Door Policy and Center Visitors

TBELC has an "open door" policy that allows children to visit their child at any time. However, we do ask that parents be aware that some children may not understand having to be separated from their parents more than once and could have a difficult time readjusting. Others, such as friends and relatives, are not allowed to visit children unless accompanied by a parent/guardian. Please do not send them to visit your child unless invited on the holidays or for special events.

Court Orders and Custody Arrangements

When there is a court order defining or limiting a parent's time with their child, it is the responsibility of the enrolling parent to provide the center with a copy of these documents. These documents may include a restraining order or a separation or divorce decree. TBELC will strictly adhere to the requirements of the court order we have in the child's file and will verify the identity of any person or parent who is not known to staff. If we do not have any documented record of that person, they will not be allowed access to the child.

Parent Suggestions and Concerns

Your comments and concerns are always welcomed. There may be times when we mess up or when you don't agree with something that has happened - please talk to us. Feel free to discuss any of these with center management via in person conversation or email. For ongoing suggestions, we have a suggestion box located at the front desk. We will also conduct an annual survey and welcome and encourage your participation to help us understand in what ways we can improve or to help identify what we are doing well and should continue.

Parent Communication

Communication about our day, activities, policy updates, events, etc. can come in a variety of ways. We use our Remind app, Facebook page, quarterly newsletters, verbal notifications, text, email, daily notes, and information boards located around the center. However, our most current and real time communication is through our Remind app.

Your child's teacher is available to chat with you at pick up and drop off time, however, please keep in mind that supervision is still required of the other children in their care

making a lengthy visit not possible. If you would like to have a private conversation with them or center management beyond our parent teacher conferences, please see the director to schedule a time that is convenient for all parties. We welcome your questions and concerns and want to make sure that you have our complete attention so that we can help you as best as we can.

Again, if you have any questions, comments, or concerns about our program, we encourage open communication with the staff. Through open communication, we can ensure that all parties are well-informed and working as partners.

Parent Expectations

Please understand, young children are present in our building. Some adult language is not appropriate for young children. TBELC prohibits swearing or cursing on our property. Threatening staff, children, or other parents will not be tolerated per Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. TBELC reserves the right to terminate care in the event of disruptive behavior from a parent or guardian. TBELC must follow all rules on discipline and guidance as outlined in the Texas Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers. All adults, including parents, must follow these rules while on our property.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Conferences are a time set aside for parents and teachers to review a child's assessment and portfolio or work, discuss strengths and areas of growth as well as set goals. TBELC conducts parent teacher conferences twice each year. The first is scheduled for the fall or approximately 6 weeks after your child has been enrolled in our care. During this conference we will focus on goals and objective for the school year. The second conference is held in the spring and is typically about accomplishments that have been made during the school year.

Holidays, Birthdays and Special Events

We honor major holidays and birthdays. If you would like to provide a special treat for a birthday or holiday, please arrange this with our administration prior to the event. For holiday parties or other classroom activities, your child's teacher will post sign up sheets for snacks or other materials needed. Please, when sending food ensure that it is store bought and sealed. We encourage and invite you to participate in all of our special events.

Policy Review

As a parent, you may review any of our policies at any time. You may request these from center management if needed. The director will be happy to discuss any policy or procedure with you at any time. All TBELC policies and procedures are reviewed at minimum annually and updated as needed. If any updates are made, parents will be notified in writing.

Parent Handbook Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have been provided a copy of TBELC's Parent Handbook and was provided an opportunity to ask any questions or receive any clarification that was needed.

I will follow the policies outlined in this book during the duration of my child's enrollment at the program. I understand that care for my children may be terminated if I do not follow these policies.

Children enrolled in the program:

Child Name: _____ DOB: _____

Child Name: _____ DOB: _____

Child Name: _____ DOB: _____

Child Name: _____ DOB: _____

Child Name: _____ DOB: _____

Child Name: _____ DOB: _____

Parent Name (print): _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

Director Signature: _____

Date: _____