



Meeting Street
Bright Futures
Early Learning Center

Family Handbook

1000 Eddy Street
Providence, RI 02905
401-533-9100 Meeting Street
401-533-9103 Bright Futures
www.meetingstreet.org

Hours of Operation: Monday – Friday 7:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Shared Mission & Philosophy

believing in the possibilities

As a program of Meeting Street, Bright Futures shares Meeting Street's mission, and philosophy.

Our Mission

Meeting Street embraces children, young adults and their families to meet the challenges in their lives. Building on our foundation of working with children with disabilities and developmental delays, we compassionately and innovatively support, educate and empower all children, young adults and their families to achieve their maximum potential and highest quality of life.

Our Philosophy

We believe in creating an environment that fosters true inclusion – a world where all children can laugh together, play together, and learn together.

Our caring and dedicated professionals partner with children, young adults, families, educators, clinicians, businesses and community members throughout Rhode Island to help all children and young adults broaden their horizons and achieve their goals. Our challenge is to create a world where individuals of all abilities truly belong – a world free of stigmas or preconceived ideas that hinder anyone's ability to enjoy a full and meaningful life.

In doing so, we are grounded in five support accomplishments:

Sharing Places: Encouraging support in the places and natural routines of community life.

Promoting Positive Reputations: Portraying individuals in ways that lead to increased social status.

Nurturing Relationships: Encouraging opportunities for individuals of all abilities to share meaningful experiences and develop friendships.

Encouraging Choices: Offering opportunities to experience new things and more choices wherever possible.

Building Competencies: Providing support toward the highest level of accomplishment.

Bright Futures Philosophy / Goals

At Bright Futures we believe each child is a unique and special individual. Bright Futures is a fully inclusive program with a firm belief that all children have a need and a right to belong in a community of learners with age appropriate peers.

We follow the philosophy that children learn best through play, exploration, and discovery. We want to provide a high quality early care and education program for your child. In an effort to do so we strive to:

- Provide a healthy and safe environment.
- Provide an environment where there is acceptance, respect, caring, and encouragement.
- Be sensitive and responsive to the needs and interests of each child.
- Facilitate learning opportunities that enhance the social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development of each child.
- Create a setting where children develop a positive attitude towards learning, responsibility, self-discipline and self-esteem.
- Recognize and appreciate the uniqueness of each and every child.
- Communicate with families in a positive and supportive manner that encourages the home-school relationship.
- Together with families as active partners we can make this learning experience for your child a positive one.

NAEYC Accredited

Bright Futures is a nationally recognized program through the National Association for the Education of Young Children. This distinction is a national, voluntary accreditation, which means our program promotes a higher standard for quality early care and education. With this accreditation, Bright Futures has become a leader in a national effort to raise the quality of early childhood education, and to help give all children a better start. Bright Futures is one of the first and only nationally accredited inclusive early learning centers in the country. To learn more about NAEYC and the rigorous accreditation standards to which Bright Futures voluntarily holds itself for the benefit of our students and families, visit www.NAEYC.org or ask your child's teacher or the Bright Futures manager.

Admissions to Bright Futures Early Learning Center

The time your child will spend with us is very important to him or her, to you, and to us. We want to do all that we can to make sure that the experience is as positive and productive as possible for everyone. Our admissions process begins with a scheduled visit by you and your child for a tour of Bright Futures so we can begin to get to know each other. We know that you will have a lot of questions and your infant or child will want to explore and adapt to a new environment so this visit must be scheduled in advance so our Manager and staff will be able to dedicate the attention to you that you deserve.

We recognize that each child and family is unique and that finding the "right fit" for your child and family is not as simple as merely identifying a quality early learning program that has an opening. We want your child and you to feel as comfortable with the "fit" as with the philosophy and curriculum so our admissions process includes scheduling a time for your child to spend a portion of the day in the classroom that he or she will be attending.

The parents are present during this visit so they can meet the teaching staff, experience the classroom environment, and observe how their child interacts within the learning community during the classroom activities. The length of this visit will vary depending on the child's age and the particular classroom.

Following the classroom visit, the family and the Bright Futures Manager will meet briefly. At that time, the family will receive an application for enrollment and other necessary paperwork. This includes medical forms that must be filled out by your child's physician; application; general information forms; a financial agreement; authorized pick up list; and permission slips. If at any time you have a question please feel free to call us. All paperwork must be completed in order for your child to start.

A start date will be selected and agreed upon by the family and the Bright Futures Manager. The initial 60 days of a child's enrollment will be a probationary period for the child to adjust to his/her new environment and for the classroom staff to get to know the child. If at any time during the first 30 days of enrollment the family or the classroom staff feels that the child is not adjusting to the classroom a meeting will be scheduled with the family, the classroom staff and the Manager to discuss the concerns and develop a plan to support the child. In the event that all reasonable attempts to acclimate the child to the classroom are unsuccessful the child may be asked to leave the program. Parents will be kept informed at all times of their child's progress.

Family Involvement

Parent Communication

Parent and staff communication and interaction is an important part of your child's experience at Bright Futures. We try to make every effort to keep you informed of center news! Information to parents and notices about center events is posted on bulletin boards outside each classroom. A schedule of the month's lessons and activities will be posted there as well. A newsletter will be distributed at the beginning of each month. This newsletter contains important information regarding the center and your child's classroom. If at any time you have any questions or suggestions, please let us know.

Daily Reporting

The classroom staff and the manager will be available daily, as much as possible, for brief conversations with you to comment about your child's day. A "Daily News" form is sent home for each child everyday. Please check your child's cubby for the forms. There is often very important information for you to read! There will be parent-teacher conferences scheduled during the year. Please feel free to contact the teacher or manager if you would like to meet at any time.

Parent Participation

Bright Futures has an open door policy, so stop by to visit whenever you'd like! We welcome parent participation and appreciate your input. If you would like to visit, it is helpful to let your child's classroom teacher know so she or he can include your visit in the daily schedule. Usually the best time to come is when you can take your child with you when you leave to avoid too many goodbyes. Your participation in field trips, events, PSO, and various surveys is appreciated. We always welcome the opportunity to talk to you in person, on the phone or via email.

Parent Staff Organization

All parents/families are invited to be part of our Parent Staff Organization! Since some of our students ride the school bus and we don't get to see their families everyday, this is a great opportunity for all of us to get together and for families who may not meet otherwise to do so. PSO helps to plan special events, community service projects, fundraisers, and parent/staff trainings. We meet at least 4 times a year and send out information regularly. Parents who are not able to attend meetings can share their ideas via phone calls and e-mail. We welcome your participation.

Parent/Staff Disagreements

We recognize that parents may not always agree with our policies and procedures. We welcome parent input and suggestions. Should a parent and staff member have a disagreement they are unable to resolve the Bright Futures Manager is available to assist in coming to an understanding. Parents may contact the COO if they feel the Manager has not helped to resolve the issue to everyone's satisfaction.

Developmentally Appropriate Environment and Activities

Learning Environments

Bright Futures Early Learning Center offers a developmentally appropriate, standards-based curriculum that nurtures, stimulates and challenges children from infancy through preschool. We have created specific curriculum and classrooms to meet the developmental and educational needs of young children of all abilities including:

Infants: Six weeks to eighteen months

Our infant program is individualized to meet the specific needs of your child. To remain consistent we follow as closely as we can the schedule you provide for your baby. Our 1:4 ratio allows us the time to take care of your child's basic needs as well as one on one playtime and interaction. It's not uncommon to see our staff right on the floors with your baby!

Toddlers: Eighteen months to three years

Our toddler program is a very busy place. We have 12 toddlers in the classroom on any given day with a 1:6 ratio. Our toddlers are learning so much in a short period of time - it never seems fast enough for them!

Due to the very busy nature of this classroom it is occasionally difficult for children to keep up; this is usually due to difficulty adjusting to the schedule or the child not feeling well, both of which may cause him or her to be overly tired. When this occurs the staff will make all attempts to assist the child so that they are able to get through the day, in extreme circumstances a parent may be called to pick up the child.

This is a critical period for language development. We continually encourage the toddlers to use the words they have and we provide words for them when they do not yet have them. This is also where we begin toilet learning. It is so important that what we do at school is consistent with what you are doing at home. We have put together a packet of information regarding toilet learning. Please see the staff members for a copy. The children in this classroom have a daily schedule since routine and predictability are important at this age. The curriculum includes opportunities for art, sensory play, fine and gross motor play, dramatic play, music and movement and more!

Preschool: Three to five years

We have two preschool classrooms, each designed to provide optimal learning experiences for children of a specific age range, beginning at 3 years and going up to kindergarten eligibility at approximately 5 years.

Our classroom size is 15 children. Each classroom has an Early Childhood Educator who plans and implements the curriculum; Teacher Assistants who support the Early Childhood Educator and assist with the implementation of curriculum; and an Early Childhood Special Educator who oversees the development and implementation of IEP goals. Our therapists – physical, occupational, and speech-language – also work as part of the classroom educational team to address the IEP goals.

Our curriculum provides opportunities for fine and gross motor activities, pre-reading and writing activities, sand and water play, dramatic play, music, block play, creative art, math activities, computer time, outdoor play, cooking, field trips and more! In addition to regular classroom activities the preschool classrooms also participate in physical education, library, and art class for 30 minutes one time per week.

Our teachers individualize the curriculum so all children are getting what they need to further their development. The same activity could be addressing different skills for different children depending on their developmental level. Our goal during these years is to facilitate your child's development so he or she has the skills they need to succeed in Kindergarten and beyond.

Curriculum

Bright Futures seeks to provide a positive learning environment for children of all abilities, ranging in age from six weeks to five years. We emphasize children's unique abilities and their individual strengths and needs. Children learn at their own pace through active exploration with guidance and positive reinforcement from teachers.

Our curriculum incorporates aspects of the Reggio Emilia philosophy and the Rhode Island Early Learning Standards to create a balanced approach to learning that has an emphasis on self-expression through the use of language, art, music and movement. Within each classroom the teachers act as facilitators, arranging the environment to allow children to safely explore the classroom and interact with a variety of different

materials, engage in a wide range of activities, and develop relationships with peers and adults. Children provide input into the curriculum through daily class meetings and

their work is documented with photos, dictated writing and “kid” writing, as well as by the projects they complete.

Our classrooms are designed to allow children to move easily from one center to another, with ready access to materials and equipment. There are regular opportunities for varied types of learning activities including large and small group, individual, teacher guided and child driven. We believe that children learn best when they have choices about what they learn and through active exploration and play.

Our teachers use the eight domains of the Rhode Island Early Learning Standards (approaches to learning, language development & communication, literacy, mathematics, science, creativity, physical health & development, and social & emotional development) as a guide when planning and implementing the curriculum. We work to support the learning needs of each child in our program and to help them develop a love of learning that will prepare them for all future learning.

We strive to:

- Encourage the growth and development of all children by providing experiences that promote feelings of success, competence, and enjoyment.
- Make learning a positive experience for children by incorporating Play as an integral part of the curriculum.
- Help achieve social, emotional, physical, and cognitive goals.
- Assist young children in using the environment productively and to see themselves as capable learners.

Activities for the Day

Each classroom has its own daily schedule posted in the classroom. You may request a copy at anytime. Our indoor and outdoor environments allow for children to make independent choices for play. Teaching staff, with the support of our Manager, creates lesson plans using an emergent curriculum method. Teachers facilitate discussions with children around what their interests are and what they would like to learn. Children are encouraged to participate in classroom activities that include opportunities for development through art, music, dramatic play, and gross and fine motor activities.

Playground

Weather permitting; the children have outdoor play every day. We believe large motor development, exercise, fresh air, and social interaction are an important part of the day. Please dress your child in comfortable play clothes, appropriate for the season and weather. Layering to adapt to changing conditions throughout the day and sneakers or durable shoes are best. When the weather does not allow for outdoor play we have access to the gym and sensory rooms in the building to provide opportunities for gross motor play indoors.

Assessments and Screening

All children at Bright Futures are assessed on an on-going basis using a variety of different methods. Our assessment methods and tools are aligned with the Rhode Island Early Learning Standards and assess children in each of the eight domains (approaches to learning, language development & communication, literacy, mathematics, science, creativity, physical health & development, and social & emotional development). The methods used for screening and on-going assessment are divided

into three categories, infant/toddler, preschool and preschool special needs. Whenever possible assessments are conducted in the child's regular classroom environment. Information is gathered primarily through observations with minimal interruption to the child's daily routine. Teachers use the information gathered through observations and on-going assessments to plan classroom activities that support the needs of each child in the class. Preschool children also receive developmental and hearing screenings one time per year.

Positive Guidance

Discipline and guidance will be consistent and based on an understanding of the child's needs and development. Staff will promote a safe environment for your child to play and develop. Staff will be consistent and use positive guidance techniques with all children. There shall be no cruel, harsh, or unusual punishment. No child shall be spanked, shaken, or hit. Appropriate behavior will be recognized and encouraged.

Positive guidance techniques that will be used with the children include:

- Teachers modeling acceptable behavior.
- Redirection of children to a more acceptable activity.
- Teachers recognizing and rewarding children's efforts.
- Structuring the environment and schedules to maximize positive behavior.
- Teachers will set fair, clear and consistent limits for classroom behavior.

Meeting Street/Bright Futures reserves the right to release a child from Bright Futures at any time if management feels the child has behavioral, educational or medical needs that cannot be adequately addressed by our program.

Classroom Policies

What to Wear

We understand that children of this age can become very adamant about what they wear to school, how they comb their hair, etc. This is a good time to begin giving them choices and encourage decision-making. They should have clothes that they can manage by themselves and comfy shoes allowing them to run and be active without restriction (**no sandals without backs please**). Simple play clothes will serve them best as we are very active and clothes can get messy. As we strive to have outdoor play every day, the children will need a jacket, possibly a hat and mittens, for colder days. On warmer days, just a sweater or hooded sweatshirt will do. Our classrooms can be warm, so sweatshirts should be worn with a T-shirt underneath so they can take off the sweatshirt if necessary.

Occasionally "accidents" do happen. Families should either pack extra sets of clothes daily or send a set in a labeled bag to be kept at school. If your child has an accident that soils his/her clothing and we do not have a change of clothes we will call you to bring a change of clothes. We do not have extra clothing at the center. Please respond promptly when called.

If you find yourself going through a setback in toilet learning, please use rubber pants or try diapers or pull-ups again for a short time. For sanitary purposes, we must avoid toilet "accidents" as much as possible. **We ask that you please label all of your child's belongings coming with him/her to school to avoid any confusion.**

Thank you in advance for your cooperation!

Strollers and Car seats

While we understand that when bringing young children into the building the use of a stroller makes it a smoother walk in, we cannot allow strollers to be left in the hallway or classrooms. We do not have the storage space in the classrooms and the hallways must be kept clear in order to meet fire code regulations.

If a car seat needs to be left at the center, either for a field trip or because someone different is picking up your child and will need it, please check with classroom staff to determine the best place to store it for the day.

A Word About Toys

Children are encouraged *not* to bring toys or stuffed animals to school. The preschool classrooms periodically schedule Sharing Days when your child will be asked to bring in something to share that is connected with the classrooms theme. Also, you might have a book or an object that enhances what we are learning in school. This is always a welcome addition!

Perhaps a "take along" toy could stay in the car or at home and wait for them there. Toys are lost on the playground, forgotten in the classroom and sometimes even broken accidentally. The teacher has to spend valuable educational time making sure toys and extras are packed and sent home at the end of the day. Please enforce this rule at home prior to coming to school. The center cannot be responsible for lost or damaged items.

Labeling of Belongings

We cannot say it enough...please label all of your child's belongings! We want to make sure everything you bring to school goes home with you as well. With this goal in mind, classroom staff will label items that arrive at school not labeled. Care will be taken to label things unobtrusively.

Special Events

Field Trips

Field trips will be chosen to enhance the monthly themes such as community helpers (a trip to the fire station) or zoo animals (a field trip to the zoo). Permission slips will be sent home at least 48 hours prior to the field trip. Transportation for field trips will be provided by the agency van or bus, which meets safety requirements for the children. The adult/child ratio will be maintained. A qualified staff member will drive the agency van or bus.

Birthdays

Let us share your joy by helping celebrate your child's birthday. Please see your child's classroom teacher to make arrangements.

Week of the Young Child

The Week of the Young Child is an annual celebration each April sponsored by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. The purpose of the week is to focus public attention on the needs of young children and their families and to support the early childhood programs that meet those needs. Bright Futures sponsors a week of fun-filled child friendly events.

School Pictures

Each year in early spring we have a photographer come to Bright Futures to take school pictures, individual pictures and class pictures. Families have an opportunity to view the proofs and purchase packages. A notice is sent out, as the dates are set.

Community Service Projects

We try to introduce the children to the importance of giving and being active members in the community. Each classroom will sponsor at least one community service project each year. We welcome your suggestions!

Bright Futures Schedule and Hours

Bright Futures is open Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. We are open fifty (50) weeks per year.

- Bright Futures will be closed the week between Christmas and New Year's Day. Parents will not pay tuition for these weeks.
- Bright Futures will close for 2 days prior to the beginning of each new school year for our staff to participate in professional development opportunities.

Holidays

Bright Futures will be closed on the following holidays:

Labor Day

Columbus Day

Veterans Day

Thanksgiving Day and the Day after Thanksgiving*

Christmas Day

New Year's Eve

New Year's Day

Martin Luther King Day

President's Day

Memorial Day

Independence Day

Victory Day

*Bright Futures will close at 3 p.m. on the day before Thanksgiving.

If a holiday falls on the weekend, the preceding Friday or the following Monday will be observed. A list of exact dates that we are closed and have early dismissal will be sent home at the beginning of the school year. Reminders will be posted in the entryway and in the monthly newsletter.

Inclement Weather Closing / Disruption of Utilities Closing

In the event of inclement weather, Bright Futures will be closed whenever Meeting Street (the agency, The Grace School and The Carter School) are closed. Please listen to the local radio stations WPRO-AM (630) WHJJ-AM (920), WSNE-FM (93.3), or watch WPRI 12 or WJAR NBC 10 for this information. You may also call our designated closing line at 401-533-9174 and listen for the dated message.

In case of a power outage, loss of water, or loss of heat, services cannot be provided. *If the center closes mid-day for any reason, we will contact you or an authorized person to pick up your child.*

Operational Policies

Arrival and Departure

Drop Off: Bright Futures opens at 7:30 a.m. We cannot accept children in the center before 7:30. We ask that all children arrive to school no later than 9:30 a.m. Arriving late disturbs your child's routine and makes it difficult for teaching staff to transition your child into the day. We do, however, understand that there may be times your child will be late for school. It is essential that you call the center (533-9103) to let us know when this situation arises. Thank you in advance!

Pick Up: Bright Futures closes at 6:00 p.m. We ask that parents arrive at the center by 5:45 to allow time for them to gather their child's belongings and check in with classroom staff to see how their child's day was.

Appointments

We recognize that sometimes appointments must be scheduled during center hours; we ask that you please try to schedule these appointments early in the morning or late in the day. This allows you to drop off your child later in the morning (before 11:00a.m.) or pick him up early to minimize the disruption to his day and the classroom routine. If a child leaves during the day for an appointment he is not allowed to return that day as it disrupts the routine of your child and the classroom. Thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation.

Release Of Children

Please come into the classroom to drop off and pick up your child each day. The center must ensure that a child is released only to a parent or an adult designated by the parent. Written notification must be received prior to pickup if the child is to be released to someone other than the custodial parent or authorized persons on the pick up list.

For the safety and security of your child, we do not accept phone call additions to the pick up lists. Please be sure authorized pick up persons bring a photo ID. The name and I.D. number of the person who picks up the child must be on the Authorized Pick Up List. All individuals, including parents, must sign out their child at pick up. Each child must be signed IN and OUT each day.

There is a SIGN IN/OUT clipboard in each classroom. When signing IN and OUT, please sign your NAME so that it is legible. Please do not use initials or "MOM, DAD" etc. Please note: it is important to update pick up lists at least yearly. Parents are responsible for providing the center with any necessary custody and/or restraining orders relating to the child. The center will keep the documents in the child's file and make all staff aware of authorized pick up lists and special restrictions.

Late Pick Up Policy

Closing time is 6:00 p.m. promptly, as determined by the clock in out entranceway. A late charge will be assessed to deter late arrivals and to provide payroll for staff needed to stay late. The first time a parent arrives late, after 6:00, they will be asked to sign the *Late Book* but no fee will be assessed. Each additional late pick up will result in a fee of \$15.00 for each 15-minute interval, or any portion of a 15-minute interval, after 6:00 p.m. *Please note that these fees are charged per child.* Late fees are to be paid immediately, at the time of pick up.

When a parent has not arrived by 6:15 p.m., every attempt will be made by the teacher to contact the parents and/or the persons listed for emergency contact on the

enrollment form. If no contact has been made by 6:45 p.m. the police department will be notified. Parents/guardians consistently late picking up their child may have their child dismissed from the program.

Absences and Vacation

If your child will *not* be coming to school for any reason, please call Leticia in the school office at 533-9247 as early as possible so staff may plan activities for the appropriate number of children. For part time children in the infant and toddler classrooms, we are unable to allow children to make up missed days by coming in on a day that is not part of their regular schedule. *Tuition is due regardless of vacation or absence.*

Withdrawal from the Program

If you decide to withdraw your child from the Bright Futures program you are required to give the center two weeks notice or pay two weeks tuition.

Payment Policy

Tuition and Fees

Application Fee: There is a one-time \$50.00 application fee due prior to enrollment.

Supply Fee: There is an annual \$30.00 per child supply fee that is due at the time of enrollment and the first week of school each subsequent year.

Weekly tuition is due on Friday for the following week of service. Monday is a grace day. A late fee of \$5.00 per day may be assessed for any overdue payments. Missing two weeks of payments will be grounds for your child's enrollment to be terminated. Again, payments are due on Friday. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Checks should be made payable to Meeting Street. Payments can be left in the *tuition box* near the Manager's office door. If paying by cash please have the exact amount in an envelope with your child's name on the envelope.

Check Return Policy

Checks returned by the bank for any reason will require payment in cash of the tuition that is due as well as a fee of \$20.00. Three returned checks will require tuition payments in cash for the remainder of the academic year.

Absence Policy

Bright Futures tuition and fees are individually agreed upon depending on the type of program selected. Once the schedule is set, tuition is due whether or not the child attends all of the scheduled days and regardless of holidays or closings due to inclement weather. Our costs do not vary with individual absences or illnesses; we cannot make individual adjustments in fees. Changes in the schedule should be discussed with the Manager. Please allow two weeks notice for any scheduling changes.

Classroom Observations & Volunteers

In addition to the regular classroom staff and therapists, there are other adults that you will see in Bright Futures' classrooms. We regularly have students from local high schools and colleges who are here observing or volunteering in the classrooms. They are completing a community service requirement for a class, doing a field placement, or just volunteering. We also have consultants who are contracted by Bright Futures/Meeting Street to provide specific types of support to classroom staff (i.e.: classroom design, behavioral interventions, services to the visual impaired).

Health and Safety

Medical Records

Our medical forms must be completed before your child can participate in the program. Immunization forms, including lead screening must also be completed. Please provide, in writing, any updates of immunizations and physicals. Physicals must be done annually in order for your child to remain in the program.

Emergencies

If your child becomes ill or has an accident at the center that is an emergency, you will be contacted at once and your child will be taken by ambulance to the emergency room at the Hasbro Children's Hospital. Our nurse will assess your child and provide as much information as possible to you and the paramedics. A staff member will accompany your child to the hospital. There is always at least one staff person in each classroom that is CPR and First Aid certified. Our nurse is on duty from of 8:00 – 3:00.

Medications

Our nurse will give your child prescription medications according to the prescription directions and your written and signed instructions. A medication authorization form must be filled out for each prescription. The forms are located in each classroom. All prescription medications must be in the original container with the child's name on it and the physician's instructions for dosage amount. A physician's order is needed for all non-prescription medications. We recommend that each child have a standing order for Tylenol. A medication authorization form must be filled out with doctor and parent signatures. We stock Children's Tylenol and Children's Motrin. The parent must provide all other medications, including Infant Tylenol and Infant Motrin. Please do not send in medication in your child's drink. This is an unsafe practice and is a violation of our policy. We ask that whenever possible medications are given at home, before or after school. Medication will be given at school only when it must be received during school hours.

Allergies

***Bright Futures is a Peanut/Nut and Latex Free center**

Please be sure to inform us if your child has any allergies. If a staff member discovers an allergy, the symptoms will be noted and recorded; parents will be notified and suspected causes will be eliminated from either the child's diet or environment. The staff in your child's class will be informed of the specific allergy. In the event that your child has a mild allergic reaction while our nurse is here, she will call you and administer Benadryl if the permission form has been signed by you. Otherwise, a staff member will notify you.

If your child has a severe allergic reaction, our nurse or a staff member will administer an Epi-pen, providing you have signed the permission form. If this occurs, 9-1-1 will be called and you will be notified. We keep Benadryl and an Epi-pen at the center for emergency allergic reactions.

Nutrition

We all want to give the children the healthiest diet possible. We also know that by starting young children off on the path toward healthier eating habits, they will be more likely to continue those habits throughout their lives. Bright Futures will be providing your child with morning and afternoon snacks that will include milk, juice or water. You are responsible for supplying your child's lunch. We ask that the meals sent to school

be packed with healthy foods to meet your child's nutritional requirements. There is no such thing as a typical school lunch. Offering a variety of foods is healthier and more interesting to your child. Variety also helps many children remain receptive to trying new foods, as they get older.

Beverage Ideas: Milk, 100% juice drinks, or water.

Lunch Ideas: Ham and cheese on whole grain bread, apple slices, and graham crackers. Chicken breast cut up, whole grain roll with butter, broccoli.

Refrigeration is available in most classrooms to store your child's lunch. We can also microwave your child's lunch if it is in an appropriate container. It is helpful if you limit the number of heat-ups sent in to one per week. It takes staff a lot of time to heat up numerous lunches and the children have to wait! Also, send in any utensils that are needed. We will encourage your child to try all the foods you provide. If you have any questions, concerns, or special feeding instructions, please feel free to contact the Manager or your child's teacher.

****The following foods represent a significant choking hazard for children less than 4 years of age. Parents are asked to please not include these foods in their child's lunches.**

- **Hotdogs, whole or cut into rounds**
- **Whole grapes or other fruits of similar size and shape**
- **Nuts and popcorn**
- **Raw peas or carrots**
- **Hard pretzels**
- **Meat larger than could safely be swallowed**
- **Hard candy**

Sharing Food From Home

When celebrating a special occasion it is acceptable to bring in food to mark the occasion. We do ask that only prepackaged food in the original packaging with the ingredients label in tact be brought in. This is to ensure that we do not unknowingly give a child food that contains an ingredient he is allergic to.

Insurance

*Meeting Street holds liability insurance coverage.

Illnesses

Each day your child will be given a brief health check. A staff member will contact you if there are any concerns or symptoms of illness noticed. We do not have the staff or facilities to care for children who are too ill to take part in regular school activities. Therefore, we ask that you not bring your child to school if she/he has had a temperature of 101 degrees or higher, has diarrhea or vomiting or a contagious condition within the last 24 hours. Anytime your child becomes ill during the day, a staff member will call you. At times, you may be called to come pick up your child. Please understand we are looking out for the health of your child and the other children in the class. If you cannot be reached, we will use the emergency numbers you have given us. The common conditions for which a child is sent home include:

Chicken Pox: Children may continue in childcare following exposure during the incubation period. However, they may not attend childcare during the outbreak period.

Parents are urged to inform us if they suspect that their child has been exposed. By law, we must inform the parents of other children about possible exposure. Parents should consult with their doctor if they have any questions about their child's contagiousness. Children cannot return to childcare until the chicken pox scabs drop off.

Conjunctivitis: Conjunctivitis is a contagious infection of the eye. Its common symptoms are a yellow discharge and tearing. Children cannot return to childcare until they have been on antibiotics for at least 24 hours and the discharge has stopped.

Diarrhea: We cannot keep a child who has watery stools in childcare. He/She may return to class 24 hours after the diarrhea stops. If your child has an allergy or condition that regularly causes diarrhea, make sure we are aware of this at the time of enrollment.

Ear Infections: Some children are very susceptible to ear infections. Children cannot return to childcare until they have been on antibiotics for 24 hours and have resumed a normal activity level.

Impetigo: Impetigo is a contagious infection of the skin. Its common symptom is crusted sores usually appearing first in the facial area. Children cannot return to childcare until they have had a regime of antibiotics and the lesions have dried.

Strep Throat: The common symptoms of strep throat are a rash, a fever and a sore throat. Children cannot return to childcare until they have been on antibiotics for 24 hours.

Temperature/Fever: A child with a temperature of 100.5 degrees auxiliary (101 F orally) or more cannot be kept in childcare. State law requires that a child remain at home fever-free for 24 hours before returning to childcare.

Vomiting: Stomach viruses are very contagious. A child who is vomiting must remain at home until the vomiting has stopped for at least 24 hours.

Head Lice: This is very contagious and very common in the public schools. Children's heads should be checked often. By law, you must inform us so that we can inform other parents. The child must get a prescription from the doctor and heads and all clothing including bed linens must be washed with this prescribed medication. The nurse must examine the child's head before re-entering facility. Children who exhibit any of the above symptoms while under our supervision will be sent home.

Child Abuse Law

Rhode Island State Law requires the staff of Bright Futures to report any suspected abuse or neglect of a child to the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families or a law enforcement agency. Child Abuse and Neglect Tracking System (CANTS) a division of the Department of Children, Youth and Families, requires human service providers who suspect a child has been abused or neglected to contact the proper authorities as soon as they have any relevant information. Delaying the report to monitor the situation or to gather more information can result in more serious harm to the child. Confidential reports may be made by calling the 24-hour toll free Abuse Hotline at 1-800-742-4453. You are not expected to prove that abuse or neglect has definitely occurred.

Incident Reporting

School can be a busy place and occasionally accidents do happen. In the event your child is hurt, staff is trained in CPR and First Aid. A staff member completes and

incident report indicating the place and time of the accident/incident, the injury if any, and the first aid procedure implemented. You will be asked to sign the report to verify that you have been informed of the incident. The original copy of the report is kept in your child's file.

Evacuation Drills

Practice fire drills are arranged at least 15 times during the school year and lockdown drills are conducted at least 2 times a year. Evacuation locations are posted in each classroom. If you are in the building and the fire alarm sounds, please leave your child with a staff member and remove your vehicle from the front semi-circle immediately. When vehicles are left in the semi-circle, emergency vehicles cannot enter. If you are in the building during a lockdown drill you must remain in the building until the drill is complete. A lockdown would occur in the event that there was a threat to the safety of those in the building. The building is secured so that no one can come or go until it is deemed safe. During a lockdown drill classroom lights are turned off and children are moved away from doors and windows. A drill log is maintained and a copy is sent yearly to the licensing agents.

Release of Information

As previously stated it is imperative we have on file any custody papers involving your child. In cases where there is joint custody, any information that is requested regarding your child by either party will be given to both parties. Please remember to file any papers relating to your child's custody.

In cases where school departments or other educational institutions request information regarding your child we will ask for written permission from a parent or guardian before filling the request.