

Parent Information Handbook

Est. May 2017

Updated November 2022



Table of Contents

Welcome	3
Philosophy	3
Parent/Teacher Partnership	3
Our Center Goals	3
Children’s Bill of Rights	4
Children with Special Needs	4
Non-discrimination Policy	4
Electronic-Free Policy	4
Program Descriptions	5 and 6
Transitioning Children	6
Hours of Operation	7
Tuition and fees	7
Vacation Policy	7
Holidays	7
Closure Policy	8
Teacher Training	8
Bringing your child prepared	8
Dispensing of Medication	8
Biting Policy	9
Injuries and Accidents	9
Illness Policy	9
Illness Pick-up Policy	10
Head Lice Policy	10
Discipline Policy	10
Expulsion and Suspension Policy	10
Mandated Reporting	10
Parking Lot Safety	11
Fire Drills	11
Emergency Procedures and Relocation Information	11
Shared Playground Policy	11
Water Play	11
Toy Policy	11
Breakfast, Lunch and Snacks	11
Field Trips	12
Rest Periods	12
Diaper Changes and Potty Training	12
Tuition Price Sheet	13
Parent Resource Library	14

Welcome

Milestones Preschool and Childcare Center would like to welcome you and your family to our facility. We look forward to providing your family with a safe and nurturing environment where your child can grow and develop physically, emotionally, and socially.

Philosophy

Our philosophy is to maintain a safe, happy, and healthy environment, while meeting your child where they're at. Our hope is to enhance and encourage your child's social and emotional development throughout their first years of life and onward up until they are school-aged. We strive to create stimulating comfortable classrooms with a variety of planned curriculum for each developmental stage carried out by teachers that want to make a difference in the life of each child. We learn through a variety of methods including an academic classroom, as well as getting outside, being physical with our bodies, and using our hands and senses to inspire creative thinking and provide sensory experiences. We are an advocate for all children of all abilities and hope to prepare them to face each day with confidence and the skills to be successful.

Parent/Teacher Partnership

At Milestones Preschool and Childcare Center we feel deeply about the importance of building strong and lasting parent/teacher relationships. Through this partnership our goal is to create relationships of mutual respect, equality, and sensitivity. Our staff provides daily written information about your child's day as they happen in real time via an app called Brightwheel. Parents are able to sign their child in through the app at drop off and we sign them out at pickup. The app provides a summary of your child's day. For infants and toddlers in diapers i.e., each diaper change is recorded, and notes are made whether they were "wet" or a had "BM". Each time a bottle is offered/consumed it is marked and number of ounces are recorded. We post photos/take pictures, and can exchange messages with parents right through the app. We encourage parents to engage with us about their child's day and share any comments or concerns with our staff. Parent teacher conferences are conducted twice a year. Our objective for partnerships with parents is to encourage a feeling of belonging, and to develop a sense of community that encompasses all children here at our center.

Our Center Goals

To help your children with the following:

- Develop a sense of confidence, self-worth and personal identification
- Feel safe and secure
- Encourage growth in your child's social and emotional skills
- Encourage children to be creative thinkers
- To provide a clean and nurturing environment
- Offer a large variety of developmentally appropriate learning experiences

Children's Bill of Rights

Children receiving childcare from childcare facilities have the following rights:

- Children must be free from emotional, physical and/or sexual abuse, neglect and exploitation
- Each child has the right to freedom from harmful actions or practices that are detrimental to the child's welfare, and to practices that are potentially harmful to the child
- Each child has a right to an environment that meets the health and safety standards in this rule
- Each child must be provided childcare services without discrimination to race, age, national origin, religion, disability, sex or family composition
- Children must be treated with dignity, consideration, and respect in full recognition of their individuality. This includes the use of developmentally appropriate practices by the childcare facility.
- Each child has the right to the implementation of any plan of service that has been developed for that child in conjunction with community or state agencies by the childcare facility
- Each child has the right to developmentally appropriate activities, materials, and equipment
- Children with disabilities have the right to reasonable modifications to childcare facility policies and practices

Children with Special Needs

At Milestones Preschool and Childcare Center, we have an open-door policy, and we strive to be an advocate for all children. We will try to accommodate all children that have special needs and/or developmental delays although this is dependent on if we have adequate resources available. If we cannot meet a child's needs, we will work with our parents, therapists, special services, schools, to help your child meet their developmental and emotional needs. If at any given time, we feel a child's needs are not being met, we will help you explore other options. In the event that our center is not an appropriate placement for your child, we will assist your family in seeking an alternative solution.

Non-Discrimination Policy

The Milestones Preschool and Child Care Center does not discriminate against age, sex, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, race, religion, color, citizenship, nationality or ethnic origin.

Electronic-Free Policy

Please have your child leave their cellphone, i-pad, tablet, etc. at home. If they must have any of these items for school or remote learning, we ask for them to remain in their bag. With limited use of electronics, we hope to improve and encourage more positive social interactions.

Program Descriptions

Milestones Preschool and Childcare Center provides developmentally appropriate programs for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and before/after school aged children. Milestones Preschool and Childcare Center offers a wide variety of hands-on and sensory learning experiences. No matter the program, our group of caring and professional staff have many years of experience and education between us and are dedicated to the success and well-being of the children and families we serve. We provide care to children 6 weeks to 12 years of age and are licensed through the Maine Department of Health and Human Services for 127 children.

Infant Care Program

Infants may start care at six weeks of age and transition into the toddler program when a number of factors determine that each child is developmentally ready, but typically around 18 months. This program entails:

- Individual schedules based on baby's needs
- Your choice of iron-fortified formula provided for the first year (as long as it is available to us)
- All jarred food pouches/oatmeal/snacks provided once you introduce solids
- Open door policy for breast feeding (while following Covid protocols)
- Access to books/story time
- Music and singing
- Walks/outdoor time when seasonally appropriate
- Providing developmentally appropriate sensory experiences
- Daily disinfecting toys and classroom equipment
- Regularly switching out toys that offer different texture/manipulatives/visual experiences

Toddler Care Program

Our toddler care program is broken up into 2 age groups. The pre-toddler age group is approximately 18 months-2.5 years and the older toddler age is approximately 2.5-3. This program entails:

- Age-appropriate curriculum, utilizing weekly and monthly themes
- Designated areas for different learning centers and various activities
- Teacher and child-directed activities and play
- Outside time
- Music and Movement
- Circle Time
- Gross and fine motor activities
- Developmentally appropriate sensory experiences
- Language-based activities, including books and reading
- Daily disinfecting of all toys and classroom equipment

Preschool Program

Our undergraduate program starts as soon as age 3 and children move into the preschool graduate program the year before they start kindergarten. This program entails:

- An age-appropriate curriculum, based on our weekly and monthly themes
- Structured classroom, with multiple centers thoughtfully arranged to enhance your child's learning
- Teacher and child-directed activities and play
- Curriculum with hands on learning and cooking opportunities
- Curriculum that focuses areas of language, science, math, reading and social/emotional regulation strategies
- Educational field trips
- Music and Movement
- Open ended arts and crafts activities
- Outdoor play

Before and After Care Program

This program is for school-aged kids during the school year and summer vacation. This program will entail:

- Homework program (first 30 minutes after school)
- Age appropriate toys and games
- Teacher and child directed activities and play
- Outside play
- Unlimited art area
- Field trips on school vacations

Summer Recreation Care Program

- Age appropriate toys and games
- Unlimited art area
- Teacher and child directed activities and play
- Outside play
- Weekly field trips

Transitioning Children

Each classroom environment is unique from the layout of the room, to the style and personality of each teacher and the classroom schedule. Our classrooms are designed for children by age range and social-emotional/developmental competency levels. We recognize that because every child is different, some children may need to stay longer in a certain classroom while it may be in the best interest of another student to transition early. Before your child transitions to a new classroom, we take many factors into consideration and create a plan of how we can best support them moving forward. Our goal is to ensure a smooth transition for each child by allowing them time to get to know their new teacher, become comfortable in the classroom and adjust to the schedule. Transition plans are based on each child's individualized needs which are determined by our classroom teachers and feedback from parents.

Hours of Operation

Milestones Preschool and Child Care Center is open Monday through Friday, with exceptions of holidays and listed days closed from 6:00am to 5:00pm

There is a late fee of \$1.00 per minute past closing time. If will be late to pick up your child, please notify the center so we know you are on your way.

The center has a drop-off time which is by 9:30 am. Children arriving after that time may cause disruption to their class, as well as affect lunch and ratio counts. If a later drop off is needed due to an appointment, please call the center by 9:00 am or message via Brightwheel so your child is included in our ratio count.

Tuition and Fees

There will be a one-time registration fee due upon enrollment of \$100 per family. This will hold your child's slot(s) for up to three months. The registration fee is non-refundable. Our center depends on your prompt payment for a smooth operation. Payments are to be made on Monday at the beginning of the week for childcare.

When care is terminated, we require a 2 week notice and full payment whether you choose to send your child for the remainder of their time here or not.

Vacation Policy

Families that pay tuition are entitled to one tuition free "vacation" week each year. Children are unable to attend for the week and no tuition will be collected.

Holidays

If a holiday falls on a weekend the center will observe this day either Monday or Friday and the Christmas/New Year break dates will be posted in January. All dates will be sent out via brightwheel. Milestones Preschool and Childcare Center will be closed for the following holidays. Full payment is required during holiday weeks.

- **January**- New Year's Day
-Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- **February**-President's Day
- **April**-Patriot's Day
- **May**- Memorial Day
- **July**- Independence Day
- **September**- Labor Day
- **October**-Indigenous People Day
- **November**- Veteran's Day
-Thanksgiving Day, and the day after Thanksgiving
- **December**- Christmas Eve, Christmas day, and the day after Christmas

Closure Policy

While we make every effort to provide you reliable childcare, there are always those unforeseen or inevitable circumstances that we must plan for. In an emergency, or if we have no electricity, running water, or are experiencing blizzard conditions we will be forced to close; or may feel it is the safest decision not to open at all for the day. In the event of any of these happening, we will send out a notification via the Brightwheel app and when possible (in cases of the center closing early) will also make attempts to notify the parents personally. In addition to the app, we will announce any weather-related closings on CHANNEL 6 NEWS. Regular payment is still due in the event of any of these situations.

Teacher Training

Milestones Preschool and Childcare Center staff is dedicated to having a continued education in the early childhood education field. We are working towards achieving a level 4 on the Quality Rating Improvement Scale through the Quality for ME initiative and also towards becoming NAEYC accredited. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is a professional membership organization that works to promote high-quality early learning for all young children, birth through 8 by connecting early childhood practice, policy, and research. Each full-time staff member is required to accumulate a minimum of forty-five hours of training a year. Our licensing requires thirty and we require an additional fifteen hours on top of that. The center will use teacher workshop days throughout the year for training, staff meetings and professional development to allow employees to be able to attend courses, trainings and classes. At least a month's notice will be given to all parents to make arrangements for your children. All normal weekly tuition will still be due.

Bringing Your Child Prepared

All children must have at least one change of weather appropriate clothing in their cubby/backpack at all times. Any child that is in a diaper or a pull-up, must have a minimum of six diapers and wipes on hand. Parents should be given at least one day notice of their child being low in diapers/wipes. If you need more notice than this, please speak with your child's teacher and make arrangements for a larger time frame. Infants need to have a change of clothes, diapers, wipes, breast milk (if they are breast fed) and a pacifier-if they use one. If your child is walking, it is a licensing requirement for shoes to be on their feet at all times. You are welcome to bring in slippers for inside if you/your child would prefer. Since outdoor playtime is such an important part of our program, please make sure your child has the appropriate clothing for all seasons. We plan to go outside daily but follow a weather guide from Maine childcare licensing that take the temperature, the wind, and the humidity all into consideration to help us determine days that may be too cold or hot.

In the winter your child needs to come daily with a snowsuit, boots, hat, and warm waterproof gloves/mittens. In the summer your child needs a bathing suit or extra change of clothes, including footwear that is ok to get wet, such as crocs or water shoes.

Dispensing Medication

Mid-day medications may be administered by staff at the center (am/pm doses must be given at home). Parents are required to fill out a medication log prior to the medication being dispensed. All medications need to be handed directly from the parent to the staff member and at no time should it be left in a child's bag or in a child's possession. When you give a child a medication, it needs to be documented and tracked on the medication log.

Biting Policy

We recognize that some children may go through a biting phase. This phase more commonly begins at about fifteen to eighteen months old and can last until a child is three or older. There are many reasons young children bite; they may be unable to verbally communicate, having their personal space invaded, or unable to express their feelings or frustrations, which unfortunately can result in a bite. For some children it may be an outlet for sensory seeking behavior. Parents are informed if their child was bitten or if they bit another child, through our incident and accident reports. If you would like some more information on biting, the center has some printouts we can get for you at your request.

Injuries and Accidents

If your child sustains a minor injury while at the center, an accident report will be filled out by the teacher who witnessed the incident. The report will explain what happened, at what time and what first aid measures-if any-were given. For a more serious injury, or any injury involving a child's head, a phone call will be made to parents so you can decide the appropriate measure to take. In the event a serious injury requires us to call emergency services, we will stay with your child in the ambulance/at the hospital until your arrival.

Illness Policy

We strongly advise all parents to find a back-up person/arrange alternate care in the event that your child isn't feeling well. Children who are feeling "under the weather" and cannot perform their daily routine, need and want their parent or guardian to soothe them, and give them the 1:1 care they require. While we understand the financial aspects of our parents needing to work, we must also protect our children from further contagion. For protection of all children and our staff, your child should be kept home if he/she displays the following symptoms of illness.

- **Temperature-** any child with an elevated fever high or higher than 100.4 degrees, will be excluded from programming for 24 hours of becoming fever free.
- **Vomiting-** any child who is vomiting or has vomited will be excluded from programming for 24 hours vomit free.
- **Diarrhea-** any child who is experiencing diarrhea and having three (loose and watery stools) over a period of several hours will be sent home and excluded from programming for 24 hours diarrhea free.
- **Conjunctivitis-** any child who has conjunctivitis will be sent home until medication has been administered for at least 24 hours. If no medication is necessary, a doctor's note is required to return to programming.
- **Strep Throat/Scarlet Fever-** any child who has either illness will be sent home until medication has been administered for at least 48 hours and no fever is present.
- **Thrush-** any child who has thrush will be excluded from the center until on an antibiotic for 24 hours.
- **Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease-** can vary case to case depending on the age of the child. All children must be fever free without fluid filled blisters. The blisters must be dried/scabbed over with the absence of sores present in their mouth-unless if the child is older and past the stage of putting things in their mouth.
- **Chickenpox-** any child who has this illness will have to be excluded from the center until they are fever free, and all chickenpox blisters have formed scabs, and are able to comfortably participate in all center activities.

Pick-up Due to Illness Policy

In the event that your child is ill and needs to be picked up, we allow a one-hour window from the time you are notified.

Head Lice Policy

Our center is a lice and nit free center. We will check each child's head every Monday, and if your child has a louse or nit they will be sent home. They may return when their head is lice and nit free. For the next seven days providers will check your child's head while you wait to ensure that there are no lice present.

Discipline Policy

Here at Milestones Preschool and Childcare Center we have age-appropriate expectations of our children. Children are working on their social and emotional development in these early years, as well as academically. We use positive guidance in all our daily endeavors. We believe in redirection, time to calm down and helping children choose other options verse a punishment. If a child is experiencing an inappropriate behavior such as intentionally disrupting, injuring or showing aggression towards other classmates, a parent will be contacted. The Owner or Director will discuss what is appropriate for each individual child. In the case of your child being sent home, they need to be picked up within one hour of speaking with a parent or guardian.

Expulsion and Suspension Policy

While we make every effort to intervene via conversations, individualized plans and behavior reports, there is only so much we can allow in our group settings. We do not have the staffing for multiple situations that require 1:1 intervention. We have the right to exclude children from programming for safety issues, excessive inappropriate language and being physical/aggressive with peers and staff.

Mandated Reporter Policy

All staff are required to complete a mandated reporter training. All Milestones Preschool Staff are mandated reporters. A mandated reporter is someone that holds a profession that makes them legally liable to report any issues of abuse or neglect.

At any time, if there is a reasonable cause to suspect abuse or neglect of a child in our care, the providers and/or management at the center are required by law to report to the Department of Health and Human Services. Prior parental notification is not required.

Definition of a mandated reporter: An individual who holds a professional position, such as a childcare worker, that requires them to report to the appropriate stat agency any suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect.

Definition of Abuse: Cruelty inflicted upon a child, including mental, emotional, sexual, or physical harm.

Definition of Neglect: Willful lack of care and attention

Parking Lot Safety

The parking lot can be very busy at times, we strongly encourage parents to hold their child's hand when in the parking lot.

Fire Drills

Milestones Preschool and Child Care Center practices monthly fire drills. All fire escape routes are posted in each classroom. Please remember to always keep your child's file up to date with all contact numbers, in the event of a true emergency.

Emergency Procedures and Relocation Information

In the event of an emergency, we have an emergency plan and agreement with our local school system to be bussed off the property to a safe location. Pick-up details would be disclosed to parents in an emergency message via Brightwheel.

Shared Playground Policy

When our classes go outside on the playground, there may be another classroom out at the same time. The ratio of each child's classroom will still be upheld on the playground, and we feel this is a great opportunity for kids to play and interact with a different selection of friends than those they share a majority of their day with.

Water Play

We play with water here in the summer months, for fun, for sensory purposes and lastly to help keep us cool! We use water tables, sprinklers and splash pads.

Toy Policy

We don't allow toys to be brought in from home. In the preschool classes, there may be opportunities for "show-and-tell" but these are coordinated with your child's teacher and must remain in your child's bag or cubby unless if it's time for them to share.

Breakfast, Lunch and Snack

We are affiliated with a statewide food program. This program gives us guidelines we follow to serve healthy meals and snacks with fresh fruits, veggies, and whole grains at every meal and snack. We provide breakfast, morning snack, lunch, as well as afternoon snack. We also provide milk and water throughout the day. We are geared towards healthy eating, and family style dining. Our staff sits and dines at the table with our students, encouraging and promoting new and different foods for our littles as young as six months of age.

Field Trips

Throughout the year, we have variety of field trips for our preschool and school aged children. Parents are always welcome to participate in, but not expected we understand their work schedules. Children will be transported by our staff, who has all their transportation trainings, car seat safety, and clean driving records. At any time if a parent is not comfortable with their child attending a field trip, their child is able to stay back at the center in another classroom. Parents are responsible for providing their child's car seat or they may use a booster seat that belongs to the daycare.

Rest Periods

It is in the best interest and health of your children to have a rest period. In the infant room we follow your baby's cues for sleep and they follow their own sleep and wake schedules. For the other classrooms, this time occurs after lunch and no later than three. The classroom is quiet and playing calming music. If your child doesn't sleep, we require them to lay down for forty-five minutes. They can color, read, write, and are able to do any quiet activity on their mat. After the forty-five minutes they may play in a quiet center, to respect the rest of the class that is sleeping. We ask parents to provide a blanket, which needs to go home every Friday to be cleaned.

Diaper Changes and Potty Training

All children that are in diapers or a pull-up will be changed every two hours unless they have a BM in between changes. All staff is required to wear gloves while they change each child. The changing station will be disinfected between each change. If you are in the process of potty training your child, please let us know and we will be happy to support you and work with you and your little one on this new phase in their lives. Please make sure to pack extra underwear and clothes daily.

Milestones Preschool and Child Care Center

Weekly Tuition Prices

Infants

6 Weeks to 12 Months of Age

Full Time: \$310.00

Part Time: \$230.00

Toddlers

One year to Three Years of Age

Full Time: \$290.00

Part Time: \$210.00

Preschool

Three Years to Five Years of Age

Full Time: \$270.00

Part Time: \$200.00

School Age Children

Five Years to Twelve Years of Age

Before and After: \$140.00

Before: \$60.00

After Care: \$80.00

Summer: \$180.00

School Vacation: \$180.00

* ALL HOLIDAYS, SNOW DAYS, AND SCHEDULED CLOSED DAYS, FULL TUITION IS DUE, THANK YOU*

Parent/Family Resource Library

- **Maine Parent Federation**-mpf.org
- **WIC Nutrition Program**-maine.gov (search WIC on search bar)
- **MaineCare**-maine.gov (Office of MaineCare Services/OMS)
- **Child Development Services**-maine.gov (Child Development Services/CDS)
- **Tri-County Mental Health Services**-tcmhs.org
- **5-2-1-0 Let's Go!**-mainehealth.org
- **Maine Roads to Quality**-mrtq.org info on free and reduced cost classes and trainings
- **Casco Public Library**-www.cascopubliclibrary.org
- **Bridgton Public Library**-www.bridgtonlibrary.org
- **Raymond Village Library**-www.raymondvillagelibrary.org
- **Play Warriors, Inc.**-playwarriorsinc.com for Play Therapy
- **Crooked River Counseling**-for substance abuse counseling
- **Maine 2-1-1** -dial 2-1-1 and speak with an operator about services you are looking for
- **North Bridgton Family Practice & Walk-in Clinic**-cmhc.org (207) 647-9021
- **Naples Family Practice**-cmhc.org (207) 693-6106
- **Food Assistance**-maine.gov-Cumberland County Food Assistance
- **Food Assistance**-extension.umaine.edu-Cooperative Extension in Cumberland County
- **Maine Parent Federation**-mpf.org provides information and training to parents of children with disabilities or special health care needs
- **Maine Early Childhood Consultation Partnership**-eccprogram.dhhs@maine.gov (207) 624-7900
- **Resource Development Center for Cumberland County-Child Care Connections** www.childcaremaine.org (207) 396-6566