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Rachael Geoffrion, RN – *Owner/Director*

Family Handbook

Our Philosophy

The positive development of a child's self-image is of prime importance and a priority in all aspects of our school. We provide an environment where your child can grow, learn and discover the world around them.

Our school is more than a day care center. We provide an early childhood education with a fully developed curriculum focused on the unique needs of each child.

We provide opportunities for your child to explore their full imagination and encourage each child to grow and to develop all of their interests, capabilities and unique talents.

Our Anti-Discrimination Policy

All families are welcome at Lightbulb Moments Early Learning Center. At Lightbulb Moments, family means anyone who cares for and loves your child. This includes ALL parents: step, foster, adoptive and partners of all those people, grandparents, aunts, uncles, teachers and everyone else who takes part in helping them grow socially, emotionally and academically.

Lightbulb Moments Early Learning Center does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status.

Lightbulb Moments Culture Statement

We are all family at Lightbulb Moments. We keep open communication with staff members and families as we embark on our educational journey together. We strive to cultivate well-rounded, kind, and educated children within our childcare center. We want every child to have “Lightbulb Moments!” as they grow and learn with us. Our goal is that you can leave your children in our care knowing that above all else they are happy, healthy, safe, and loved!

Programs

Infant, Waddler and Toddler Program

Infants, Waddlers and Toddlers ages 6 weeks to 2 years 9 months are cared for in a safe, nurturing, and loving environment. The ratio is one teacher to four children. The infants will range from 6 weeks to about 12 months of age; waddlers (those crawling/learning to walk) will range from 12 months to 2 years of age and toddlers will range from 2 years of age to 2 years 9 months/3 years of age.

This program is designed to build a trusting, secure relationship between each infant and his/her teacher. As babies grow, they explore the world around them and experiment with independence. The program provides gross and fine motor activities to stimulate and enhance every child's growth and development. As your baby becomes a waddler, activities will center on learning to walk and mastering newfound skills at an individual pace. As your waddler becomes a toddler, they will begin to participate in small group activities and develop language, large and fine motor skills. To teach toddlers to be independent, the staff encourages self-help skills such as buttoning and zippering, washing hands and using appropriate materials and equipment.

Infant Sleep Arrangement

All children under the age of one will be placed to sleep on their back, not swaddled with anything other than a sleep sack and a pacifier, if necessary. Nothing will be allowed in or hung over a crib or other sleeping equipment with a child including, but not limited to, pillows, teething necklaces or bracelets, soft bumpers, toys, and blankets.

Diapering Policy

- Diapers will be changed every two hours or sooner if needed.
- Cloth or disposable diapers are allowed.

- All diapering procedures will be followed.
- If using cloth diapers, parents are responsible for bringing a clean “wet bag” each day for used diapers.

Preschool Program

The preschool program services children from 32 months to 5 years of age. To meet the emotional, social, physical, and educational needs of each child, teachers guide children through a world of creativity and self-discovery.

The curriculum for Lightbulb Moments Early Learning Center is based upon expectations from the Stafford School System. It includes activities, which develop peer socialization skills, encourage small and large motor skills, and provides opportunities to share verbal communication and express individual thoughts. These goals are accomplished through activities such as dramatic play, cooking, music and movement, education, and outdoor play.

Before/After School

The before and after school program at Lightbulb Moments consists of a consistent, daily routine and is targeted for children 5 to 12 years or middle school age, whichever comes first. Our morning includes breakfast time (7:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.) and free play. Our afternoon includes snack, homework time, craft time and free play inside/outside (weather permitting). The choices for our school agers will be greatly student lead and their input is welcomed and encouraged while planning for school vacations and summer programming.

Dress Code

Children engage in many activities during the day: lunch, art, outside play etc. Please be sure to dress your child appropriately. Please be aware that kids find ways of getting messy so please do not dress them in clothes you don't want to get dirty.

It is very important that children are not dressed in clothing that inhibits them from using the toilet independently. For example, if your child is potty training, please do not send them in a onesie, as this will not allow that child to independently use the toilet.

Children are also required to dress for the season. We spend a lot of time outside and all children should be allowed to do so comfortably. Please send your child in with at least one set of extra clothes. Accidents do happen and if your child is in need of a change of clothes but isn't prepared with a spare set, we will be inclined to call the parent to provide one for him/her. A small selection of “daycare spares” are available.

New Student Enrollment

The following items must be returned to Lightbulb Moments before a new child ages 6 weeks to 12 years may start:

- Enrollment form (completely filled out; 1 per child) accompanied by \$40 registration fee (per child). This fee is non-refundable
- The last pages of the Parent Handbook completed and signed
 - These pages states that you, the parent, received and read the handbook and policies including, but not limited to discipline and the infant sleep arrangement policy were discussed with you
- Photo Permission Form
- Up-to-date Physical Exam/Immunizations form
- Medication Authorization Forms (this applies to those children who will need to be given medication while in our care)
 - Any rescue medication accompanied by care plan
- Your child's first week's tuition

Provisional Enrollment

The first 30 days will be regarded as a trial period, in which case either party may terminate the contract without notice. After the first 30 days of enrollment, please see withdrawal policy. Please note that if contract is terminated all non-refundable monies will stay with Lightbulb Moments Early Learning Center.

Withdrawal of Children

Parents/guardians are required to give a two-week notice if removing their child from Lightbulb Moments. If the parent/guardian will be removing the child prior to the two-week period, they will be required to pay for any outstanding tuition payments.

Parent Involvement/Access to Program and Facility

Parents are a child's first teachers. We at Lightbulb Moments greatly value you and want you to feel comfortable coming into the classrooms and volunteering in an already organized activity or create your own to share a passion with our children.

Your child's teachers are always available to talk to you about their day or anything that is going on in their lives. Lightbulb Moments has an open-door policy. Parents are given a code to the front door upon enrollment. This code may be used at any time during business hours to enter the building.

At the start of each day, parents will have the opportunity to communicate with the staff members. At this time, parents should inform the staff of any important information about the child (i.e. how the child slept, ate, is feeling, if the child was on medication or if there are any specific changes at this time that should be passed on to the school). The parent will be asked to write down any specific requests for the child (i.e. extra fluids, no juice, no dairy products). The parents will be encouraged to stop by to see how their child is doing. Staff will call the parent(s) if any problem or question should arise. Child(ren) under three years old will have their daily feedings, changes, and other pertinent activities logged via Brightwheel. When the child is picked up, the staff will communicate any information about the child's day (i.e. didn't sleep, wasn't themselves, eating patterns).

Parents are also encouraged to come and observe the program of the center, or they can simply drop by to visit. They are welcome to come at any time of day. We believe this is a wonderful way for parents to learn about how their child interacts and behaves with other children.

Agreements with Parents

- Please call/message Brightwheel by 9 a.m. to let the staff know if your child is going to be absent for any reason.
- **An adult must accompany your child to and from his/her classroom and sign them in and out each day.
- Please leave at least 2 spare outfits in your child's cubby labeled with their name on it. Parents must supply diapers, bottles, baby food, formula, etc.
- Toys are not to be brought from home except on specified days. Check with your child's teacher for special days.
- Parents are to supply bedding for cots. Crib sheets are provided for our infant room and are laundered weekly. Please note that children under the age of one cannot have anything in their cribs except for a sleep sack or untethered pacifier.
- Any changes in address, phone number, employment, etc. must be given to the Director in writing.

- In case of inclement weather, messages will be sent out via Brightwheel.
- Your child needs a labeled water bottle EVERYDAY.

Days of Operation and Holidays

Lightbulb Moments Early Learning Center will be open year-round, Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The centers will close early (3:00 p.m.) on the following days:

- The Day Before Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- New Year's Eve

The centers will be closed for the following holidays:

- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day and the Day After
- Christmas Day and the Day after
- New Year's Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day

*Depending on what day of the week a holiday falls on, Lightbulb Moments may be closed the day before or the day after. You will be notified ahead of time if this does occur.

Tuition

Your first week's tuition with your \$40 registration fee will be used as your deposit to hold your child's spot at Lightbulb Moments; this deposit is non-refundable.

Going forward tuition is always due the Friday before your child attends Lightbulb Moments. There are no exceptions for sick days, holidays, or vacations, as you pay to hold your child's spot not the attendance. If tuition is not received by 5:30p.m. on Friday it will be considered late and a charge of \$5.00 per day will be accrued until payment is made. Non-payment of tuition is grounds for dismissal from Lightbulb Moments Early Learning Center. Payments must be kept current for continued enrollment. However, if you anticipate difficulty with paying on time, please discuss this matter with the owner immediately.

In the event of a public health emergency, **including COVID-19**, parents will be required to continue to pay tuition to hold their child's spot. This would remain true even if the center were closed due to said emergency. The same applies for closures due to weather.

Lightbulb Moments Early Learning Center does accept Care 4 Kids; however, parents are responsible for completing all required paperwork on time and covering full tuition until

documentation of approval has been received by the center. The parent is responsible to provide payment for the remainder of the tuition fee that the State of Connecticut does not cover.

After one year of enrollment in the childcare center, parents/guardians will be given one week of unpaid vacation each year. Your child must not be in attendance for the entire week to receive the free tuition (meaning you cannot “use your free week” and still send your child in). Prior to a year of enrollment, it is necessary to pay for vacation time to hold the child’s position at Lightbulb Moments.

*There will be an annual tuition increase or more frequently due to variables such as an increase in minimum wage or overhead expenses. Advance notice will be given for tuition increases.

Extended Absence

If your child will be absent from Lightbulb Moments for a minimum of six weeks, you may pay 30% of their tuition to hold their spot.

If your child is changing their days of attendance due to summer vacation, maternity leave etc and it has been approved by the owner/director/assistant director you must pay 35% tuition to hold their spot.

Signing In/Out

Parents are required to sign their child in and out daily. The sign in/out process will take place via the Brightwheel app utilizing the center tablets or your personal cell phone devices.

If a child is absent, his/her parent is asked to call/message the center by 9 o’clock in the morning to notify the staff. If you are planning to bring your child in late and will not be arriving until after 9 o’clock in the morning, please call the center and let the staff know. If a child does not arrive as expected, the staff may contact the family to make sure the child is alright.

No child is ever allowed to enter or exit the center without a parent or designated adult. Each parent may submit the names of other people authorized to pick the child up. (This can be done on the registration form that you will fill out prior to attending our school.) If someone other than the parent will be picking up your child, please let another staff member know. This person must present photo ID the first time they arrive at the center and sign the child out. No child will be released to anyone who does not have permission or who does not present valid identification. This is for the protection of you, your child, and Lightbulb Moments Early Learning Center as well.

Late Pick-Up Policy

It is the responsibility of the parents to pick their child up by the school closing time of 5:30 p.m. or otherwise designated. If you are unable to pick up your child by the designated time, then you are responsible for arranging for another authorized person to pick up.

If you do not contact the school within 10 minutes after closing time, a staff member will attempt to reach the parent/guardian. If the parent/guardian are unreachable, a staff member will then contact the emergency person(s) on the child's application. If the teacher has been unsuccessful at reaching anyone within 30 minutes of closing, the Owner and/or Director will be notified (if not on the premises). The Owner and/or Director will then contact the police department for assistance in locating the parent/guardian.

Late fees are as follows:

- \$5.00 for each 5-minute increment or portion thereof to each staff member present.
- You, the parent, then owe the late fee to the staff members directly.

If you are continually late to pick-up your child(ren) this will be addressed with a formal letter that will be signed by you and put into your child's folder. If late pick-up continues, this is grounds for dismissal from the childcare center.

Health/Illness Policy

If a child is sick, parents are required to keep the child home. If the sickness is discovered while the child is at school, the parent/guardian will be contacted and required to come pick up their child immediately. If we are unable to contact a parent/guardian, the center will begin calling those listed under your emergency contacts on the enrollment form. Children may not return to the center until they are symptom free.

Please remember that Lightbulb Moments Early Learning Center serves the needs of many children. The health of all the children depends entirely on the cooperation of all parents regarding keeping their children home until they are symptom free and/or no longer contagious. All diagnosed communicable diseases must be discussed with Rachael.

Your child will be sent home for the following reasons:

Illness	When can they return?
Fever at or above 100.4°F	Child is fever free WITHOUT medication for 24 hrs.
Vomiting	When 24 hours has lapsed without vomiting
Loose Bowel Movements/ Diarrhea (3 times)	When bowel movements return to normal.

*This list includes some, but not all criteria for being sent home. A full list of illness policies is available upon request.

Medication Administration Policy

This policy is intended to ensure the health and safety of all children in our childcare facility, and it is important that our policy and guidelines are followed and understood by all involved parents and child care providers.

Procedure/Practice

1. Whenever possible, it is best that medication be given at home. Parents/guardians are encouraged to discuss this possibility with the child's health care provider.
2. The first dose of any medication should be given at home to watch for potential reactions.
3. Non-prescription topical medication (diaper creams free of antibiotic, antifungal or steroidal components/medicated powders/teething, gums, or lip medications) will only be administered when ordered by the parent/guardian with written consent. The proper form will need to be completed then signed by the person receiving the form and medication. The parent will need to indicate that the medication has been previously administered to the child without adverse side effect.
4. Prescription medications and over-the-counter medications will only be administered when ordered by the child's health care provider with written consent. A medication authorization form must be completed and signed by the child's doctor and the parent/guardian for medication to be administered. The parent must also indicate that the medication has been previously administered to the child without adverse effect. Parent/guardian will also need to provide a care plan if there is not one included in the medication authorization form.
5. Ibuprofen/Acetaminophen will not be given for fevers without any accompanying order from a physician.

Safety

All of the children's safety is very important to us here at Lightbulb Moments Early Learning Center. To that end any policy/procedural changes will be adhered to, and guidelines followed from the Town of Stafford Fire Marshall as well as the local health departments and the State of Connecticut Office of Early Childhood who make regular inspections of our facilities.

In case of accidental injury, we will make an immediate attempt to contact you. If we are unable to reach you, we will notify the child's physician. If necessary, we will also call an ambulance or the paramedics. The staff members that are certified in First Aid will make all decisions regarding the care of your child.

Fire drills will be held as often as possible, ideally once a month.

Meals and Snacks

Mealtime is an important opportunity for social interaction and should be enjoyed by both children and their teachers. Children will sometimes be asked to assist with serving meals and snacks; they will also assist in the clean-up process afterwards. All staff members will sit with the children during meals and snacks to promote role modeling, appropriate manners, and socialization. Tables are wiped clean with sanitizing solution before and after meals and snacks and children's hands are washed before and after meal and snack times.

Each day we will have a designated breakfast time when children will be allowed to go eat their breakfast. We do not provide breakfast, but if you would like to bring one in for your child, they may eat it during breakfast (6:30a.m.-8:00a.m.)

Children will be served a portion of every food and encouraged to try everything. Foods will not be given or withheld as means of reward or punishment.

Lightbulb Moments Early Learning Center will provide two snack times, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Snacks are to be provided by the family. Please pack your child a lunch that takes no longer than one minute to heat up and has been cut up to your child's needs. Meals such as "Easy Mac" need to be prepared prior to coming in and will be reheated at lunch. All lunch boxes/containers and water bottles must be labeled with your child's name.

Please remember that Lightbulb Moments Early Learning Center is a PEANUT/TREE NUT FREE CENTER. At any time that we have a child with other known food allergies, we reserve the right adjust our allergy policy as needed.

Please notify us of any food allergies immediately!

Educational Program Plan

Children at Lightbulb Moments Early Learning Center will follow a flexible daily schedule that meets and enhances 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 shall include indoor and outdoor physical activities, which will allow for fine and gross motor development.

The daily schedule shall include opportunity for problem-solving experiences that help to facilitate concept formation, formulate language development and sensory discrimination.

Children will have the opportunity to express their own ideas and feeling through creative experiences in all parts of the program, including, but not limited to:

- Arts and Media
- Dramatic Play
- Music
- Language
- Motor Activity
- Language learning experiences that provide opportunities or spontaneous conversation, as well as experiences with book, poems, stories and songs
- Experiences that promote self-reliance and build self-esteem
- Health education experiences that include modeling good health practices, sound nutrition and safety awareness
- 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

Supervision of children

At Lightbulb Moments Early Learning Center the safety, security and well-being of our children is a priority. Teaching staff and volunteers are aware of practice and procedures for ensuring the awareness of each child's presence and condition. In addition, as a licensed child development center, we are required to maintain staff-to-child ratios consistent with licensing regulations and standards.

Group Size:

- Sufficient staff are assigned on a daily basis to comply with state requirements and to never exceed the CT Licensing regulations (4:1, under 2 years of age 5:1 children 2 years old, 10:1 children 2.9 years of age to 5 years of age, and 15:1 for children 5 and older.) It is important to understand that these children-to-adult ratios are not arbitrary but allow us to provide a quality educational program.

Discipline

It is our philosophy that children need a loving environment, realistic limits, and freedom to grow. We also believe many discipline problems can be prevented when staff is

knowledgeable of the growth development of the child. Therefore, staff will plan developmentally appropriate activities, provide the supervision necessary for children, and have clear simple rules, which children will be taught to respect. This will be accomplished by:

- Teacher role modeling
- Praise for accountable behavior
- Planning appropriate activities in an appropriate environment
- Giving simple instructions and explanations of what is going to happen next
- Encouraging children to solve problems on their own
- Encouraging children to express their feelings in appropriate ways
(with help from teacher when necessary)
- Being realistic and consistent in behavior expectations
- Giving choices to children whenever possible
- Encouraging children to be independent thinkers

If a child is engaging themselves in an activity that may harm themselves or those around them, we will use positive reinforcement and redirection to help that child make a better choice.

Staff will continuously supervise children during any disciplinary actions.

Staff shall not use abusive, neglectful, physical, corporal, humiliating, or frightening treatment or punishment including, but not limited to, spanking, slapping, pinching, shaking or striking children. No child will be physically restrained unless it is necessary to protect the safety or health of the child or others, using the least restrictive methods, as appropriate.

If such behavior is exhibited where the health and/ or safety of the staff or children of Lightbulb Moments is continuous the following protocol will be enacted:

1- A written warning will be issued. Parents will be given the opportunity to have a meeting with the teacher and assistant director to reflect and come up with an ongoing plan.

2- If three written warnings are given within a six-month period your family will be asked to find alternative care.

At any point we feel that the behavior is unmanageable by staff or poses a threat to the safety of staff/students, we reserve the right to disenroll your child immediately.

Biting

It is common to have incidences of biting in the infant, waddler and toddler areas. This happens periodically and is an unavoidable situation of group care. When it happens, it can

be scary, frustrating, and very stressful for children, parents and teachers; however, it is not something to blame on the children, parents or teachers. Unfortunately, there are no quick or easy solutions. We will do our best to prevent biting behavior. If another child does bite a child, we will immediately wash area with soap and water and apply ice. The teacher who witnessed the incident will fill out an accident report for the child who was bit and an incident report for the child who did the biting.

Abuse and Neglect

All of our staff have the responsibility to prevent child abuse and neglect of any children in our center.

Center Policy

All of the management and directors support a 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. The administration will protect the child, including immediate notification of a parent or guardian, once there is an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child in our program. Any staff member accused of abuse or neglect may be immediately removed from his or her position until DCF's investigation is completed. Based on whether the allegations were substantiated or not, the employee would either be dismissed from his/her position or allowed to return to work.

Provisions for informing families of abuse and neglect policy:

A copy of this policy will be included in our parent information packet, and each family will be given a copy upon enrollment. A copy of this policy will also be posted on the parent board.

When an accusation of abuse or neglect by a staff member is made, the Owner/Director must immediately inform the parents or guardians that a report has been made to DCF. Health care officials may need to talk to a child's parents to access the cause of the child's injuries and offer support and guidance.

Emergencies

Lightbulb Moments Early Learning Center has emergency preparedness plans in place. In the event of an emergency families will be notified via Brightwheel and/or phone calls of any disruption to regular schedules including but not limited to the location and time of pick-up.

Center Closings

For center closings, including inclement weather or other emergent closings, a message will be sent out on the Brightwheel App. Please note, that use of our Brightwheel App is a requirement of the center as it is our primary method of communication.

Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement of:

Lightbulb Moments Early Learning Center

Parent Handbook

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Please complete and sign this form on your child’s first day acknowledging that you have read and understood the policies of Lightbulb Moments Early Learning Center. This signature is also confirming that you have reviewed and discussed all policies including but not limited to:

- being informed of the discipline policy and techniques
- being informed of the infant sleeping arrangement policy

with the owner/director/assistant director of Lightbulb Moments Early Learning Center.

Parent and/or Legal Guardian:

Please Print Full Name

Signature

Date

Driver’s License Number

State

Expiration Date

Child(ren)’s Name (s)

