

Blackbird Childcare Center Handbook

(231) 526-4605

Welcome to Blackbird Childcare Center. We are excited to have your child enrolled in our program. Our center will focus on creative play, basic learning and socialization skills. Our goal is to provide a safe and quality program for the community of Harbor Springs. It is important that parents read this handbook carefully to develop a common understanding of expectations and become oriented with the program requirements needed for your child to attend. We want your family to be happy and comfortable with our “at school” care.

Program Philosophy

We strive to provide an environment of trust, understanding, comfort and safety for the children in our care. We hope to instill a sense of personal responsibility, empathy toward others, a desire to learn, and an ability to keep busy while having fun with schoolmates in each child.

Program Plan

Hours of operation are from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Those children attending the morning kindergarten or preschool program may attend our center from the time their class is dismissed through 6:00 p.m. Children attending the afternoon session may arrive at our opening time of 7:30 a.m. and stay until afternoon classes begin. Children are also welcome to return to the center once afternoon classes are dismissed and stay through our closing time of 6:00 p.m. Our daily classroom routine includes the following:

- Daily outside play – even for a few minutes
Please send appropriate outerwear.
- Group story and music time
- Quiet rest time
- Small group activities
- Group games and free play

Children must hang their outerwear and backpacks upon arrival. Parents must provide a morning and afternoon snack for their child each day. The children will eat their lunch in the classroom at 11:15 a.m. A refrigerator is available in our childcare room to store your child’s lunch box. If a child seems to be sick while at the center, parents will be called and they must pick up their child. Parents are required to frequently check their purple folders for newsletters, billing statements and important classroom information. On our doorway, you will find message tags to where we would be if not in our room. Please remember to check that location if we are not in the classroom.

Fees

A non-refundable enrollment fee of \$50.00 is required upon acceptance to the program. The daily fee for childcare is \$4.00/hour for 3 year olds and \$3.50/hour for children ages 4 and up. Drop-in rates are \$4.00/hour regardless of the child’s age. Rates are subject to change and parents will be notified if this should occur.

Please see the current Client Contract for a complete description of charges and payment agreement

Childcare Accounts

Clients will find their invoices for the week of services in their purple folders on Mondays. Each client agrees to pay the invoice balance by 6:00 pm that Friday to avoid delinquency charges.

FIA

Families that qualify for FIA are still obligated to pay the fifty dollar enrollment fee. Once all the paper work is filed and we receive all required information your account and payment plan then will be set up. Billing slips will be put in your purple file folders and you are responsible to pay the remaining balance that FIA does not pay.

Delinquent Accounts

Delinquency charges will be posted to all delinquent accounts each day at 6:00 pm. An account is delinquent when payment in accordance with the contract has not occurred. A delinquency charge of \$1.00/business day applies to the account for the duration of the delinquency. If after three weeks this account is still delinquent, childcare will be terminated until the account has been paid in full.

Drop-In

“Drop-In” services are available to children who are not enrolled in our program only if space is available. Payment is due at the time of sign-up. Payment is still required even if your child cancels, is sick, or does not show up. A charge of \$4.00/hour will be applied for the time your child is in childcare.

Late Pick Up

Parents who pick up their child after 6:00 p.m. (according to the classroom clock) must pay a \$10.00 fee per child. This fee must be paid before your child can return to the childcare center.

Scheduling

Each client is required to fill out a Client Contract. Clients must complete the contract before the start of childcare. The contract is binding for the duration of the school year when signed by both parties. ***There are no credits for cancellations, sick days, vacations or no shows.*** You may add days by checking with the center to insure space is available for your child.

Please see the current client contract for a complete description of charges and payment agreements.

Enrollment Policies

A child may be signed up through Blackbird Childcare Center only. Upon receipt of an Enrollment Request Form, the center will start enrollment procedures. In the event of a waiting list, the center will keep this form on file and use it to contact you when a space for your child becomes available. No child will be accepted without current immunizations. Hepatitis B vaccination is required of all childcare attendees as of 1/97. Varicella (chicken pox) vaccination is required of all childcare attendees as of 1/00. In the event that your child has had chicken pox, please provide us with a note from your physician stating the month and year of infection. All enrollments are contingent upon a thirty day "get acquainted period". At the end of this period, Blackbird Childcare Center reserves the right to discontinue care if we feel the arrangement is not positive for everyone. It is of the utmost importance that all the children fit together as a group.

The following paperwork must be on file **before** a child may attend Blackbird Childcare Center:

- Emergency Card
- Immunization record
- Parent Contract
- Updated Physical form
- \$50.00 non-refundable enrollment fee

All children that are enrolled **MUST** be fully toilet trained. Pull-ups, rubber pants or diapers are not allowed. We do understand that children occasionally have accidents and we ask that you supply a change of clothing in the child's backpack for such an occasion. If your child consistently wets or soils their clothing, the child's enrollment will be terminated.

Snacks/Lunch

Clients must provide daily snacks and lunches for their children. BBCCC will not manage school lunch accounts. Please contact the lunchroom to set up an account. Client agrees to pay any hot lunch charges that occur if their child arrives at the childcare center without a lunch. During the winter months, we will be eating cold lunch in the classroom.

Medication

State regulations do not allow us to give your child medication unless we have a written statement from you. Medicine must be in its original container bearing the child's name and that of the physician. Medication should be administered at home whenever possible. Over the counter medications, such as Tylenol, may be given with permission to comfort a child, but cannot be used to mask symptoms. Over the counter medications will only be administered if an accurate dosage for the age of your child is found on the label or guidelines are provided in writing from a physician's office. All medication administered at the center must be recorded on the medication log regardless of who is giving the medication. All medication must be given to a staff member by the parent when on school property. A child is at no time allowed to carry or store medication of any kind in a backpack.

Child Illness

If your child shows signs of illness while in our care, we will notify you immediately. These signs include but are not limited to:

- temperature about 100.5 degree F
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- rash
- nasal drainage
- eye redness or drainage
- irritability
- persistent cough
- sore throat
- inability to participate in daily activities
- loss of appetite

Parents or designated emergency contact must pick up the child within 30 minutes of receiving the telephone call. If a staff member feels your child is ill upon arrival and should not stay at the center, it will be necessary for the parent to make arrangements to take the child home immediately. Please update your emergency contact form for any changes that might occur, i.e. change of work place/telephone number, contact people, etc.

Infectious Illness

Once a child's illness is diagnosed by a licensed physician as infectious, parents are asked to report this diagnosis to the center so that all other parents can be notified. Your child's name will not be mentioned. If your child is taking an antibiotic due to illness, you may not bring the child to the center until they have been on the antibiotic for at least 24 hours.

Incident Reports

If your child should become injured while in attendance at the center, a written notification will be give to you. You will be required to sign this report acknowledging that you are aware the incident occurred.

Discipline

Discipline begins with a talk with the child followed by a change of activity. Time out is used as a time for the child to think about their behavior and actions. The child and teacher will then discuss the child's behavior and they may return to their activity. This puts the child in control of their own behavior. We will talk to parents if the need presents itself. We are here to encourage positive behavior. Withdrawal procedures will commence if a child is consistently mean, uncontrollable or disruptive. Open communication between parents and care-givers is important. We do our best to inform parents of their child's behavior daily. Please work with your child at home regarding appropriate behavior at the center.

Napping

Each child who attends the center at rest time will be provided a mat and be expected to rest each day. Please provide your child with a pillow and blanket if it is needed. Children need an appropriate bag to store their naptime belongings in. The center is not responsible for any lost articles. Napping items need to be kept in the bag and parents are responsible for washing the items on a weekly basis.

Clothing

We ask that children be dressed in washable play clothes so they may participate in all activities. In the summer, children should bring in their own sun screen, swim suit and beach towel. Sandals with straps must be worn...no flip-flops. In the winter, warm outerwear will be needed. Boots, snow pants, jackets, mittens and hats are required. This is the school policy. Without proper attire, the child will spend their recess standing on the sidewalk and not be able to participate in playtime. Please label your child's clothing.

Personal Items and Toys

We strongly discourage children from bringing personal toys to the childcare. We are not responsible for lost or broken toys. We do allow special days for "show and tell". If items are brought from home on "show and tell" days, your child must share with all other children or the child will be asked to put it away in their backpack.

Field Trips

We plan several field trips throughout the school year and summer months. Parents will be notified in advance of all outings that we plan. Every child must have a release form signed by a parent or guardian to attend. A Harbor Springs school bus will be used to transport children when walking is not practical.

Withdrawal

If it becomes necessary that you withdraw your child, all childcare fees must be paid in accordance with the current contract. Blackbird Childcare Center reserves the right to have a child withdrawn from the program if behavior prohibits them or other children from benefiting from the program.

Holidays/Breaks

Although we are located outside the school building and are operated by the school system, we do not necessarily follow the school calendar. We will be open on all half-days of school. We will be closed on the following days:

- Thanksgiving Break
- Christmas Eve and Christmas Day/New Year's Break
- Spring Break – Dates will be posted
- Memorial Day
- The 4th of July
- The last two weeks of August through the first day of school

Classroom Guidelines

1. Primarily is THE GOLDEN RULE.
Do unto others, as you would have others do unto you.
2. Use appropriate classroom language.
3. Only use other people’s things if they give permission.
4. Spitting or biting is unacceptable.
Child may be subject to dismissal per Director’s discretion.
5. Children are responsible for cleaning up their own work or play area when finished.
6. Wash hands after using the bathroom and before eating.
7. Children check in with the staff when they arrive.
8. Client must report any change to your child’s schedule to the center as soon as possible.
Please work with us in providing a secure, predictable experience for your child.
9. Anyone you ask to pick up your child MUST be on your enrollment card.
If a staff member is not familiar with this person, picture identification is required before BBCCC will release your child from childcare.
Please call if you are going to be late. This could change our numbers and staffing. Your child worries about you just as you do them.

We hold an OPEN DOOR policy to encourage visits by parents whenever possible. We feel that open discussion between parents and staff is vital. Please come to us if you have any concerns and we will work with you to alleviate problems as they may arise.

Karey Scholten, Blackbird Elementary School Principal
Tami Keller, Blackbird Childcare Director

I have read the Blackbird Childcare Center Handbook, understand the content, and agree to abide by all policies stated therein. The Blackbird Childcare Center’s days/hours of operation, policies, and rates may be subject to change at the beginning of each session.

Parent Signature

Date

Child’s name

Updated January 2008
