



# **Early Learning and Child Care Center**

**Parent Policy Book**  
Rev 2019

**157 Litchfield Street, Torrington, CT 06790 860-489-5437, fax 860-489-0910**  
**[www.brookermemorial.org](http://www.brookermemorial.org)**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

“To prepare children for life-long success through education, health services, family support, and programs of excellence.”

## **PHILOSOPHY OF THE CENTER**

- We believe strong relationships are vitally important to the development of every child. These include the relationships between children, between children and their teachers, and between all center staff and families. We believe in building true partnerships through effective communication that is genuine, encouraging, and collaborative in nature.
- We respect and value diversity and strive to demonstrate this respect through our actions and words. We focus on building awareness and acceptance of differences in beliefs and practices. We believe that respecting differences helps build individual self-esteem and inclusion within our community.
- We believe a safe, nurturing environment is essential. A safe environment provides for both physical and emotional well-being. We believe children learn best in an environment that is warm, accepting, adaptable, and appropriately challenging.
- We believe that children learn through play. As children play, they learn problem solving skills, social skills, creativity, language skills, and fine and gross motor skills. Teachers will intentionally plan and provide experiences to encourage friendships, promote cooperation, and foster learning in all domains.

## **CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT**

Brooker Memorial uses the nationally recognized Creative Curriculum and Connecticut’s Early Learning and Development Standards as guidelines for planning lessons, activities, and experiences. Assessments are performed using the DOTS assessment tool. Assessments are done at the end of September and again in May to measure progress toward learning goals. Parents will be invited for Parent-Teacher conferences to review their child’s assessment results and discuss goals for their child yearly in October and June.

While at our center, children will follow a flexible daily schedule that meets the individual needs of the diverse population of children and families served by our program, including those with cultural, language and developmental differences.

The daily schedule will include indoor and outdoor physical activities, which will allow for fine and gross motor development. The daily schedule will also include opportunities for problem-solving experiences that help to promote language development and sensory discrimination.

Children will have the opportunity to express their own ideas and feelings through creative experiences in all parts of the program, including:

- Arts and media
- Dramatic play
- Music
- Language
- Motor activity
- Experiences that promote self-reliance/ self-help skills

- Health education practices
- Child initiated and staff initiated experiences
- Exploration and discovery
- Varied choices in materials and equipment
- Individual and small group activities
- Active and quiet play
- Rest, sleep or quiet activity
- Nutritious meals and snacks
- Toileting and clean up

## PARENT COMMUNICATION

Brooker Memorial strives to establish positive and open communication with the families of the children enrolled in our program. We believe parents are an integral part of their child's education. Therefore, parents are welcome in the center at any time to visit and are encouraged to volunteer. Your child's teacher will communicate with you daily either verbally or via the Procure app about your child's day to ensure the most positive experience for your child. Important notices and alerts will also be sent through the Procure app. If both parents wish to receive information via the app, please be sure to provide us with both emails.

## GENERAL POLICIES OF THE CENTER

### **Admission Policy:**

Brooker Memorial Early Learning and Child Care Center serves children ages 6 weeks up through the end of their third grade school year. Upon confirmation that a space is available, the center will hold that space open for a maximum of 2 weeks. If a family is not looking to start within 2 weeks, they can either choose to pay the weekly tuition until their preferred start date, or can be placed on a waitlist for the next available space. Prior to admission, parents/guardians must complete all forms in the enrollment packet; this includes an **Early Childhood Health Assessment Record** which needs to be completed by the child's physician. Parents/guardians must also read the center's policy book, then sign and return the last page indicating they have received and read our policies. The enrollment packet, deposit\*, and last page of the policy book must be returned to the center at least one week prior to the start date. Your child's space is not guaranteed until these have been received. Additionally, all children need to visit their prospective classroom for 30 minutes - 1 hour with or without their parent/guardian prior to their first day of attendance. Please contact the director to schedule this.

The family must submit a one time, non-refundable **\$35 Registration Fee**. The fee for a second child is \$15 and \$5 for a third. If a family withdraws a child for part of the year, a re-registration fee of **\$15** will be charged the next time the child enrolls.

**\*Deposit: Prior to enrollment, families are required to pay the registration fee and the full amount of the child's first and last week (used as a security deposit) of tuition. When a child withdraws, the security deposit will be applied toward any outstanding tuition or refunded if 2 weeks' notice has been given and the account is paid in full.**

**Provisional Enrollment:**

The first 30 days of enrollment will be regarded as a trial period, in which case either party may terminate the child’s attendance without notice. After the first 30 days of enrollment, please see withdrawal policy.

**Withdrawal or Dismissal Policy:**

Withdrawal from the center will require **two weeks** written notice. If 2 week notice is not given, parents will be responsible for paying 2 weeks of tuition from the date the notice is given. Security deposits will not be returned if we do not receive a 2 week notice or if there is a balance due at the time of withdrawal. Withdrawal notice forms are available in the parent resource area.

We are committed to providing services to children of varying needs. However, the center reserves the right to dismiss a child when it is determined it is in the best interest of the child/children. In making this decision we consider the safety and educational needs of **all** the children in the group and the ability of staff to effectively carry out their duties as teachers.

**HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION**

Brooker Memorial Early Learning and Child Care Center is open **Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Children may attend up to a maximum of 10 hours per day.** The Center is closed on the following holidays:

- New Year’s Day**
- Good Friday**
- Memorial Day**
- July 4<sup>th</sup>**
- Labor Day**
- Thanksgiving Day**
- Day after Thanksgiving**
- Christmas Day**

**The center may close for an additional “floating holiday”. Families will be notified 30 days in advance of such a closing.**

**\*\*\*\*The Center is also closed for staff professional development on: Martin Luther King Day, the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of Torrington Public School’s Spring Break, the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of every August, and Columbus Day.**

**\*\*Please be sure to mark your calendar\*\***

(A 10% discount is given to families whose child is normally scheduled to attend on one of our staff development days and whose tuition account is at \$0 the week prior to the closing day. This discount does not apply to holiday or weather closings or to families who owe a balance on their tuition.)

**Tuition is not reduced for days when the center is closed.**

**If the center is closed for a day and the family wishes to attend a different day that week, extra tuition fees will apply. If a child misses a day during the week and the family would like to attend an additional day, extra tuition fees will apply. Days cannot be “swapped”. Picking up extra days will depend on space availability and staffing.**

**Drop Off/Pick Up Policy:**

1. Your child needs to arrive at his/her scheduled time and be picked up at his/her scheduled time. Staff schedules are made in accordance with the schedules of the children so we can maintain proper staffing ratios. If you need to drop off early, or stay late you **MUST** call first to check if we have coverage. You may request a schedule change or request early or extended hours when the need arises. This needs to be done in writing and approved by the child care director. We request that parents do not drop off or pick up during naptime as it can be too disruptive for the other children. We also require children to be dropped off by 9:30 am unless other arrangements have been approved.
2. Each family will be given their own 4 digit PIN for the security door. Please use careful judgment as to whom you share your code with, and for safety reasons please *do not* share your code with your child. This code can be changed at any time if the need arises.
3. **For the safety of the children please do not let anyone in as you are entering or exiting!** (You may recognize other parents or guardians, but situations occasionally occur where someone who used to drop off & pick up is no longer authorized to do so.) Anyone who is authorized to enter the building will have their own code. Anyone without a code will be let in by staff only.
4. Upon arrival, parents/guardians must escort their child in to his/her classroom and be sure the teacher is aware he/she has arrived. The teacher will then sign your child in for the day and you may leave.
5. Upon departure, children are to wait in the classroom or on the playground until a parent/guardian comes in. Again you must be sure the teacher is aware you are picking up. If the teacher is speaking with another parent please wait until she is available and can acknowledge you are leaving. Your child will then be signed out and becomes your responsibility to supervise.
6. **Please do not allow your child to run in the hallways or parking lot**, or to enter classrooms that are not their own.
7. **Please drive slowly in our parking lot!!! The posted speed limit is 5mph!** Please hold your child's hand while in the parking lot for safety reasons.
8. Parents/guardians or other authorized visitors are welcome to come see your child at any part of his/her day. It would be preferable that visits not be scheduled at naptime. Please inform your child's teacher if anyone other than yourself will be coming in to visit or observe your child. Please feel free to contact your child's teacher or the Director if you are interested in volunteering at the center or sharing a special talent/skill that you may have. All are welcome.
9. Only persons listed on the child's information form will be allowed to pick up the child. Parents must inform child care staff when anyone other than themselves will be picking up. If an alternate person comes to pick up your child, and staff have not been informed, the person will be asked to wait until you can be reached to verify who is picking up.
10. The center reserves the right to ask for proper identification of any person visiting or picking up a child.
11. We must be informed of any restraining orders or other similar issues and be given copies of court paperwork in order to protect your child. It is the

- parent/guardian's responsibility to provide the center with up to date copies of such orders, and notification when orders are expired or lifted. Without copies of such orders, the staff will not be able to enforce them.
12. Please be diligent in following child safety restraint laws. If we see a child in an inappropriate car seat or none at all, we will request that you leave the child with us while you go and purchase or borrow the age appropriate car seat. We must report your name and license plate number to the police department if you refuse to cooperate and leave with your child. A report will also be made to DCF.
  13. Per DCF, children under the age of 12 MAY NOT be left alone in the car. Do not leave a child in your car while coming in to drop off or pick up.
  14. It is against the law to drive while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. If we smell alcohol or otherwise note that the safety of your child is better served if the parent/guardian does not drive, we will request that you find a substitute driver. We must report your name and license plate number to the police department if you refuse to cooperate and leave with your child. A report will also be made to DCF.
  15. Please be sure to call the center to let us know when your child will be absent.

### **Late Pick Up Policy:**

**All children must be picked up at the end of their scheduled time each day (according to the classroom clock) or a late fee will be charged.** Additionally, the child care center closes at **6:00p.m.** All children need to be removed from the program area at this time. Late pick up fees are as follows:

- \$5.00 up to 5 minutes past the closing/scheduled pick up time
- \$10.00 between 6 and 10 minutes past the closing/ scheduled pick up time
- \$15.00 between 11 and 15 minutes past the closing/ scheduled pick up time, \$1.00 for each minute thereafter past the closing/ scheduled pick up time

If you know you will be late to pick up your child, please call the center to advise staff of your expected arrival time. (Late fees will still apply.) When you are late to pick up your child, you will be required to sign our late pick up form indicating the time of pick up. Late fees will be immediately added to your account. *Parents/caregivers who are late more than two times in a month will be charged an additional \$1.00 per minute. Chronic issues with late pick up may result in disenrollment.* Payment of late fees is due with tuition payment the first Thursday following the late pick up. Failure to pay assessed late fees may result in your child's disenrollment from the program.

The above fees apply as well as the following procedures:

- If a child has not been picked up within 10 minutes of our closing time, we will call all home and work numbers listed for the parent/guardians.
- If we cannot reach a parent/guardian we will call all other pick up and emergency numbers on your information form.
- The child care director or executive director of Brooker Memorial will be notified.
- If no one can be reached by 6:30p.m., the child care director or executive director will notify the police and a determination will be made regarding the involvement of The Department of Children and Families for abandonment or neglect.

- Two staff eighteen years of age or older will remain on the licensed premises until the child is picked up.

**Payment/Tuition Policy:**

1. Tuition is due every Thursday by 6:00p.m. for childcare that will be provided the following week.
2. Each family is allowed one tuition free “vacation” week per calendar year. The vacation week must be used as a week and cannot be spread out over the course of the year. Vacation weeks cannot be carried over. Parents who withdraw their child for any portion of the year or who seasonally reduce their child’s attendance are not eligible for a free vacation week. Vacations need to be requested in writing via email or Procare.
3. **Non-payment of tuition will prohibit your child from attending the center. Families who are more than 3 weeks behind or \$800 (whichever comes first) will not be allowed to drop off their child until tuition is paid in full.**
4. A \$10 late fee is charged for tuition not received by Thursday at 6:00p.m. and another \$10 fee for payment not received by Friday at 6:00p.m. Failure to make your weekly tuition payment by Monday can result in your child’s disenrollment from the center until full payment including late fees is received.
5. If there is a public school holiday or storm closing and you are using additional child care, you are responsible for including the additional fee with your weekly payment for that week.
6. There is no reduction in tuition rates when Brooker is closed for a holiday or the first three storm closings. If the center is closed due to storms more than 3 days during the year from July 1 to June 30, parents will only be charged for the first three. We only close the center during severe storms.
7. If a payment is made by check and the check is returned to Brooker Memorial for any reason, the family is responsible for resubmitting the check and for any bank fees Brooker Memorial incurs. In addition, Brooker will charge a \$10 returned check fee. If a check is returned to Brooker Memorial two separate times, Brooker Memorial reserves the right to accept only cash, credit card, or money order payments for tuition from that time forward.
8. Care 4 Kids: Brooker Memorial participates in the State of Connecticut Care 4 Kids child care assistance program. Of our total enrollment, up to 50% of the spaces will be available to families on Care 4 Kids. A current certificate of eligibility indicating the amount of subsidy must be on file with the child care prior to the child’s admission. Most families are required to pay a portion of the tuition. This amount will be calculated by Brooker Memorial. Payment of the parent share is due every Thursday by 6:00p.m. If a family’s certificate application or renewal is incomplete or pending for any reason, the full amount of tuition must be paid weekly until the certificate is received by the child care center. Once the certificate is received, a refund will be processed for the amount of the credit balance. When redetermination for Care 4 Kids is due, the family must have all forms to the child care secretary 6 weeks prior to the deadline indicated on the form. Failure to adhere to this deadline will result in the family paying full tuition until a valid certificate is received. **Non-payment of tuition/parent share will prohibit your child from attending the center until tuition is paid in full. A re-registration fee may apply. (See Care 4 Kids Scholarship Policy)**

9. Payments of cash or check must be placed in the small lock box mounted on the wall in the parent resource area. When making cash payments, please include your name, your child's name, and the payment amount on the envelope. When writing a check, please include your child's name and the payment period.
10. Brooker Memorial accepts VISA, MASTERCARD, and American Express. We can set up an automatic credit/debit payment or checking/savings withdrawal. Please see the child care administrative assistant for the necessary form.
11. Tuition charges are constant according to your child care contract, with the exception of snow days and school holidays when additional tuition fees will apply for children who are in the school age program. Full payment is expected every week. Parents can view their accounts at [www.myprocare.com](http://www.myprocare.com). Parents can also make payments online via the same website.
12. Sibling Discount: Brooker Memorial offers families with more than one child enrolled in the program a 15% discount\* upon the enrollment of a second child and 5% upon the enrollment of a third child. The discount(s) will be applied to the child(ren) with the lower tuition rate(s). \*The sibling discount rate only applies to children enrolled at the center full time (5 days). Families receiving Care 4 Kids, DCF funding, or scholarship are not eligible for sibling discounts. Also, families must keep their account up to date on payments in order to receive discounts. Families with a balance will be charged full tuition.
13. Families who work a flexible schedule are required to pay for a full week regardless of their changing work schedule. For example: If one week the work schedule is Monday, Wednesday, and Friday and the next week is Tuesday, Thursday; you will be charged the full tuition rate every week. This is necessary since the center needs to leave a slot open for your child Monday through Friday.
14. Please refrain from signing your child up for hours that you will not use, just in case you might need it sometime in the future. With notice we can usually accommodate your need for occasional early arrival or late pick up. Please note that **children's daily attendance is capped at 10 hours per day**. If a parent absolutely needs more than 10 hours we can accommodate the additional time providing that parents supply us with a document from their employer detailing their work schedule. \* *There is an additional overtime charge of \$5.00 for every 30 minutes or part thereof over the allotted 10 hours.\**
15. A thirty day notice will be given prior to any rate changes.



## **Health Policy:**

Nothing can be more trying or worrisome for a parent than a sick child. Because of the close contact children naturally have with one another, a sick child can easily infect others. To help keep all children as illness-free as possible, we have established some basic guidelines. Please keep these guidelines handy and refer to them when your child becomes ill.

**\*\*Please notify the center immediately if your child has had an exposure to anyone who tests positive for COVID or if your child has tested positive themselves. Quarantine and testing recommendations are based on current guidance from the Torrington Area Health Department and the Office of Early Childhood and are subject to change during the course of the pandemic.**

Children should **not come** to the center and will be **sent home** if any or a combination of the following conditions exist:

1. Fever at or above 100 degrees as measured under the arm. Fever is measured without fever reducing medication in the 8 hours prior to temperature check.
2. Vomiting 2 or more times in the last 24 hours, or one episode of vomiting and the child complains of stomach or other pain, or is generally acting ill.
3. Two or more unusually loose or watery stools in the last 24 hours that cannot be contained in the diaper or cause accidents for toilet trained children.
4. Difficulty breathing, wheezing, uncontrolled coughing.
5. Yellow/green or watery discharge from eyes.
6. Skin rashes (other than diaper rash) not determined to be non-contagious by the doctor; must be accompanied by a Doctor's note to return to child care.
7. Chickenpox: May not return until 7 days after onset of rash, or until all lesions are dried and crusted.
8. Head Lice: May not return until they are nit free.
9. Complaints of pain, ie: earache, stomach pain lasting two or more hours or severe enough to impact the child's participation in daily activities.
10. The child has been sedated in the 12 hours prior to arrival
11. The child is too ill to participate in the day's program, including outdoor activities (i.e. must be able to go outside), or requires more care than can be managed in a group setting.

Children with contagious illness must stay home until:

1. They are symptom free for 24 hours (a child sent home from the center may not return the next day) or
2. They have been on medication prescribed by the doctor for at least 24 hours and are well enough to participate in all child care activities including outdoor play,
3. There is a note from the doctor stating the child is not contagious and the child is well enough to participate in all child care activities including outdoor play.
4. Exclusion for illnesses not listed above will be based on the advice of the center's Nurse Consultant and/or local health officials.
5. Head lice and scabies are considered contagious.

Families will be notified and given information regarding any unusual level or type of communicable disease to which their child was exposed.

*\*If your child is starting a new medication (one s/he has never taken before), you must give the first dose at home and monitor your child for reaction **before** returning to the*

*child care center. This is to ensure that there are no allergic or other reactions to the medication that could result in a medical emergency for your child.*

*\*Please let your child's teacher know if s/he has had any medication as it may affect her/his behavior during the day.*

Parents should not medicate a child to hide symptoms and then send the child to the center. If your child has any of the symptoms listed above, he/she should not come to child care. Other children and staff will be exposed to a possibly contagious illness before we realize your child is ill.

\*(Note: If a child becomes ill while at the center, we will contact the parent. Arrangements must be made by the parent to take the child home **within one hour**. If a parent cannot be reached, the emergency numbers will be called. Your child will be kept as isolated (either in the classroom or in the Director's office) and as comfortable as possible until he/she is picked up.)

**On the days your child is out sick, tuition is still charged for his/her contracted time unless it is an extended illness.**

Our policy on an extended illness, (out for two or more consecutive weeks), is as follows:

First Week:	Regular Weekly Fee Charged
Second Week:	Half of regular weekly fee charged
Third Week:	No Charge
Fourth Week:	No Charge

Upon the second consecutive week of illness a doctor's note is required stating that the child cannot attend child care and for how long. If you know in advance as in the case of surgery, you may notify us and send the note in then. Please note: In situations where an illness continues longer than four weeks the child will be disenrolled from the Center, or you may hold his/her slot by paying the full amount of weekly tuition. At the parent's request, the child can be put on a waiting list. The Director will notify the family if the child's space is at risk and offer the family the choice of paying to hold the slot until the child's return.

**Regulations require that all children have a current health form on file, which includes an annual physical examination (dated less than 1 year old) and a current record of all immunizations. Child Care regulations also require an annual flu shot for all children ages 6 months through 5 years. Parents are responsible for keeping the center records updated. If your child's health record is more than 30 days overdue, your child will not be able to attend the program until an updated copy is received.**

#### **Medication Policy:**

All staff members at the center are trained to administer oral, topical, or inhalant medication. Please remember that parents must administer the first dose of any new medications at home. If your child requires medication during the times that they are scheduled to be at the center, all of the following will be required:

A written and signed authorization form *specific to licensed child care centers* must be submitted to the center from the child's physician and must include:

1. The name, address, and date of birth of the child

2. The date the medication order was written
3. The medication or drug name, dose, and method of administration
4. The reason the medication is being administered
5. The time the medication is to be administered
6. The date(s) the medication is to be started and ended
7. Relevant side effects, reactions, or negative interaction with foods or drugs and the authorized plan for management if they occur
8. Notation if the medication is a controlled drug
9. Parent/guardian & doctor's signature required

This authorization form is required by the State of Connecticut for our licensing and is available in the child care parent information area. Please note that there are many variations of the medication administration form that medical providers have access to. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure the medication administration form clearly states that it is for licensed child care centers. All information on the form **MUST** be filled out completely. If the proper form is not complete, staff will not be able to administer the medication, and this may mean your child cannot attend child care. \*Medication must be in the original container, must not be expired, and if it is prescription must have the original prescription label.\* ***\*Medication may not be administered in a child's bottle or sippy cup, in food, etc.\****

**Non-Prescription Topical Application:**

*Non-prescription* topical products can be administered to your child while present at the center. These items include diaper changing or other ointments (that ARE NOT antibiotic, antifungal or steroidal), teething, gum, or lip balms, and diaper powders. These items must be provided by the parent in their original container, and have an expiration date that is not expired. No product can be applied by staff until an authorization form has been completed by the parent and at least one dose has been administered at home. Parents must administer the first dose of any new product at home to rule out adverse side effects.

**Wellness Policy:**

The Brooker Memorial Early Learning and Child Care Center is committed to providing an environment that promotes good nutrition and health practices to help reduce childhood obesity and to reinforce healthy choices for all children, families, and staff. We use the following standards which are based on the recommendations of numerous health and educational organizations.

- **Physical Activity**

We know that active play is important for healthy growth, and physical and cognitive (brain) development. Therefore teachers will strive to:

- Plan 60 minutes daily of structured physical activity for preschool children and 30 minutes daily for toddlers.
- Provide at least 60 minutes of unstructured physical activity for children of both age groups each day.
- Insure that children are not inactive for more than 60 minutes at any time, except when sleeping.

- Provide short, supervised and engaging floor and/or tummy time activities for infants at least two or more times per day. We will limit the use of restrictive equipment such as swings, exersaucers, and bouncy seats.

- **Screen Time**

The use of television and other electronic media can get in the way of exploring, being physically active, and socializing. Because of this:

- Screen time will be limited to no more than 20 minutes per day for preschool and school age children.
- Screen time is restricted for infants and toddlers.
- Screen time is limited to educational and age appropriate content.
- Staff encourage families to limit recreational screen time to no more than 1-2 hours per day of developmentally appropriate programming; no or minimal screen time for children under 2 years of age is recommended.

- **Nutrition**

Studies show that young children consistently over consume salty, fatty, and sweet foods. These unhealthy foods can displace the nutrient-rich foods needed for healthy growth and development. We will support healthy food choices by:

- Serving, fruits, vegetables and whole grains at snack times.
- Not using food as a reward.
- Making water readily available and encouraging children to develop the habit of daily intake.
- Serving only 1% milk to preschool children, and whole milk to older infants and toddlers.
- Discussing nutrition and healthy choices regularly, and providing frequent positive feedback when children make healthy choices.
- Staff will act as role models and will refrain from consuming unhealthy food/beverages in front of children.

\*Please be sure to refer to our policy regarding breakfast and lunch (see below) for details on foods that are and are not allowed from home.

***Our center is Nut Free. Sunbutter is allowed.***

**Snacks:**

Healthy snacks and milk or water are provided by the center and served to children ages 18 months and older. Snacks will include a fruit or vegetable and whole grains. Snack times are around 9:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. A snack menu is posted in the kitchen for your review.

If your child has a food allergy, this information needs to be listed on his/her health form and a Care Plan needs to be created with the assistance of our Nurse Consultant and/or the child's physician (depending on the nature and severity of the allergy).

For children under 18 months of age snacks and drinks must be provided by the parent/guardian.

Here are a few suggestions:

- Whole Grain Crackers
- Grain/Cereal Bars
- Fruit/Vegetables (Need to be cut into small pieces and ready to serve.)
- Cheese or Yogurt
- Water or Whole milk for children age 12 mo. to 24 mo. (no Juice please)

### **Breakfast and Lunch:**

#### **Breakfast:**

The center does not provide breakfast. You may send a **healthy** breakfast for your child if he/she arrives before 8:30 am. If your child arrives at 8:30 or later, please serve breakfast at home. **Please do not send donuts, cookies, or other sugary cereals/foods as breakfast.**

#### **Lunch:**

All parents must provide a nutritious lunch for their child. National recommendations indicate child care centers should work to ensure that meals sent from home meet current guidelines for nutritional content. Therefore, lunches should at least include a main meal, a fruit or vegetable (or both), and a drink. Drinks should be water, or milk only. Please save juice for home, it will not be served at the center.

\*Per guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics, the center requests parents send no more than **one** “treat” item such as cookies, chips, jello, pudding, etc. in your child’s lunch. Please do not send more than that as only one will be served.

\*All lunch boxes and tupperware should be labeled with your child’s name.

\*All lunch items must be in ready to eat, or ready to heat containers. This means no canned soup, boxed macaroni, EZ macs, or frozen dinners as these are too time consuming to prepare.

\*The center will not serve any candy, fruit snacks, or juice sent from home.

\*To prevent choking, please cut your child’s food into bite sized pieces. We are not allowed to offer children younger than 4 the following foods: whole hot dogs or hot dogs sliced into rounds (must be cut into quarters), whole grapes (must be cut into quarters), popcorn, hard pretzels, or chunks of raw carrot or meat larger than can be swallowed whole (these items can be served if they are cut into small pieces).

\*Lunches (except babyroom lunches) should be placed in the refrigerator in the center’s kitchen. Staff will heat any meals needing it and deliver lunches to the classrooms.

Here are a few lunch ideas:

- Sandwiches on whole grain bread
- Leftovers from the night before
- Cold cut & cheese roll ups
- Salads
- Vegetables/Fruit
- Whole Grain Crackers with SunButter

- Granola Bars
- Yogurt

\*The center provides utensils, disposable cups, and bibs for your convenience. You may choose to send your own if you prefer. Please **label** any items brought from home.

\*The State of Connecticut requires a fresh sippy cup or bottle be used for each meal and servings should be prepared with this in mind. We cannot reuse or refill cups or bottles. All sippy cups and bottles must be labeled with your child's name.

\*All infants on formula must have premade, **labeled** (child's name and date if breastmilk) bottles brought to the center. We cannot reuse bottles or nipples. Be sure to label both bottles *and* bottle covers.

\*The center **cannot serve** any bottles that have cereal, food, or medication mixed in.

### **Dental Care:**

The Children's Dental Center at Brooker Memorial offers dental services to children who live in Litchfield County. We see patients who are insured through any of the state of Connecticut Title 19 HUSKY plans, those who have private dental insurance, and those without insurance. Financial Assistance is available to qualifying families. The Dental Center also provides dental care for pregnant women enrolled in the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program, and post-natal care up to 6 weeks post-partum. Infants should receive their first dental care appointment by one year of age or when their first tooth emerges. Families may call 860-489-1328 for more information or to schedule an appointment.

### **Discipline Policy:**

It is the policy of Brooker Memorial to protect all children enrolled in the child care program. Brooker Memorial strives to provide a program that fosters the healthy development of a child's self-esteem. We prohibit the use of abusive, neglectful, physical, corporal, humiliating, or frightening treatment, and the use of physical restraint, unless such restraint is necessary to protect the health and safety of the child or others. Additionally, teaching staff shall never use threats or derogatory remarks and will not withhold or threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline. Teaching staff will continuously supervise children during disciplinary actions.

Our program believes in:

1. Setting clear limits that are developmentally appropriate and consistent.
2. Using positive guidance to encourage children to verbalize their feelings and find solutions to solve problems.
3. Use of positive role models and the modeling of appropriate behaviors for children.
4. The use of genuine praise and attention for appropriate behaviors, i.e. positive reinforcement.

Hitting, kicking, shoving, throwing objects, biting, bullying, or other aggression by a child will not be accepted by the staff as an appropriate means to resolve any issue or as an accepted manner of behavior. Brooker Memorial reserves the right to dismiss a child whose behavior presents unsafe conditions for themselves or others, who repeatedly destroys property, or is consistently disruptive.

If a child exhibits any of the above behaviors, the staff at the center will:

1. Redirect the child's behavior
2. Model the correct appropriate/socially acceptable behavior.
3. Interact with the child and discuss alternative methods of approach to the situation

If the child is physically hurting others, including themselves, or being excessively disruptive, he/she will be removed from the classroom and will remain under staff supervision. When the child has regained self-control, and the staff have been able to discuss the incident with him/her, the child will be able to return to the classroom. A behavior form will be completed by the teacher and given to the parent **to sign and return the following day**. If the child continues to exhibit inappropriate behaviors, the parent may be called to pick up their child from the center. Parents will need to make arrangements for the child to be picked up within one hour. For ongoing behaviors, teachers will observe and document the concerns. A meeting will be scheduled with the family to obtain their input, to formulate a behavior plan, and make necessary referrals. It is expected that parents will follow through with recommendations and/or referrals to improve their child's chances of success. If the family does not agree with or chooses not to follow through with the recommendations and the behavior continues, Brooker Memorial reserves the right to refuse child care service to the child. This is done for the safety and learning of the other children enrolled in the program. This is the last step that will be taken, and parents will be notified in writing. Whenever possible, 2 weeks notice will be given. However, the severity of the behaviors may cause disenrollment with less notice.

### **Mandated Reporting:**

All staff and consultants at Brooker Memorial are Mandated Reporters under Connecticut General Statutes. We are mandated by law to report any and all suspected child abuse or neglect and must report any suspicion to DCF regardless of the identity of the perpetrator. We are not required to inform families when making a report, unless a staff member is accused. If the suspected abuse involves a staff member, he/she will either be removed from direct work with children, or placed on leave until the investigation is complete. The management of this program supports zero tolerance for abuse and neglect and will implement immediate action should there be an allegation that a staff member abused or neglected a child. All staff receive annual training on Abuse and Neglect.

### **Confidentiality:**

All staff of Brooker Memorial are required to sign our Confidentiality Policy upon hire. Confidential and/or sensitive information is not shared with other families or any staff who do not have a need to know. Confidential information includes but is not limited to: addresses, phone numbers, financial status, health/mental health information, and home situations/living arrangements.

### **Biting Policy:**

We recognize that biting is a normal developmental stage many children go through, and incidences of biting likely *will* occur at our center. It is a behavior most commonly seen

in children between the ages of 13 and 24 months of age, and is usually a temporary stage. However, it is our responsibility to provide a safe environment for the children in our center. It is our policy to provide quick, consistent responses to biting incidents and to maintain the confidentiality of all families involved. If a child shows a tendency to bite, staff will follow a set procedure and partner with parents to develop a behavior plan. Every effort will be made to break the biting behavior pattern. If all attempts have failed, it may be necessary to utilize the services of a consultant or to disenroll the child. Parents will be provided with written notice prior to these actions.

### **Potty training policy:**

The staff at Brooker are happy to help with your child's transition from diapers to using the potty. If you feel your child is ready to begin potty training please communicate this to your child's teacher and complete a Potty Training Readiness Checklist. Potty training is much more likely to be a smooth process if your child is *truly* ready and if staff and families work together.

During the beginning phase of potty training we will require that your child remain in diapers or pull ups until they have successfully used the potty for one full week. This is for sanitary reasons. Cloth underwear does not keep urine and feces contained in order to prevent the spread of germs and bodily fluids. We also do not have the capability to clean carpets multiple times per day. Once your child transitions to underwear, please *continue* to send diapers or pull ups and at least **3 full changes** of clothing (including socks and an extra pair of slippers/shoes). If your child has 2 consecutive accidents, he/she will need to be put back in a pull up. Please remember that we can encourage, but we cannot force a child to sit on the potty. Staff will bring your child to the bathroom at frequent intervals throughout the day and use lots of positive reinforcement. If your child refuses to sit on the potty, he/she will need to be put back in a pull up/diaper. In the event of an accident, please be aware that we cannot dump, launder, or rinse out soiled clothing per licensing regulations. It will be placed in a bag as is and sent home. You must replace any clothing sent home by the next day; we do not have spare clothing at the center! Also, your child must be dressed in clothing they can easily pull up and down themselves to minimize accidents. (No onesies, overalls, belts, etc. should be worn while potty training.)

*\*All children must be fully potty trained before entering our preschool program. This means the child can remain dry in underwear and use the bathroom unassisted during the day with the exception of naptime. Pull ups can be used for naptime in preschool if necessary. Please show your child how to wipe him/herself after going to the bathroom. Staff are not able to go into the bathroom alone with a child to assist with wiping. Toddlers who are currently enrolled will only transition to a preschool classroom once these criteria are met. Exceptions may be made for children with a documented Individualized Education Plan (IEP).*

### **Snow and Inclement Weather:**

Late opening or closings due to inclement weather:

Late opening or closing information will be sent out via Procare, be announced on WZBG 97.3 FM, will be on Brooker's website ([www.brookermemorial.org](http://www.brookermemorial.org)), announced on our telephone answering system, and will be listed on the school closing page at [www.nbcconnecticut.com](http://www.nbcconnecticut.com). Announcements will be posted by 5:30 am.



**Early Closing:**

Families will be phoned by child care staff and informed of the time of closing. Families must make arrangements to have their child picked up by the early closing time. Staff will remain as necessary to maintain ratio with at least 2 staff remaining until all children are picked up.

Tuition is *not reduced* for days that the center is closed due to weather or other emergency situations. However, if the center is closed more than three days during the year from July 1 to June 30, you will not be charged for closed days beyond 3. This will only apply if your child is scheduled to attend on days the center is closed.

**Evacuation Emergency:****Shelter in place:**

In the event of a tornado warning children and staff will shelter in place. We will evacuate to a designated safe area of the child care center. Children and staff will remain there until the warning is lifted. Signs notifying families of our location will be posted. Emergency supplies are kept onsite.

**Evacuation:**

In the event of any emergency that would require the evacuation of the building, parents would be notified by center staff prior to the evacuation if possible, or as soon as possible afterwards. Brooker Child Care has permission to evacuate children to the Columbia Club building on 152 Litchfield St., or to the Torrington Library on 12 Daycoeton Place. Children will be transported in staff vehicles and/or will walk. Once notified of evacuation families must make arrangements to have their child picked up as soon as possible.

**Absence:**

If your child will be absent, please call the center to inform your child's teacher. The center should be informed if your child will be out due to an illness, and the nature of illness. If the center does not receive a phone call regarding the absence of your child, we will make a phone call to find out your child's status.

**Photo Release:**

As a learning center, the center uses photography as a teaching tool and for publicity. The children also love to see themselves. Photos are displayed throughout the center and may be printed in local newspapers, agency publications; appear on our website, or in other publicity. Parents are asked to sign a waiver upon enrollment for this or to let the center know if you don't want your child's photo to be taken or used.

**Field Trips:**

The children may periodically take field trips. Field trip fees will apply. Advance notice will be given when a field trip is scheduled and a permission slip will need to be signed. No child may go on a field trip without a permission slip. If your child will not be participating in the trip, you may be required to make other child care arrangements for the day. We encourage parent chaperones on field trips and will provide additional staffing over ratio as needed. A first aid kit, reliable means of communication, and any necessary medications will be brought. Staff are trained in first aid, CPR, and the administration of medication.

**Naps/Bedding:**

Children are required to have bed linens and to rest during the day as mandated by the State of Connecticut Office of Early Childhood. All sheets and blankets must be brought home weekly, washed and returned the following week. These items need to be brought in on your child's first day of care for the week and taken home on your child's last day of care for the week. If your child does not have these items, they will be provided by the center and there will be a \$5.00 charge for using and washing these items. If your items are not taken home there will also be a \$5.00 charge to wash your items. The additional charges will be applied to your account. Nap items include:

- Crib Sheet
- Sleep Sack only for infants, Blanket for older children
- Pillow (not allowed for infants)
- Security Item (if needed, not allowed for infants)

(Please note: To reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), infants under the age of 12 months, unless otherwise ordered by a physician, *must be placed on their backs to sleep*. Pillows, blankets, stuffed toys, and any other soft items are not allowed in cribs per child care licensing regulations. Parents may send a sleep sack in lieu of a blanket. After being placed down for sleep on their backs, infants may then be allowed to assume any comfortable position to which they can easily turn themselves from the back position.)

**Diapers/Wipes/Ointment:**

For all children who are not potty trained please provide the following:

- Diapers
- Wipes
- Non- medicated ointment if needed.

A parent/guardian authorization form must be completed *before* diaper creams, ointments, or medicated powders can be applied. Staff will notify you when your child needs more supplies.

**Sun Screen:**

During the warmer months, the children will spend more time outdoors. Please remember to bring in a labeled bottle of Sun Screen to be used when going outside. Sunscreen expires after one year, and will need to be replaced yearly. Please note, we cannot apply another child's lotion to your child and we prohibit the use of spray sunscreens at the center. Sunscreens containing PABA will require a doctor's note.

**Clothing:**

Each child needs to keep a full set of spare clothing at the center. Please include the following:

- Shirts
- Pants/Shorts
- Socks
- Underwear

- Shoes

Remember to provide your child with weather appropriate items as well. The children go outside every day weather permitting. Please include:

- Hats/Mittens/Gloves
- Boots/Snow Pants
- Bathing Suit/Towel/Water Shoes
- **Please remember to label all of your child's items.**

**If your child does not have these items, you or one of your contacts may be called to bring them to the center.**

### **Toys from Home:**

We ask that children do not bring toys from home. Things can become lost, get broken, or cause hard feelings around issues of sharing. We cannot be responsible for any toys brought from home, and staff are not responsible for monitoring toys that are left in children's cubbies. If there is a special activity when your child can bring an item from home, your child's teacher will notify you ahead of time. In that case, upon arrival the item should be placed in your child's cubby. The teacher will allow children to get the item from their cubby at the appropriate time, and have them return it to their cubby when the activity is over. It is recommended that families do not allow their child to bring expensive or irreplaceable items to child care!

### **Complaint Procedure:**

Brooker Memorial uses the complaint procedures set forth by the State of Connecticut Office of Early Childhood. Most problems within a child care setting are not life threatening and should be resolved by:

- Discussing the problem with the classroom teacher
- Discussing the problem with the program director if the teacher has not been able to address your concern
- Discussing the problem with the Executive Director of the organization
- If the problem is still not resolved, you may contact the Office of Early Childhood

All inspection reports and compliance letters are available for your inspection at the child care center or by contacting the State of Connecticut Office of Early Childhood.

Please note, positive feedback is always welcomed too!

Brooker does not encourage child care staff to babysit children enrolled in the center, however we do not specifically prohibit it. *If* a babysitting arrangement is made between a family and a center employee, then the Babysitting Release Form must be completed by both parties.

**(You *DO NOT NEED* to complete this form unless you have made a babysitting arrangement with a staff member.)**



### Babysitting Release Form

I, the undersigned parent, custodian or guardian responsible for \_\_\_\_\_ (child's name)

understand and acknowledge that:

- (1) Brooker Memorial Early Learning and Child Care Center is not responsible in any way for the care and welfare of my child(ren) when my child(ren) is not in attendance; and
- (2) Brooker Memorial Early Learning and Child Care Center is not responsible for any of the below named employee's actions or omissions during any period of time the employee is babysitting for my child(ren).

I agree to hold harmless Brooker Memorial Early Learning and Child Care Center, its agents, employees, officers, and directors from any claims I may have, or my child may have, resulting from injury, damage or loss arising out of, in connection with, or in any way associated with babysitting performed by

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Employee name: Printed Name                      Signature                      (Date)

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Parent/Guardian: Printed Name                      Signature                      (Date)

This form is to be placed in the child's file. Parent must add the employee's name to their list of authorized alternate pick up persons. Parent agrees to allow the alternate pick up person to receive the child's daily information sheet, and any accident/incident forms. If the child is being picked up from the center, staff member must be off the clock and then becomes responsible for gathering and bringing home the child's belongings. The staff member picking up, and teacher in the classroom will both sign the daily information sheet indicating there are no injuries/marks on the child other than those noted on any incident/accident sheets.

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**Confirmation of Receipt**

**\*This page must be signed and returned to the center before the start of child care.\***

I have received the Brooker Memorial Early Learning and Child Care Center Policy Book, and I am fully aware of its contents including the discipline policy which I have discussed with the Director or Assistant Director. I understand that should questions arise about the Policy Book, the Child Care Director will be available to address them in a timely manner. I understand that failure by the center to require performance/adherence of any provision in the Policy Book shall not affect the center’s right to require performance/adherence at any time thereafter.

Child’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_