



Bloom

EARLY LEARNING & CHILD CARE

Parent Handbook

• 2023 •

Welcome to Bloom Early Learning & Child Care

We are very excited that you chose Bloom as the place for you and your child. This is a special place full of love with great staff who will do their best to care, nurture, teach, and keep your child safe. We are in this together and are committed to open communication, making this the best possible experience for you and your child. Please read this handbook so you know what the rules are and what guides us in our work. If you have any questions or concerns, please talk to the teachers, Center Director or the Assistant Director.

Let's work together to make Bloom a great place!

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Bloom History and Mission Statement

History

Kids' Care Connection (KCC) began in response to a challenge by the pastor of Messiah United Methodist Church in Plymouth, Minnesota in 1997. The pastor, Dr. Rolland Robinson, was concerned about the federal welfare-to-work legislation and how families would find affordable, high quality child care. Members from the church accepted Dr. Robinson's challenge and endorsed a financial campaign to expand the church building to accommodate a child care center/preschool. After months of research, planning, and diligent efforts, KCC opened its doors in July 2000.

Kids' Care Connection (KCC) is now Bloom

We simply realized that our name was holding us back in many ways. The meaning of Kids' Care Connection was unclear to many and people used the acronym KCC because it was faster and easier to say. Nothing about the name said "quality early learning" and many people thought it was a referral service for finding child care providers. We were being confused with and associated with the many community organizational acronyms CFKI, IOCP, FCDC, ECFE, etc. It affected our ability to reach families for our early learning and child care services. It also impacted our ability to raise the needed funds for our scholarships for low-income families.

In the beginning of 2014 the decision to change our name was a thoughtful and strategic one. Be assured that the only thing that changed is the name: the governance, staff, mission and programs and everything else are exactly the same as before.

We needed a name that would speak more to our mission, feel more fun and be easily said and remembered. We have an important and unique story to tell and our former name was no longer effective at telling it. Our fresh look and improved name will better communicate our message and mission to families in our community. Bloom will have a stronger impact when reaching out to businesses and organizations for the needed scholarship funds.

Why "Bloom?"

We selected Bloom because of its meaning: "a flourishing, healthy condition" or "to cause to flourish or thrive." The word "Bloom" truly reflects who we are. Bloom Early Learning & Child Care is a place that cultivates the best in all our children. It's a place to learn and grow. It's a place that makes quality child care affordable for low-income families. And it's a place where children and families can blossom and thrive — and cost would not be a barrier.

Why a butterfly?

In nature, plants can bloom with the help of a butterfly. And the butterfly was selected as our symbol because of its transformational qualities and its ability to fly. It represents the way that Bloom can change the lives of children and families in our community, helping single mothers and parents in low-income jobs to alter their paths in life; to work or pursue training and education in order to achieve success... and fly!

History and Mission Statement (cont.)

Mission: Bloom Early Learning provides equitable access to exceptional early learning and care so that children and families thrive and find pathways out of poverty.

To fulfill this mission, we strive to enroll approximately half of our children from families who are challenged financially. While our enrollment numbers vary from that goal at times, we strive to help as many children and families as we can through our Shirley Robinson Scholarship Fund. We apply for grants and seek funding from private donors, churches, community groups and the business community. We also have various fundraising events. You can help by serving on a committee, giving a donation, and attending the events.

Tagline: A passion to nurture each child, a mission to make it affordable.

Our tuition rates are determined to be at the average rate for similar centers in our geographic area. In addition to our Shirley Robinson Scholarships, some of our families receive tuition assistance from county and state programs. Additionally, Bloom is part of a larger community collaborative, Caring for Kids, that provides early childhood scholarships, parent education, and school readiness to families in the Wayzata School District.

Vision: To prepare children for success in school and life and to build opportunity for families of low income.

Our Values:

- **Access.** All children deserve a loving and nurturing start in life. Providing families with quality care and early learning enables parents to pursue education and employment that builds opportunity and pathways out of poverty.
- **Individualization.** We respond to the individual needs of children and their families. Meeting their unique situations ensures that we provide the appropriate support necessary for learning and growth.
- **Quality.** We apply best practices in early childhood development and support talented staff in delivering quality learning. Doing so is key to achieving exceptional outcomes and foundational to a child's social and academic success.
- **Community.** Financial and volunteer support is core to our work. The community formed through generosity helps families become stronger, healthier, and more self-sufficient.

Our Goals:

- Advance and sustain quality centers.
- Serve more families of low income.
- Improve financial sustainability.
- Build a culture that reflects and values diversity, equity, belonging and inclusion.

Value-centered

The Virtues Project plays an important role at Bloom. The Virtues Project was developed by Linda Popov and emphasizes basic values that build character and responsibility. We use the Virtues Project as a tool to help us model positive behavior as adults and to help children cultivate within themselves:

Patience	Generosity	Assertiveness
Honesty	Love	Orderliness
Respect	Courtesy	Flexibility
Gentleness	Trust	Tolerance

Each month we highlight a different virtue. Staff in the toddler and preschool rooms talk about the virtue and help children begin to understand what the virtue would “look like.” The monthly virtue is highlighted in the Bloom newsletter serving as a reminder to all of us to look for opportunities to teach and reinforce the virtue.

The Virtues Project is an excellent tool to help guide our children in developing characteristics that will enhance their self-esteem, build self-responsibility and the social skills that will be necessary for them to succeed in a wide variety of situations.

Bloom Philosophy and Values

Bloom believes in high quality care and education for all children. Child care and early childhood education enhance the physical, social and emotional growth of the child. We also believe that our environment must foster the personal and professional growth of our staff. Child care is one be a part of their lives. Working together, families and child care staff nurture healthy, loving, and responsible children.

We value the trust you place in Bloom and are committed to the following values:

1. We will strive to provide consistency in the staff that care for your child as well as maintain a secure, loving, safe and respectful place for you and your child.
2. We believe that children learn through play. Play is a child's work. We help your child learn through exploration and a variety of experiences.
3. We see your child as unique, and we apply child development principles so that we can meet children where they are and help them develop at their own pace.
4. We are committed to enhancing each child's self-esteem. We recognize and celebrate the rights of young children and will empower them to achieve their unique potentials.
5. We strive to create a stimulating atmosphere, by fostering the innate curiosity and enthusiasm within each child.
6. We are committed to anti-bias attitudes (in culture, ethnicity, gender, age, socioeconomic status and religion) and will model and teach respect and appreciation for all people.
7. We view ourselves as a "team" with parents/guardians and recognize the primary and most important role you play in your child's life. Our care for your child is enhanced by open communication, trust and a positive relationship between parents and staff. Parents are invited to review and discuss our program plan with the Bloom Director at any time. We also encourage you to talk with your child's teacher about your child's progress on a regular basis. Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year but you are welcome to contact the teacher at any time.
8. We honor our staff and strive to foster a positive, professional, healthy environment that enhances staff development and learning.
9. We encourage children to use peaceful conflict resolution by expressing their feelings and discussing positive choices. We discourage aggressive play and do not expose children to violence in books or film.
10. We strive to demonstrate to children a respect and appreciation for the earth's resources.
11. Bloom prohibits smoking, firearms, and weapons at our center along with any significant hazards that pose a risk to children and adults.

Structure and Governing Body

Bloom is governed by a volunteer Board including community members, business leaders, the Executive Director, Center Director and Business Manager and representatives from Messiah United Methodist Church. The Board's purpose is to provide guidance and support for the mission of Bloom.

The Executive Director of Bloom reports to the Board and recommends actions to the Board appropriate to the best interests of Bloom. The Center Director supervises the administration of Bloom in accordance with the policies adopted by the Board and by licensing requirements of the Minnesota Department of Human Services and the standards set by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

Your questions, ideas and concerns should be addressed with your child's teachers, Center Director, and/or the Business Manager. If you feel your concerns are not being adequately dealt with, you may contact the Executive Director or Bloom Board Chair.

Licensing/Accreditation

Bloom Early Learning & Child Care became nationally accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children in September 2007. We achieved this recognition after creating and implementing various program components that include a curriculum based on child development, an assessment tool, and a commitment to teacher training and education. This is an on-going process that requires us to continue striving for excellence to maintain NAEYC standards.

Bloom Early Learning & Child Care is licensed by the State of Minnesota's Department of Human Services. The license is posted by the front door and is available for your review. Reviews and communications also are posted on the board. Bloom's licensing record is available upon request from DHS. You may contact DHS to report a suspected violation by Bloom Early Learning & Child Care by calling 651-431-6500.

As part of the state's licensing requirements, all employees of Bloom are mandated reporters and are required by law to report to the proper authorities any suspicion of child abuse, maltreatment or neglect. The identity of persons making these reports is completely confidential.

In keeping with state-mandated guidelines, each staff member is required to participate in continuing education classes relevant to their profession. The number of continuing education credits is based on the number of hours a staff person works each year. For a full-time employee, approximately 40 hours of continuing education hours are required. All of our staff must be certified in CPR and trained in First Aid. Bloom assists staff in obtaining their CE hours when possible. We hope you will understand that one day per year Bloom is closed so that staff can attend a Staff Development Day to help them obtain their required continuing education hours. This is typically the Friday of MEA, in October.

Enrollment

Bloom does not discriminate in the enrollment of children upon the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, religion, disability, socioeconomic status or religion. While our goal is to never turn away a family due to financial need, our scholarship funding is limited and, in order for Bloom to remain financially viable, we must maintain a ratio of private pay enrollees and those who receive scholarships.

Enrollment is open first to children requiring full-time (five day a week) care. Children requiring part-time care are accepted if space is available.

Your child's enrollment begins with a tour of the center and a meeting with the Center Director. At that time if you are interested in enrollment and there are spaces available, you will be given the enrollment forms. If space is not available, you may put your name on our waiting list and will be contacted should an opening occur.

The following enrollment forms must be completed and returned to Bloom prior to your child's first day at Bloom:

1. Emergency Authorization Form contains the names of parents/guardians and home, work and cell phone numbers we can call in the case of an emergency. It also contains the names of two other persons whom we can call in the event of an emergency if the parents or guardians cannot be reached. This card also gives us permission to call 911 and to transport your child to the hospital of our choice in the event of an emergency. It also contains the names of persons other than yourself who are authorized to drop off or pick up your child. PLEASE NOTE: We must have your verbal notification whenever someone other than yourself is picking up your child even if that person's name is on the emergency card. *Please write their name in the sign-in/out book.*
2. Child's Health Information Forms: Child's Immunization Form, Health Care Summary, Medication Form if necessary
3. Enrollment Application
4. Parent/Guardian Understanding Agreement
5. Permission for photographing your child
6. Permission to use sunscreen, diaper creams, or hand lotion
7. Permission to obtain records
8. Infectious Disease and Illness Policy and Understanding
9. CACFP-Child Enrollment Form (Food Program)
10. CACFP-Household Income Statement

Upon enrollment you will provide a onetime \$100 non-refundable deposit that goes towards the first tuition payment. A onetime \$60 registration fee is also required at this time.

Families must start when the opening becomes available. If circumstances arise that delays the child's start date a family can hold the spot by paying 75% of the fulltime tuition for up to 3 months to save the spot.

Operations

Hours of Operation

Bloom Early Learning & Child Care is open from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. each day Monday through Friday except for:

- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Presidents’ Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Fourth of July
- Labor Day
- One staff in-service day scheduled annually (the Friday of MEA Break in October)
- Thanksgiving Day and the day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve Day
- Christmas Day
- The week between Christmas and the New Year
- New Year’s Day

We establish our tuition on an annual basis so there is no reduction in fees for these holidays. *Tuition is based off of a 51 week year. You will not be charged for the week between Christmas and the New Year.*

Classroom Size

We are licensed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services to provide care to 9 infants, 18 toddlers, 25 preschool aged children and 18 pre-K children. We accept children from ages 6 weeks through 5 years (the first day of kindergarten).

Child: Staff Ratios

	DHS	NAEYC
Infants: (6 weeks – 16 months)	4:1	3:1
Toddlers (16 months –35 months)	7:1	5:1
Preschoolers (35 months to Pre-K)	10:1	8:1

We staff according to NAEYC ratios with the understanding that there may be a rare occasion when we follow DHS guidelines. There also are times when we have additional staff or volunteers helping to ensure smooth transitions, naptime, meals, or when a particular child needs additional attention. This makes for a calmer atmosphere and higher quality care.

Release of Children

When you drop off or pick up your child we ask that you refrain from using your cell phone. These are important times for your child and s/he needs your full attention. In addition, this may be a time when you need to communicate information to the staff or the staff needs to communicate information to you. Both parents and staff are asked to keep this communication brief since the staff is responsible for supervising other children during these times. Feel free to ask the teacher to call you if you want to discuss something more in depth.

Operations (cont.)

Sign-in and Sign-out Procedure

Students must be signed in and out in the Sign-in/out Book located on the parent table as you enter Bloom. It is extremely important that you sign your child in and out each day s/he is here. The adult that is signing in and out must write their name next to the time. This is a safety precaution for your child. If someone other than a parent picks up a child, this person must be listed on your emergency card (completed at the time of enrollment). In addition, the day that someone other than a parent is to pick up a child, we must receive a written note or a call from the parent (if we recognize your voice) telling us that someone other than the parent will be picking up your child. We will check the ID of all persons coming to pick up your child if we have not met him/her before. We are not allowed to release your child to a person under the age of 14 even if that child is a sibling. Bloom encourages all families to turn their vehicle off and lock during the drop off and pick up procedures.

Late Pick-up Charges

Bloom is licensed to provide care only from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday-Friday. You must pick up your child before 6:00 p.m. Parents who arrive late to pick up their child will be charged a late fee. This fee is \$1.00 per minute for each minute between 6:00-6:15 p.m. After 6:15 p.m., we charge \$2.00 per minute. After 6:30, the charge is \$5.00 per minute. The late charge will be added to your next tuition invoice and will require payment on the next tuition due date. After 6:45 p.m. if your child is not picked up, our policy is to call the Plymouth Police Department to come and pick up your child.

If you are persistently late in picking up your child it may jeopardize your child's enrollment at Bloom. We are only licensed until 6:00 p.m. There could be liability issues and staff well-being is affected when you are chronically late picking up your child.

Absence Policy

Our program and licensing rules require us to staff classrooms based on the number of children who are scheduled to attend each day. Therefore, we cannot give refunds or discounts for days your child is absent due to illness or vacation. Because we are a small child care center, we cannot guarantee spots will be saved when wanting time off for families who do not need summer care or want an extended leave for other reasons. Full tuition, paid on time, will hold your slot for any time your child is absent.

Holding Policy

Families who will be taking a month or more off can chose between two options to hold their child's spot. Families may decide to move down to the minimum schedule of having their child attend two days per week for the summer or pay 25% of tuition without having their child attend. If you choose to have your child attend two days per week, the days must be discussed and agreed upon with the office and be the same each week.

Transportation

Parents/guardians are expected to provide transportation to and from Bloom Early Learning & Child Care. State law requires that all children are to be restrained when traveling in a vehicle. We are required to notify the authorities if we see that your child is being transported without appropriate restraint (i.e., car seat or seat belt).

Operations (cont.)

Clothing

Please dress your child in comfortable play clothes and understand that your child will be involved in activities like painting, coloring, using play dough, climbing and snow play where clothes may be soiled. Clothes should be washable and easy for your child to manage on his/her own, especially when toilet training or beyond. When your child is learning to use the toilet, please do not dress him/her in one piece clothes or those with lots of snaps or buttons. Sweat pants or other pants with an elasticized waist work well. Please label all clothing with your child's name. Mitten clips are a great help when we go outside, as are comfortable, easy on and off boots.

Please send along a complete change of clothing for your child and be sure to replace it if used. On occasion, if we do not find a change of clothing for your child, we will dress him/her in clothing from Bloom. This clothing is labeled "Bloom." Please wash and return these items (socks, underwear, pants, etc.) as soon as possible so we have them available for all of the children.

Quilts

Children who enroll at Bloom will be given a handmade quilt as a gift. This quilt is to be used for naptime each day and parents take the quilt home each Friday to launder and return it Monday morning. A group of women from Messiah United Methodist Church generously donate the materials and talent to make our beautiful quilts. Quilts are not allowed in the cribs in the infant room but a parent may pick one out to take with them when the child transitions to the toddler room.

Daily Safety Inspections

Teachers and administrators do daily safety checks within the classrooms, playground and large muscle room noting and correcting any hazardous conditions, materials, defective equipment or spills. Should you observe any safety concerns, please inform a teacher, the Center Director, or the Business Manager immediately.

Bringing Items from Home

Children are required to leave toys, food, candy, chewing gum, pets, and money at home. When children bring their own toys to school they are more likely to lose them, break them or have trouble sharing them with others. The toys and materials at Bloom are shared by all children as a part of their learning experience. If toys are brought from home, they will immediately be placed in the child's "cubby" until the child leaves for the day. Some of the classrooms have special "show and share" days where things from home can be shared by your child, but teachers will inform you of when they occur.

Insurance

Bloom has a liability policy in effect to the limits required by the State of Minnesota Department of Human Services. Levels of insurance and coverage of benefits are on file in the Director's office.

Operations (cont.)

School Closing Due to Weather

If necessary, Bloom will close due to weather conditions. We will rely on the Wayzata Public Schools' (WPS) closings to determine when the weather is too severe for staff and families to drive safely. Please check WCCO's website and your email when weather conditions seem questionable. If you see that WPS (or all schools in Minnesota) are closed or delayed for blizzard/snow, Bloom also will be closed/delayed. If WPS closes for extreme cold, Bloom will remain open as long as it has not been recommended there be no travel. If WPS are open despite weather conditions, Bloom also will be open. Tuition is charged on days off due to weather conditions.

Tuition

Bloom's tuition is paid bi-monthly with tuition due on the 1st and the 15th of each month. Invoices are sent via email 5 days before the new tuition cycle begins. On your email statement you can set up your access to Bloom's Payment Portal to pay electronically and check your payment history. Tuition rates are set for each classroom. When your child has completed a transition into the next age group, tuition is then adjusted to reflect the new tuition rate. Each year, our board of directors assesses tuition rates and increases for the beginning of each calendar year. Tuition Rate notices are communicated via email and paper copies will be provided at the parent desk. Bloom enrolls full time attendance first and cannot accommodate rotating schedules.

A 2-week notices needs to be communicated to the office of any change to your child's schedule that will qualify for a tuition change. If your child will be gone for the length of a billing cycle or longer, you can pay 25% of tuition to hold your child's spot during that time.

Program

We focus on providing each child with a well-rounded program including developmentally-appropriate activities that meet individual and group needs. Our program strives to help your child develop physically, intellectually, socially and emotionally in a safe, secure and loving environment. We promote a variety of experiences for your child and encourage him/her to explore creatively and independently as well as in groups.

Bloom Early Learning & Child Care recognizes the need to encourage value development in children. The Virtues Project offers a framework that teachers and parents can model to help children build character, social skills, and self-esteem. We try to have as much consistency as possible for the children. We make every attempt to have the same staff provide on-going personal contact, meaningful learning activities, supervision, and care for the same group of children. The program is organized and staffed to minimize the number of group, teaching staff, and classroom transitions experienced by an individual child during the day and program year. We keep infants in the infant room until 16 months of age. They begin a transition period at 15 months to gradually introduce them to the toddler room. The toddlers begin transitioning to the Preschool room around 34 months.

Field Trips

Bloom Early Learning & Child Care periodically will plan field trips for preschool and pre-K children. Staff to child ratios will be maintained and we will take emergency information and a first aid kit on the field trip. A staff person trained in CPR will be present. A school bus or Plymouth Dial-A-Ride will provide the transportation. For your child to participate, you must sign a permission slip prior to the field trip. This permission slip will be placed on the parent board several days before the trip. Please sign the permission slip as soon as possible so your child is able to participate. Parents are encouraged to chaperone. This is a great way for you to see your child with her/his friends and get to know the teachers and other children/parents as well.

Birthdays

We welcome parents to be a part of their child's birthday celebration. Parents should discuss plans or wishes with the child's teachers. If you bring treats, they must be commercially prepared and packaged, and peanut free. We are not allowed to serve homemade items at Bloom. If you are giving toys or favors to the other children in the classroom, be sure they are safe and developmentally appropriate.

Research or Public Relations/Permission for Photographs

Bloom will take part in occasional child development research. When this occurs, parents will have the programs fully explained to them. Parental permission must be obtained on a situational basis for each child to participate. We also ask for your signed permission to use any photographs or video of your child in public relations, marketing or advertising media. An initial release is obtained to use your child's photo in and around Bloom, and on the website.

Bloom Early Learning & Child Care Staff

(See the Staff Bulletin Board in the Bloom hallway for pictures and backgrounds of our staff members)

Our staff is comprised of an Executive Director, Center Director, Business Manager, Lead Teachers, Assistant Teachers, Classroom Aides, a part-time cook and custodians. Lead and Assistant Teachers must have a college degree in Education, a certificate in early childhood education or college credits with experience in child care. Each room has a Lead Teacher who is responsible for the curriculum plan, daily functioning of the room and assuring that licensing requirements and safety and health regulations are met. In addition, the Lead Teacher will be the person you meet with for parent conferences twice a year. All staff in every room are responsible for maintaining a safe, healthy, nurturing environment for your child and for communicating with you about your child's day. Do not hesitate to ask staff members about your child's progress. Should you ever have a concern about a staff member, please speak to the Lead Teacher or the Center Director.

Consistency and continuity are important values at Bloom. We try to provide staff with a working environment that is pleasant, challenging and compassionate. We appreciate your help in acknowledging the positive things you see our staff doing. Your thanks and encouragement mean a lot to us!

- When a staff member is absent, we will have another staff person replace him/her or management staff will fill in.
- All staff must complete a criminal background check as a part of their hiring process.
- This background check is conducted by the Minnesota Department of Human Services.
- Volunteers who supervise children must also complete a criminal background check.
- By law, all Bloom employees are mandated reporters of suspected abuse, maltreatment, and neglect.

We believe that the interaction your child has with the adults at Bloom is key to high quality care. We strive to hire and maintain highly qualified childcare professionals to care for your child. We provide training for staff so they can continue to develop and update their skills as early childhood professionals.

Classroom Environment

Bloom has separate classrooms for Infants, (6 weeks-16 months) Toddlers (16-35 months), Preschoolers (35 months-4-years-old), and pre-K (4- and 5-year-olds). Each classroom is well equipped with toys, manipulatives, blocks, art supplies, dramatic play and other learning materials. We help children develop self-help skills by providing child-size furniture and equipment and placing most materials within reach of the children. As children grow, we encourage them to put on and take off their own clothing. We teach toddlers and preschoolers to help pick up toys before transitioning to another play area. Your cooperation in reinforcing these habits is much appreciated.

In the classroom, teachers and children work and play together in small and large groups. These activities involve play time as well as structured teacher and child-initiated curriculum.

When Children Transition to the Next Age Group

State licensing requires that we wait until a child is a certain chronological age to transition him/her to the next classroom. For infants, this age is 15 months. For toddlers to transition to the preschool room, it is between the ages of 33-35 months. We also base the transition on your child's readiness. We'll discuss this with you as your child gets close to the transition age. Any change can be both stressful and exciting for you and your child. We'll do our best to help prepare for this transition and we value any suggestions or input you may have. Meeting with your child's new teachers will be a helpful way for you to get to know the new schedule, curriculum, and the routine of the new classroom. Your child's current teacher will also have a meeting to discuss the best route to make this transition to the next group as smooth as possible.

Large Muscle Play

Bloom is fortunate to have a wonderful playroom downstairs with high ceilings and huge windows that allow children a beautiful view of the outdoors. We use this space for large muscle activities such as running, climbing, riding toys, playing with balls and other active play that helps children "run off energy" and develop their physical and emotional skills. Each classroom has scheduled blocks of time to use this room. On days when weather does not permit going outside, the room is a great substitute for playground time.

Outdoor Play

Fresh air and nature are important elements in a child's development and whenever the weather allows, we encourage staff to take the children outside. We have a completely enclosed playground with climbing equipment, riding toys, a large sandbox, dramatic play equipment, a garden and many other materials that allow children to explore and learn. Each classroom has at least two scheduled daily playground times. State licensing requires that we include outdoor time each day that the weather permits. Therefore, children who attend our center must be well enough to participate in all activities including outdoor play. Please be sure your child has appropriate clothing for the season. If the temperature (including wind chill) is below zero degrees F. we will not go outside. With your permission, we apply sun screen on days it is needed. On occasion, teachers also take children for walks around the property. Children will be closely supervised at all times.

Pets at Bloom

Bloom will notify families if animals will be present in the building for in house field trips or visits. This will be communicated in the newsletter, and or with a permission slip. Animals provide the children with ample learning opportunities, from science and observation to the social emotion support.

Our preschool classroom has two guinea pigs that stay in their room. They are sister's named Cali and Squeakers. The children have rules to guide them in caring for them, and for keeping the children safe while doing so. Having the sisters in class sparks many of conversation, journalled observations, and excitement. Children are closely monitored while handling Cali and Squeakers. All children are asked to wash their hands after visiting with the guinea pigs.

Health and Safety

Parents/guardians have the responsibility to inform Bloom when their child has a special medical condition, needs, or allergies so we can provide appropriate care and support.

Illness/Contagious Diseases

For the protection of all children and to comply with DHS Licensing requirements, this policy states that your child must be kept home for the specified amount of time for symptoms such as the following:

ILLNESS/CONDITION	CHILD EXCLUDED FROM BLOOM
Chicken pox, measles	until day 6 after the rash begins
vomiting two or more times in one day	until 24 hours after last vomiting episode
Diarrhea two or more times in one day	until 24 hours after last diarrhea episode
Contagious conjunctivitis (pink eye)	until 24 hours after antibiotic has been started
Strep throat	until 24 hours after antibiotic has been started
Impetigo	until 24 hours after antibiotic has been started
Head lice	until first treatment is completed, no live lice
An axillary temperature of 100 degrees	until 24 hours after temperature is lowered without fever-reducing medication
Unexplained lethargy	until child returns to normal energy level
A reportable illness as specified by the state	Follow guidelines by Minnesota Department of Health and Human Services and a physician determines treatment
Respiratory distress	until child is no longer in respiratory distress
Not able to participate in child care program because of illness	until child is able to participate in activities
Child requires more care than the program staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children in the center	until child does not require more care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children in the center.

PLEASE NOTE THAT YOUR CHILD'S TEMPERATURE MUST BE NORMAL FOR 24 HOURS WITHOUT FEVER-REDUCING MEDICATION BEFORE RETURNING TO BLOOM. This is state law and we must comply.

When a child in our care has been medically diagnosed with a reportable condition, we will notify the appropriate health authorities and the Department of Human Services as required by our licensing agreement. We will follow their requirements for posting information to parents of all exposed children.

Health and Safety (cont.)

We also will notify parents of other contagious but not reportable conditions (such as strep throat, pink eye or chicken pox) by posting a notice in a prominent place for parents to see.

If your child contracts a contagious disease, please notify us as soon as possible.

If Bloom has a confirmed case of a vaccine-preventable disease, all children that are not up to date on their vaccinations will be excluded from care.

If your child becomes ill while at Bloom, we will:

Call parents/guardians and ask that you come and get your child within the hour.

If we are unable to reach parents/guardians, we will call the persons you identified as emergency “back-ups” for you. Your child will be isolated in a designated area and supervised by a staff member who will use comfort measures with your child.

It is the parent’s responsibility to be sure you have alternative arrangements to pick up your child if you cannot. It is also important that you have “back-up” child care in the event you cannot take time off with your child when ill.

Health Care Requirements

The state of Minnesota requires us to maintain an up-to-date medical record on each child in our care. We require that your child have a health care summary signed by your health care provider along with a record of immunization before entering the center for the first time. This is for your child’s benefit and will be kept on file at the center. These forms will be provided when you indicate your interest in attending Bloom. Parents/Guardians have the responsibility to keep the immunization records up-to-date.

You will need to submit a new Health Care Summary and up to date immunization record to us when your child transitions into a new age group as required by state regulations (e.g. when transitioning from the toddler room to the preschool room.)

Medical Emergency

In the event of a medical emergency or accident that requires emergency medical attention, we will first call 911 and then contact the parents. Appropriate first aid will be administered by trained staff. As a part of the admission procedure for Bloom, you will be asked to supply information on your child’s physician and any emergency contact in the event we cannot reach you.

Administering Medication

Bloom staff will administer medication prescribed by a physician to children in our care. The medication must be in its original container, bearing the name of the pharmacy and directions for administration. Parents are required to sign medication permission forms authorizing the staff to administer medication. We require signed permission from parents to administer diaper products, lotion or sunscreen. Other over the counter medications require a doctor’s signed order with instructions for administration.

Health and Safety (cont.)

Alcohol, Tobacco and Illicit Drug Use

Any employee or volunteer found under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs during their working hours at Bloom will be immediately terminated. Smoking is prohibited on Bloom property.

Parents who arrive to pick up their children who appear to be incapacitated in any way will be asked to find other arrangements to transport their child. If the parent refuses, the Bloom employee will call 911 and give the police the parent's name and license number of the vehicle.

Presence of Pets

Bloom will notify families if animals will be present in the building for in house field trips or visits. This will be communicated in the newsletter, and or with a permission slip. Animals provide the children with ample learning opportunities, from science and observation to the social emotion support.

Our preschool classroom has two guinea pigs that stay in their room. They are sister's named Cali and Squeakers. The children have rules to guide them in caring for them, and for keeping the children safe while doing so. Having the sisters in class sparks many of conversation, journaled observations, and excitement. Children are closely monitored while handling Cali and Squeakers. All children are asked to wash their hands after visiting with the guinea pigs.

Cleanliness

Cleanliness and sanitation are extremely important in preventing the spread of disease.

Bloom is cleaned daily by center and custodial staff. Throughout the day, staff members wash their hands frequently with soap. Children's hands are washed before meals and snacks and after toileting. Toys are sanitized daily. Disposable towels are used to dry children and staff's hands. Countertops, tables and other surfaces are washed and disinfected daily. If you as a parent see any issues related to cleanliness or health, please let the Center Director know so we can resolve the problem. Staff attends annual training on preventing the spread of diseases.

Diapering Procedures

Diapers are checked or changed every two hours or more frequently as needed. The proper procedure for diapering is posted in each diapering area. Gloves must be used when the diaper is soiled. All staff are trained in diapering procedures and hand washing technique. Bloom is not able to accept children with cloth diapers.

Safety and Emergency Policies at Bloom

Staff members are trained in CPR, First Aid, Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID), and Abusive Head Trauma (AHT) on a regular basis and there is always someone on duty that is trained in these procedures.

Health and Safety (cont.)

Supervision of Children

No child, of any age, will be left alone at Bloom. All children must be within the sight and sound of program staff at all times. Children, alone or in groups, are not allowed to move throughout the center without adult supervision. Our Transition Procedure has been implemented to assure that all children are accounted for when moving them from area to area. Teachers carry clipboards and match the names with the faces (not relying on headcount).

Confidentiality

A signed release is needed between yourself, Bloom and another organization in order for us to divulge any information regarding your family or child(ren.) Examples of partnering organizations may be Interfaith Outreach and Community Partners (IOCP) and Wayzata Public Schools. All information obtain by bloom is kept confidential.

Fire and Tornado Drills

Monthly fire drills are held so that children and staff feel competent and comfortable with the procedures. Monthly tornado drills are held April-September during the tornado season. You can see our procedure for evacuation and tornado drills posted in each room.

Missing Child Procedure

The teachers must know the names of children in their rooms each day. Attendance is recorded daily. In the event of a missing child, our Missing Child Procedure will be implemented. This procedure is posted in each classroom.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of an emergency Bloom has plans in place that involve relocation, evacuation, and lock down scenarios. In the event of an emergency situation Bloom would contact the parents using the emergency card information. At that time we would share the situation and provide you with the steps to safely be reunited with your child(ren).

Bloom's first relocation destination is Northwest Family Physicians, County Road 101,
763-504-6600

Bloom's second relocation destination is Pancake House, 1415 County Road 101,
952-475-9151

Bloom's third relocation destination is Interfaith Outreach & Community Partners,
1605 County Road 101, 763-489-7500

The staff are trained for emergency situations annually. Please make sure that you keep your child's emergency information current. Emergency cards will be review annually in the fall.

Toilet Training

Around the age of 24 months, you may see the following signs of readiness for toilet training:

- Your child can indicate when s/he is wet or dry.
- Your child remains dry for longer periods of time.
- Your child asks to use the toilet or potty chair.
- Your child can remove and replace his/her own diaper or pull-up.
- Your child has had success with toilet training with very few accidents.

When you see these signs, we ask you to talk with your child's teachers and discuss how you and Bloom staff can best help your child practice and master this important skill. We will want to know what words you and your child use for toileting and we will talk with you about when to have your child wear pull-ups or underwear. During the toilet training process, we will always use a positive approach. Your child will never be punished, blamed or shamed for accidents. We ask that you also take a positive approach with your child. It is not uncommon for children to regress and progress at toilet training. Stress or changes at home or at school can delay the process. Some children are ready for toilet training earlier than others. The most important approach is one that works best for your child and maintains his/her self-respect and self-esteem.

We ask that you work at having your child toilet trained by the time your child is entering the Preschool room at age three. We understand that this is not always possible, but please make a plan with the toddler teachers about working on this prior to the transition.

Meals and Snacks

Bloom provides breakfast, hot lunch and one snack each day. A menu is posted on the Parent Communication board in the front hall next to the sign-in book. We encourage children to try all foods but we never force a child to eat something s/he does not want or like.

If your child has food allergies or restrictions, we will need a special diet form signed by a medical professional. Please talk to someone in the office if you would like more information regarding special diets. Bloom will work with individual families to develop a plan to meet each child's needs and to make sure that each child is provided a proper supplement.

Lunches at Bloom are prepared and catered according to the Minnesota Department of Health standards by Preschool Pantry, located in Edina, MN, which has a SAFE food certification. The preschool class helps serve their own food with "family style" dining encouraged by NAEYC. Staff will sit with the children during snacks and lunch and view this as a great opportunity to help children develop social and self-help skills.

Bloom participates in the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child Nutrition food program which means we receive reimbursement for a portion of our food costs based on the income levels of our clients. You will be asked to complete an income form each year that will be submitted to verify the level of reimbursement Bloom can receive. Your cooperation in returning this form is very much appreciated and critical to the program's benefits.

Meals and Snacks (cont.)

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex (includes sexual orientation and gender identity), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877- 8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (AD-3027) found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: 1. mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; 2. fax (202) 690-7442; or 3. email program.intake@usda.gov.

Bloom is an equal opportunity provider.

We encourage children to say a “thank you” together before eating. Here is the “thank you” we use in case you want to use it at home:

“Thank you for our food.
Thank you for our friends.
Thank you for our family,
And the love that never ends”.

Behavior Guidance

Discipline means to teach, and we help children learn appropriate ways to behave. It does not mean punishment. Punishment can be confusing and harmful to young children and can cause anger and hostility and aggression. Any attempts to guide behavior will depend on the developmental level of the child and what s/he is capable of doing. Discipline is not appropriate for infants because they do not have the capacity to control their impulses. Even at the early toddler stage, very little impulse control is developmentally possible. We believe the best way to guide behavior in these early ages is to distract the child and redirect them to other activities. We do this with patience, compassion and good communication skills, meaning we get down to the child's level and talk softly and kindly to them. Teachers will often use words to help the child express how s/he might be feeling. "You're mad because Josh accidentally pushed you down. That hurt didn't it? Let's see what we can do to help you feel better."

At the older toddler stage and beyond, children begin to develop self-control. The staff may ask the child to "use your words" to express his/her feelings or what s/he wants or find the words as a teachable moment. The staff will help the child problem-solve. "How could both you and Brian play with the truck together?" Children have multiple opportunities throughout the day to build their problem-solving toolbox as gain practice from the staff and with their classmates.

The goal of behavior guidance is to help a child develop self-discipline and the ability to control his or her behavior from within rather than behave only based on his/her fear of the consequences. This goal of this policy is to eliminate the use of suspension, and or expulsion. This means that we try to guide children toward a desire to respect themselves and others. We know that it is not reasonable to expect certain behavior from a child when he or she is not developmentally capable. For example, the attention span of a one-year-old is not long enough for him/her to be able to focus on one thing for very long. It is not realistic to expect a toddler to play cooperatively with several other children. Toddlers almost exclusively demonstrate parallel play; they play next to one another but not really "with" one another.

Most children at the preschool stage are not emotionally mature enough to be in complete control of their behavior and need adult guidance. At Bloom, that guidance is always offered with compassion, caring, respect and consideration for the child's developmental abilities.

Promoting Positive Behavior

All staff is expected to model positive behavior, language, actions, courtesy, and respect. Children are keen observers of what goes on around them and learn from adults using appropriate tone of voice, respectful language, courtesy and compassion. Our goal is that children feel loved, confident and respected even when we are guiding their behavior. We reinforce positive behavior and interactions with smiles, hugs, eye contact, touch, and getting down on the child's level. We also encourage children with our words: "Thank you for sharing." "You seem happy with the hard work you've done". We also promote positive behaviors with activities and positive reinforcement: "Come, sit next to me." "Will you lead the line today?" "You can pick out the song today." "Would you help me serve our snack?" "Would you like to help choose a story to read?"

Promoting Positive Behavior (cont.)

No child may be separated from the group unless the teaching staff has tried less intrusive methods of behavior guidance and found them ineffective and/or if the child's behavior threatens the well-being of themselves or other children. A child requiring separation from the group must be within an unenclosed part of the classroom where s/he can be continuously seen and heard by a staff member. When separation from the group is used as a behavior guidance technique, the child's return to the group must be contingent on the child stopping the behavior that precipitated the separation and the child must be returned to the group as soon as the behavior has stopped. A child from 6 weeks-16 months cannot be separated from the group as a means of behavior guidance. If a child is separated from a group as a means of behavior guidance, it must be noted in the Separation Log Book. If a child is separated from the group three or more times in a day, the child's parent must be notified and this documented.

When a child persistently requires substantial attempts at behavior guidance which appear ineffective, it may be necessary to evaluate whether the child has a special behavior problem or special needs. Bloom may ask Wayzata School's Early Childhood program to observe the situation. If the observer believes it would be helpful for the child to receive special services from the Wayzata School's Early Education program, we will notify the child's parent to obtain permission for the child to be evaluated.

Staff track unregulated behaviors on a Behavior Log in the classroom. If unregulated behaviors persist, a Behavior Plan will be put into place and kept in the child's file. The parents will be involved in writing the plan and will sign the form. If the supports of the observations and behavior plan does not impact the child's daily life at Bloom; Family members will be involved in the discussion if the classroom environment at Bloom can support your child throughout the day. At this time, we will offer recommendations for finding an environment that can support your child's needs by providing referrals and contact information.

Parents

Monthly Newsletter

Please take the time to read the monthly newsletter. The Center Director and teachers share information that is important in keeping you informed such as; center closures, conferences, community events, and classroom events. The newsletter will be emailed; it also can be found on-line at www.bloomearlylearning.org

Parent Visitation and involvement

Parents of children enrolled at Bloom are welcomed and encouraged to visit Bloom at any time. We ask that you help our staff continue the schedule for the day while you are visiting. You are welcome to drop-in any time or call and let us know when you plan to come. Visiting your child's room may include sharing a talent with the class, or spending time with the group to share in their routines. Parents are also invited to volunteer their time during field trips.

Parent Grievance

Any parent who has a grievance regarding any aspect of the care their child receives at Bloom should report it to the Bloom Center Director. The Director will make every effort to respond to your concern/grievance within two business days. If you are unhappy with the response or feel further action is needed, you may ask the Center Director to take the grievance to the Executive Director or, ultimately, the Board of Directors. They will contact you and attempt to resolve your grievance. All decisions made by the Board of Directors are final.

Reporting of Maltreatment, Abuse, or Neglect

As stated earlier in this manual, the Department of Human Services requires personnel of licensed child care centers to report any suspicion or evidence of maltreatment, abuse or neglect of a child to the DHS. As parents, if you believe that your child has been maltreated, abused or neglected at Bloom, you can call the Minnesota Department of Human Services at 651-431-6600. Your call will be kept confidential.

Parent Communication and Parent Meetings:

The key to our success at Bloom is open, honest communication with parents of the children in our care. We ask that you never hesitate to talk with your child's teachers or the Center Director if you have suggestions, concerns or questions. We are committed to communicating with you respectfully and professionally. We ask that you approach us in the same way. Our ability to resolve problems depends on a collaborative relationship.

We strive to hold quarterly parent education meetings led by a Parent Educator from the Wayzata Public School's Family Learning Center. You will be notified about these meetings and all parents are encouraged to attend. On occasion, we plan a dinner after the meeting where children and parents can spend time together.

Parent Advisory meetings occur at least once a year. At these meetings we discuss changes or new program ideas at Bloom, fundraising and volunteer opportunities and more. We appreciate getting the parent perspective and will incorporate your input in program planning. All parents are invited to attend.

Parents (cont.)

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are held twice a year in the fall and spring. They will be scheduled to review your child's development. You may request additional meetings with the teacher at any time throughout the year. Updates about your child's development and learning are given through the year verbally or with written milestones on your child's daily note. If you do not attend the conference, we will ask that you sign a form documenting that you were offered a conference. This is mandated by the Department of Human Services. We encourage you to attend the conferences. We will work with you to find a time that is convenient. We see our work with children as a partnership between parents and teachers and sharing information is an important piece to help your child progress and develop.

Curriculum/Program

THE INFANT ROOM (6 weeks - 16 months)

The Creative Curriculum® is used in the infant room. This curriculum is based on the belief that “curriculum for infants and toddlers is primarily about building responsive relationships....adults create environments and offer a variety of experiences in response to children’s growing abilities, personalities, interests, and needs.” From The Creative Curriculum for Infants & Toddlers.

In the Infant Room we strive to:

build a sense of trust with each infant

A key developmental task for infants, according to Erikson, is building their trust in others. In the infant room we do this by responding promptly to the infant’s physical needs for feeding, diapering, sleep or attention with warm, nurturing methods. Staff members show empathy and warmth to all children.

nurture, give individual attention, and provide sensory stimulation

During feeding, diapering and play times, infants are held as staff members talk, sing, read, do simple finger plays, and interact with the babies. Crying infants are responded to promptly and various methods of either soothing or providing stimulation will be used by the staff. Since research supports that language and early literacy skills begin at infancy, we emphasize talking with, and interacting with, infants throughout the day.

encourage exploration of safe, developmentally-appropriate environment

Our infant room is set up specifically as a place for infants to play and explore. We have soft mats and pillows on which children can roll, sit, crawl and climb. A mirror is placed at floor level so infants can see their own image, which helps develop a sense of self. A variety of dolls, soft blocks, rattles, busy boxes and pull toys are within reach of the children. Staff and parents are required to remove soiled shoes or sanitize them before entering the infant room to keep the carpeting as clean as possible so crawling babies have a safe area to explore. (The carpet is cleaned regularly as well.) Our program excludes baby walkers.

support development of social awareness and feelings of love, trust and security

Children are called by name and encouraged to interact with other children. They help to greet arriving infants and say good-bye to their own parents and others. We use the language of the Virtues Project when reminding infants of appropriate behavior. “Please be gentle when you touch her.” We give infants positive affirmations, “You are so kind.” “You are doing a great job walking!” This helps foster the development of healthy self-esteem.

encourage muscle and motor development

Staff help children perform such tasks such as sitting up, rolling over and walking until infants are able to do this on their own. Infant seats and “exersaucers” are used as developmentally-appropriate equipment. Older infants are encouraged in self-feeding and other development skills that will help them transition to the toddler room at 16 months.

Curriculum/Program (Cont.) - INFANT ROOM

Infant Care Plans

Prior to your infant coming to Bloom, we encourage you to meet with the Lead Teacher to discuss your infant's schedule, unique characteristics and needs. At this time, you and the Lead Teacher will write out the Infant Care Plan as required by DHS licensing so that all staff will know how to care for your baby. At regular intervals, you will be asked to update the care plan so that, as your baby's needs change, it will be current and accurate.

Infant Daily Sheets

Each morning when you bring your infant, you are to fill out the infant daily sheet with your infant's name, who will pick up your infant that day and the approximate time of pick-up. In addition, you should fill out when your baby awoke, the time of the last feeding and diaper change and any special information about sleeping, feeding or how your baby feels. This information is used by the staff during the day. The staff records on the infant daily sheet when and how much your baby eats during the day, when and how long s/he sleeps, diaper changes and other information about your baby's day. We also will try to remind you when diapers, wipes, formula and supplies are running low. The infant daily sheet is yours to take home each night and it will give you an idea of what kind of day your infant had.

Infant Room Food

BLOOM PROVIDES:

- One type of infant formula (iron fortified)
- Baby cereals and all baby food
- Snack items (crackers, dry cereal, cereal bars)
- Table foods (breakfast, hot lunch and snack once the child is able to eat table foods)
- Apple juice and whole milk

PARENTS OF INFANTS PROVIDE:

- Formula or breast milk if they choose not to use Bloom's formula
- Bottles and nipples
- Special food items Bloom does not have available

Infants are fed bottles "on demand" unless parents have specific schedules they want the staff to try to follow. Our philosophy is to avoid strict regimens in bottle feeding but rather to acknowledge that infants go through growing spurts and may at times need to be fed more frequently than at other times.

When an infant is ready to begin baby food, parents must inform the Lead Teacher of the type of food the baby can have, the approximate amounts and the frequency of feedings. The Lead Teacher will keep parents informed of the infant's progress in feeding. Parents of infants need to keep infant room staff informed of any changes in feeding routine.

At approximately 12 months, the Lead Teacher will talk to you about when you plan to help transition your baby from a bottle to a sippy cup. (You are certainly welcome to do this prior to 12 months if your baby is developmentally able.) By 16 months, your baby will no longer use a bottle while at Bloom since bottles are not allowed in the toddler room.

Curriculum/Program (Cont.) - INFANT ROOM/TODDLER ROOM

Diapering

Parents of infants furnish diapers, wipes and diaper ointments. We need written permission to apply anything including lotion and ointments. Diapers are checked or changed every two hours or more frequently, if needed. Clothes that are soiled during the day are not washed or rinsed, but put in a plastic bag for you to take home and wash. (We do not have laundry facilities at Bloom.) Bloom only accepts commercially available disposable diapers. Diapering procedures are approved by our health consultant and are posted in designated diapering areas.

Infant Nap-time

Infants nap “on-demand” until they are about 13-months-old. Infants may nap in our “crib room.” Each infant has his/her own crib and sheets are changed and laundered once a week or more often as needed. We play calming music in our crib room and the room is darkened. There is a baby monitor and continuous supervision in the crib room and an observation window in the door of the crib room. Infants have different “sleeping routines” so it’s very helpful if you let us know how your infant usually likes to fall asleep at home. Safety checks are performed on each crib monthly. If you wish to have your infant try to sleep less or more while at Bloom, please let us know. We’ll do our best, although it is hard to control a baby’s sleeping habits and needs. All infants are placed on their backs to sleep on a firm surface manufactured for sale as infant sleeping equipment that meets the standards of the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission. Pillows, blankets, quilts, comforters, and or stuffed toys are not allowed in the crib with children in the infant classroom. Children may use an approved sleep sack that is non-swaddling. Once your child is 6 months of age or has the proper consent forms filled out. He or she may assume any comfortable position once they are placed on their back to sleep. At about 13 months, we try to reduce nap time to once a day after lunch. This is to help your infant prepare for the transition to the Toddler Room where naps occur just once per day.

TODDLER ROOM (16 months - 35 months)

We continue to use the Creative Curriculum® in the toddler room. This curriculum is based on the belief that “curriculum for infants and toddlers is primarily about building responsive relationships....adults create environments and offer a variety of experiences in response to children’s growing abilities, personalities, interests, and needs.” From The Creative Curriculum for Infants & Toddlers

In the toddler room we strive to:

encourage independence and autonomy

A primary developmental skill for toddlers, according to Erikson, is for the toddler to recognize that s/he is a separate individual apart from parents. During the toddler years, the child becomes much more independent and autonomous and learns to dress, begins toilet training, gains the ability to talk and follow directions and many other skills s/he was unable to do as an infant. The toddler room teachers encourage children to do more things for themselves as they grow in this phase. We help and encourage children to wash and dry their own hands, put on coats and boots, and clean-up toys before each transition to another activity.

Some children have trouble with separation anxiety when dropped off at child care. It is hard for parents to see their child having problems saying good-bye and many parents feel guilty and stressed by these times of separation. When your child is having problems separating from you, we promise to comfort him/her and to interact and try to engage your child in play activities that will help him/her make the transition from being with you to being at Bloom. Our experience

Curriculum/Program (Cont.) - TODDLER ROOM

has taught us that it seems to work best for parents to say good-bye, give your child a hug and kiss, tell him/her you love them and then leave. Usually, the longer the good-byes are extended, the harder it is for you and your child. In almost all cases, the child stops crying and becomes involved in play as soon as the parent leaves. Some parents prefer to come into the room for a few minutes and do a puzzle or read a book and then leave. This is also a good way to make the transition easier as long as your child understands that you need to leave after a few minutes. In the unlikely event that your child continues to cry for a long time after you leave, we will talk with you about some ways to ease the transition for both you and your child.

As your child becomes more independent, s/he may want to do things on their own or use the word "No!" to assert his/her independence. This is a normal phase of child development. Part of our role as adults in helping children through these phases is to guide them in appropriate behaviors for getting their needs met. The toddler years are a time of great learning and growth. It is an exciting time for children and parents. We need to help toddlers feel good about themselves while beginning to learn to respect the needs of others as well.

encourage exploration of developmentally-appropriate equipment

The toddler classrooms provide centers for building with blocks, dramatic play (pretend food, dress-up clothes, etc.) music (CD's and rhythm instruments) fine motor (beads, strings, puzzles interlocking building blocks) and sensory stimulation (play dough, a sensory table filled with water, sand or other materials). Teachers offer creative arts and crafts activities. Large muscle activities including riding toys, climbing, sliding, running and playing with balls are provided in the large muscle room and on the playground. Science activities include gardening, water play, insects, animal, and weather observations.

develop social skills and feelings of empathy

Children are encouraged to treat peers with kindness and gentleness. The staff models empathy, caring and helpfulness to each child in the group. Children are called by their names and encouraged to call other children by their names. Staff actively engages children in small group play with activities using balls, parachutes and circle games like "Ring Around the Rosy" to encourage positive interactions with other children.

nurture a love of books, stories, music

Children are read to on a daily basis both individually and as a group. Books are provided in locations accessible to children. Teachers regularly introduce new books into the environment. Toddlers are encouraged to select favorite books that they like to read again and again. Children and teachers perform songs and finger plays at transition times and regular classroom times. Children are encouraged to listen to music and dance or move and are provided with developmentally-appropriate rhythm instruments like tambourines, maracas and bells.

Toddler Daily Sheets

Teachers will record your toddler's snacks, meals, diaper or toilet times and the kind of day your toddler had on the daily sheet. The sheets will be found in your file folder on the sign-in desk. Don't hesitate to talk directly to your toddler's teachers if you have questions or concerns.

Curriculum/Program (Cont.) - TODDLER ROOM/PRESCHOOL ROOM

Toddler Naptime

Toddlers nap right after lunch each day (approximately 12:00 noon). They usually nap until 2:00 p.m. although some toddlers awaken earlier. The nap room is always supervised by a staff person. Children are not forced to nap although they all are required to have a “quiet time” for 30 minutes according to DHS Rule 3.

Diapers and Toilet Training

Parents are required to supply diapers, wipes and diaper creams for their toddler. When you notice that your toddler is showing interest in toilet training, please talk to the teacher. S/he will work with you to help your child learn this important skill. Please leave at least two complete changes of clothing at the center. When your toddler is toilet training, please dress your child in clothes s/he can remove easily and send extra under-clothes and pants in the case of an accident.

Our hope is that children are toilet trained by the age of 3 when they enter the Preschool Room. This may not be possible if your child is not developmentally ready.

PRESCHOOL AND PRE-K ROOM (33 months - Kindergarten)

We continue to use the Creative Curriculum® in the preschool room.

In the Preschool Room we strive to:

help the preschooler develop a positive sense of self

Part of the developmental task of preschoolers is the ability to acquire a gender, cultural or ethnic identity and to develop feelings of self-confidence, behavior control and personal competence. Unlike infants and toddlers who feel that they are a part of the adults in their lives, preschoolers begin to develop a sense of being a separate individual with a unique personality, skills, likes and dislikes, and an identify of his/her own.

encourage exploration and curiosity

Children engage in project learning which gives them opportunities to do more in-depth exploration of topics that interest them. These are topics about the world around them deemed worthy of investigation. We try to bring children out into the world as well as invite people to come in and share information about a topic. Project work promotes their curiosity and the ability to sustain interest and attention over time.

encourage thinking and problem solving

Preschoolers will be encouraged to perform self-help tasks such as dressing, using and putting away toys, and cleaning up after a meal. Teachers will encourage preschoolers to solve problems they encounter while sharing, playing, and interacting with peers as well as the environment.

help the preschooler develop a sense of initiative

According to Erikson, preschoolers want and need to take action that involves pretending, inventing, creating and playing with others. Preschoolers need to initiate their own activities,

Curriculum/Program (Cont.) - PRESCHOOL ROOM

enjoy their accomplishments and feel valued. They need to feel good about their behaviors rather than feel a sense of guilt because they are doing things that adults or others disapprove of.

help the preschooler develop pro-social behavior and friendships

Preschoolers are ready to move from the parallel play style of toddlers to that of associative and then cooperative play. This means they move from brief episodes of playing together to a more complex social interaction where children choose playmates and friends. Helpful teachers can teach and model social skills such as empathy, caring, compassion, friendliness, politeness and understanding. They also will give children positive encouragement when seeing them demonstrate these behaviors.

help the preschooler control aggression and resolve conflicts cooperatively

Preschoolers are ready to learn to control their aggressiveness and use their verbal skills to defend their rights and resolve conflicts in cooperative ways. Teachers help preschoolers by encouraging them to express their feelings and talk about how to cooperate and resolve conflicts without aggression.

encourage creativity and self-expression

Children will be provided with opportunities to use art materials independently and work on projects on a daily basis. Teachers will encourage children to develop ideas in their imaginary and dramatic play. Singing, music, rhythm instruments and dancing will be part of the child's regular schedule.

encourage early literacy and pre-math skills and concepts

Teachers in our preschool room understand that preparing the children to succeed in kindergarten is an important goal of Bloom Early Learning & Child Care. We help preschoolers with developmental goals and use a creative curriculum to teach intellectual skills such as developing curiosity, perseverance, and problem-solving. Children also are given opportunities to identify letters, numbers, shapes and colors. The preschooler learns crucial skills to help make the transition to kindergarten successful. Teachers understand that play is still the most important way for preschoolers to learn skills. While children are encouraged to hold a pencil correctly and to begin to write their names, children are approached as unique individuals with differing interest levels and abilities and are never pressured or pushed to learn skills they are not ready to learn. Skills will be learned as part of a project rather than taught at a separate "skill time."

stimulate physical and emotional development

Children will be provided with the opportunities and materials to engage in a wide variety of large motor activities such as climbing, running, playing with balls, riding bikes and navigating an obstacle course. They will be encouraged to develop fine motor skills by doing puzzles, using scissors, drawing, and performing self-help tasks. Teachers will provide empathy and support and help children find the words to communicate their feelings and emotions.

Curriculum/Program (Cont.) - PRESCHOOL ROOM

Preschooler Naptime

The preschoolers start naptime at approximately 12:15 p.m. While most of them sleep for a while, if they cannot sleep, they are required by licensing to rest for at least 30 minutes. Quiet activities are available for children after their rest period. Naptime is over around 2:30 p.m.

Diapers and Toilet Training

If your preschooler wears diapers or pull-ups, you are responsible for providing these as well as wipes. If your child is still toilet-training, be sure to have extra outfits including underwear for accidents. Please work closely with the staff to complete the toilet training process.

Classroom Schedules...example

12:15 - 2:30	Naptime (children who awaken early read, color or do other quiet activities)
2:30 - 3:00	Bathroom/Put cots away/Read
3:00 - 3:30	Table Toys, Games
3:30 - 3:45	Snack
3:45 - 4:45	Centers/Project Work in classroom
4:45 - 5:30	Activities in Large Muscle Room/Playground
5:30 - 6:00	Small group activity



EARLY LEARNING & CHILD CARE

State Licensing

Bloom follows all licensing regulations and standards set forth by the Minnesota Department of Human Services. These standards relate to our facility, staff, health and safety, nutrition, teacher/child ratios and record keeping. Our center is subject to inspection by state and city health, fire and licensing officials. We also adhere to the standards of the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

The Bloom Program Plan is evaluated and revised annually by the Director and made available to parents for review upon request.

If you have any questions regarding this child care center please talk to the Center Director. You also may call the Department of Human Services, Licensing Division at: 651-431-6600.

Bloom is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization located at:

17805 County Road 6, Plymouth MN 55447

BloomEarlyLearning.org