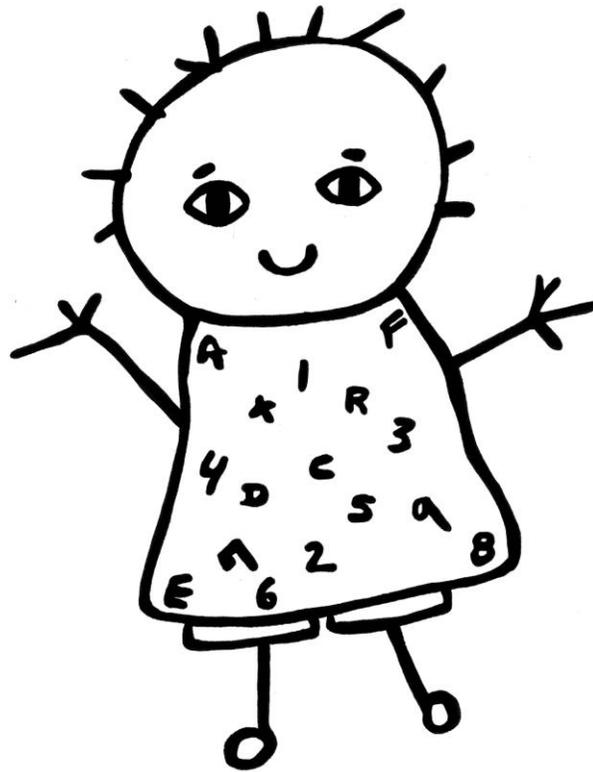


# Handbook for Families



**Brown/Fox Point Early Childhood Education Center, Inc.**

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*This handbook is our attempt to articulate the policies and practices of our agency.*

*Please read it carefully and review it as necessary.*

*If you have a question about something in the handbook,  
or if your family is dealing with a situation not addressed here,  
please get in touch with Chris Amirault, the Executive Director, immediately.*

## **1. Background**

For over four decades, Brown/Fox Point Early Childhood Education Center has provided a high quality preschool and childcare program to families that live, work, or study in our community. Originally formed through the joint efforts of Brown University and the Fox Point Neighborhood Association, we operated within a department of Brown until 1979 when we incorporated as an independent non-profit agency.

We are licensed by the Department for Children, Youth and Families and are rated five stars by BrightStars, RI's Quality Rating and Improvement System. Since 1996, Brown/Fox Point has been accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the nation's largest organization of early childhood professionals, through a rigorous, voluntary process by which early childhood programs demonstrate that they consistently meet national standards of excellence.

The outstanding staff has been trained in the RI Early Learning Standards and uses them in all aspects of our work. We maintain strong links to a number of organizations in the community, including Ready to Learn Providence, the Providence Public Library, the Brown Center for the Study of Children at Risk, and many others. Following the USDA nondiscrimination statement, this institution is an equal opportunity provider. Finally, we receive extensive support from the United Way of RI for families in financial need.

As a nonprofit agency, Brown/Fox Point is governed by a Board of Directors. The Board is comprised of members of the community, including family members of children who are or have been enrolled at Brown/Fox Point.

## **2. Mission Statement**

Brown/Fox Point Early Childhood Education Center is a community of childcare professionals and families who recognize that providing high-quality early care and education in a diverse environment is of the utmost importance to a child's well-being and development. Through its full-day preschool, the Center provides meaningful, developmentally appropriate learning in an environment that is safe, nurturing and creative. Mutual respect is the guiding principle of the Center. The Center is committed to maintaining an emergent, anti-bias curriculum and supporting the professional development of its staff.

### **3. Philosophy**

Brown/Fox Point Early Childhood Education Center is a preschool designed to meet the needs of working families in the greater Providence community. Our program offers full-time quality care and education that stimulates learning in all areas of a child's development. Teachers blend meaningful learning experiences, developmentally appropriate practices and a nurturing atmosphere to create a safe and creative learning environment.

Children are respected at Brown/Fox Point. Teachers listen to children, observe them in action, and plan curricula based upon children's interests and needs. Throughout the course of the year, children and teachers together build a community of learners where each individual member is valued for the strengths that he/she brings to the group. In classrooms that are safe, comfortable, structured, and calm, children can have successful learning experiences. By balancing independence with clear expectations, teachers help children to be part of a community. Teachers actively model and facilitate problem solving and conflict resolution skills, with the ultimate goal of empowering children to solve problems on their own.

At Brown/Fox Point, children develop and learn in natural ways – by playing and interacting with their peers. Through their play, children engage, explore, and create. Through their play, they make sense of their world, learn about themselves and others, develop language, gain self-confidence and self-control, problem-solve, and understand and express feelings. The process of each activity or experience is the focal point of its implementation, not the product, guiding children to think, reason, question, and ultimately, learn how to learn.

Our community is extremely diverse in many ways including economically, culturally, and linguistically. Our classrooms are places where differences are valued and children and their families are appreciated and respected. We include children of differing abilities and work with the Providence School Department to provide special services when appropriate. Using an anti-bias approach, teachers help children learn about the diversity of our community, supporting acceptance of differences and promoting self-esteem, pride, and awareness of rights in all children.

We encourage you to play an active role in determining appropriate goals for your family and child and to seek out support from us and others in striving toward those goals. We will do all we can within our community to advocate with and for your family and child.

### **4. Staff**

Brown/Fox Point is staffed by professionally trained teachers who implement the program, plan developmentally appropriate activities, and care for the physical and emotional needs of the children. Two full-time lead teachers (co-teachers) share responsibility for curriculum, assessment, instruction, and the overall well-being of the children. In addition to the two teachers, each classroom has a full-time assistant teacher, and we provide additional floating teachers to classrooms as needed.

All co-teachers have a terminal educational credential (Masters, Bachelors degree) in early childhood education or a related field. All participate in a continuous program of in-service training and workshops pertaining to issues of child development and early childhood education. Working with the teaching staff are the Executive Director, the Assistant Director/Business Manager, and administrative support staff.

In addition to our staff, we have volunteers and student interns from a variety of organizations including the Ready to Learn Providence AmeriCorps program and teacher education programs at local colleges and universities. We are grateful to them for their time and energy.

## **5. Eligibility Determination**

The Center serves children regardless of race, religion, sex, color, or national origin. The only conditions for enrollment are that children must be at least three years old by September 1 and must be fully toilet trained. (Please see below.)

## **6. Enrollment and Fee Policies**

*Classroom Placement.* We have two three-year-old rooms (Chestnuts & Maples) and two four-year-old rooms (Redwoods & Willows), with a range of children based on date of birth, gender, and other factors. While we will consult with you on most decisions involving your child, we reserve the right to determine your child's classroom placement and teachers.

*Enrollment Materials.* In the early summer after you have accepted a spot for your child, you will receive materials *that must be completed and returned before the child's start date*, including:

1. Pediatric Information Form (or related form from your child's pediatrician)
2. Family Information and Enrollment Form
3. Emergency and Pick-up Form

On the first day of school, you will also receive a Tuition Agreement and a Community Field Trip Permission Form, both of which must be signed and returned.

For the safety of your child, you must keep all personal information records up to date. *It is your responsibility to notify the office of any changes to pertinent information regarding your family, including employment, address, telephone numbers, hours of work, care and/or custody arrangements.* You are ensured complete confidentiality of personal information (see below).

*Transitions.* Once you have agreed to enroll your child at Brown/Fox Point, we want to do all that we can to ensure that your child's transition to the program is successful. Therefore, we require at least one adult family member to attend the Center's transition workshop well in advance of the child's first day. In addition, we strongly recommend that you and your child visit several times prior to your child's first day. During visits, you and your child can meet the teachers and staff, explore the classroom and playground together, practice key preschool skills, and interact with other children. If you have not done so already, you can also meet with and receive a tour from the Executive Director.

*Class List.* In the fall, you will receive a class list with the names, addresses and phone numbers of the families in your child's class. If you do not want your family's information to appear on such a list, please let the Executive Director know no later than September 1.

*Removal.* Under extremely rare circumstances in which we have determined that we cannot meet the needs of a child, a family may be asked to withdraw their child from the program. We will consider this outcome only after all other avenues have been explored, including conversations with the family in consultation with experts in the field and extensive efforts to identify special resources and supports. If it becomes clear that the child's interests are not being served in the Center, the family will be given advanced notice in writing and support to enable them to find a suitable placement elsewhere.

*Fee Policies.* Brown/Fox Point receives support from community donations, private agencies (such as the Rhode Island Child Care Facilities Fund), and governmental subsidies (such as the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Quality Improvement grants and Child Care Food Program). This funding enables us to offer quality care at reduced rates for those who qualify.

- During the enrollment process, families pay a two week non-refundable deposit, which will be applied to the last two weeks your child is enrolled at Brown/Fox Point.
- Tuition for new families is \$325/week as of August 29, 2016.
- Brown/Fox Point charges tuition for 50 weeks per year. We do not charge fees for the two full weeks that we are closed, which are the last week of December and the last week of August. Fees are not waived or prorated for other days that B/FP is closed.
- Tuition covers all regular program costs including food, beverages, art materials, and the like. (Costs not covered by tuition include fees for late pickup, penalties for checks returned unpaid, payment for used underwear, and admission to special events on no more than two summer field trips, each of which are capped at \$10/child.)
- Financial assistance is available for qualifying families. Applications and related documentation are due each spring. (You can find those forms as well as a helpful financial aid worksheet at our website.) The finance committee meets soon thereafter, immediately after which families will be notified of their financial aid eligibility.
- At the beginning of each month, you will be billed for that month's tuition, which is due by the 10<sup>th</sup>. (Your bill is usually for four weeks; in October 2016 and July 2017, your bill will be for five weeks.) If more than three of your tuition payments are received after the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month, we reserve the right to ask you to withdraw your child from the program for late payments.

- *Fees are payable in full regardless of days missed by a child.* If your child is sick or if you are on vacation, you are still responsible for tuition payments for that period of time. Fees are not waived when the Center is closed for holidays, seasonal cleanings, staff development, inclement weather, or building-related emergencies.
- Children are enrolled for a full program year (through June 23, 2017). If you withdraw your child before the end of the program year, we require a minimum of four weeks notice. You will be billed for those weeks even if your child is not in attendance.
- Please submit tuition either by handing payments directly to office administrators or by placing the payments in the locked box in the office. Please do not give payments to teachers or leave them on office desks.

## **7. Typical Daily Schedule**

The Center is open daily from 7:30 am to 5:30 pm. Although we are open ten hours daily, we strongly urge parents to limit their child's time here to nine hours if at all possible. The daily schedule that is outlined below is a general guideline of school-wide practices. The schedule in individual classrooms is posted and may vary.

**7:30 - 9:30:** Parents sign children into the appropriate classroom. Learning areas are open for free play and breakfast is available.

**9:30 -11:30:** Outdoor and indoor play, individual and small group activities, and/or center time. Center times feature developmentally appropriate small group activities, both teacher-directed and child-initiated, which are planned in accordance with the Center's overall philosophy. Center time also provide opportunities for cooperative and independent learning within a structured schedule. Areas and centers may include art, blocks, science and nature, books, writing, math, sensory tables, dramatic play, listening, music, and others.

**11:30- 12:30:** Lunch (monthly menus available on cubbies and online) and transition into rest.

**12:30 - 2:30:** Rest time (actual time may vary in individual classrooms).

**2:30 - 3:00:** Snack.

**3:00 - 5:30:** Free choice, outdoor and indoor play, individual and small group activities.

## **8. Toileting**

Healthy toileting is essential for children's successful experiences at Brown/Fox Point, and we provide the structure and consistency necessary to support those successful experiences, making sure that all children go to the bathroom at regular intervals throughout the day. This is particularly true in the three-year-old Chestnut & Maple rooms, where the children are taken

to the bathroom at regular intervals throughout the day and before every major transition (going outside, lunch, rest, snack, etc.). In addition, we reinforce behavioral expectations with phrases like, "This is not a choice," "Sometimes kids have to do things they don't want to do," and "Everybody tries!"

While we support successful toileting in a number of ways, we cannot toilet train children at school; we cannot provide the staffing to do so and lack adequate building facilities for children learning to use the toilet. To insure happy, successful experiences at school, children must be fully toilet trained before arriving at Brown/Fox Point: they must know how and when to use the toilet independently, pause to do so even when engaged in play, remove and put back on clothing as needed, and clean themselves adequately. Children may not wear diapers or pull-ups while here.

Children who have a bowel movement or urinate in their clothing on five different days in two consecutive calendar weeks will have to leave the program for two weeks to be retrained at home. (Tuition payment is required during this time to maintain enrollment.) This policy does not apply during a child's first four weeks in our program, nor does it apply if the child is sick, asleep, under medical care, or unable to reach the bathroom from the playground in time.

We live in a society in which conflicting information about toilet training can be very confusing for parents. As a result, we believe that open, honest communication between parents and our program staff is the best way for a child to transition effectively into the Center and to maintain healthy, appropriate toileting while here. If you have questions about toilet training your child, please set up a meeting with the Executive Director immediately, who can provide suggestions about toilet training and related behavioral matters.

## **9. Behavioral Development**

We are devoted to support every aspect of your child's development, including appropriate behavior. Challenge, anger, and conflict are healthy, appropriate elements of human relationships and critical components of early childhood development. Our curriculum is designed support your child's behavioral development by providing him or her with a positive, stimulating environment, using a well-planned structure, observing comments, opportunities for choice, and other strategies to prevent behavioral problems before they arise.

Behavioral expectations are discussed openly with children so that they understand the rules and routines of school life. Teachers make "observing comments" about children's behavior to help them develop self-awareness and to facilitate productive social strategies. Teachers discuss and model problem-solving skills and conflict resolution techniques regularly, so that the children learn how to address the inevitable challenges they face as they grow. Whenever possible, teachers determine natural, logical consequences that fit the individual situation in order to demonstrate why a given behavior is inappropriate. We do not punish children at Brown/Fox Point under any circumstances. No physical or verbal abuse is allowed, nor do we associate consequences with food, rest, or toileting.

## **10. Assessment**

To provide meaningful curriculum and instruction, regular, on-going, authentic assessment of children's development and learning is essential. Our highly-trained lead teachers collect data on each individual child and maintain both digital and paper-based portfolios of their work to discover his/her interests, unique characteristics, attitudes and abilities. This information is gathered authentically: instead of subjecting children to instruments, quizzes, and tests, teachers observe what children know and are able to do in their natural environments and relationships throughout the day, documenting that information in Teaching Strategies Gold, our research-based online assessment system, when they are not instructing children.

This regular, iterative assessment drives both individual and group curriculum design. Teachers meet weekly in classroom co-teacher pairs to discuss children's needs and to develop appropriate curriculum based on those needs. In addition, cross-classroom teams meet twice weekly with both the Executive Director and with our outside consultant to discuss appropriate, research-based concerns related to instruction that are appropriate for meeting children's needs.

Teachers informally share that information with parents through weekly notes, emails, phone calls, and conversations, and they formally share information with family members in January and again in June in the form of detailed, research-based progress reports. (All families also meet with teachers in October to review your child's transition into the school or a new classroom, set shared goals, and determine assessment and communication strategies.) We close the Center for a day each January to enable teachers to meet with family members and discuss your child's progress. However, you need not wait for progress report time to request a conference. Teachers can schedule a time to meet with you if you have questions or concerns about your child, or if you simply want more information about their development.

On occasion, your child's teacher or the Executive Director may request to meet with you regarding our assessments of your child. Our goal is to work together for a successful outcome by sharing information about what is happening with your child both at the Center and at home and planning together proactive next steps in both contexts. Based on our follow-up meetings, we may decide to adjust our curriculum, to suggest ideas for supporting your child at home, or to seek outside assistance through referrals for professional evaluation.

## **11. Confidentiality**

Following our state's licensing requirements, Brown/Fox Point treats information about your family and child with the strictest confidentiality. Only permanent teaching and administrative staff have access to your child's file, which holds his or her assessment, medical, and other personal information, and they use it only for the purposes of communicating more effectively with you and designing the best environment, experience, and curriculum possible for your child and in consultation with you. We will only release your child's assessment information if you have given us a written release to do so.

If you apply for financial aid, your family's financial information is reviewed in full only by the Executive Director and the Assistant Director. They redact all identifying information from your application before forwarding it to the Financial Aid committee, a subcommittee of board members who are not current parents. Teaching staff never have access to a family's financial information.

## **12. Letters of Recommendation**

Each year, many families request letters of recommendation to support their children's applications to other schools. When requesting letters, families need to allow teachers *at least two weeks* to complete the required forms. *Teachers will not be able to process requests during the month of January, so please plan ahead!* During this time, teachers will be completing progress reports for all the children at the center, which is very time-consuming. After February 1, teachers will again be available to prepare letters or forms in support of admissions applications, with a minimum of two weeks notice.

*If you know the schools you are considering have application deadlines in January or early February, please provide our teachers with recommendation forms in November or early December to ensure that they are ready on time.*

## **13. Getting Involved and Staying Informed**

Brown/Fox Point has an open door policy. You are welcome in the school at any time, and we encourage you to be participants in the classroom. Once your child has successfully transitioned into the program, feel free to have lunch with your child or to visit during a break in your schedule except rest time. (Keep in mind that some children find unplanned visits disruptive, particularly when they are transitioning into the Center; we encourage you to discuss any such concerns with your child's teachers.) Also, you are encouraged to plan with classroom teachers activities you would like to share with the children.

Each classroom has a family bulletin board, on which you will find information about the daily schedule of activities and other items that will help you be more informed of your child's experience here. Newsletters and other correspondence from the administrative staff will be placed in your child's cubby or e-mailed to you on a regular basis. Finally, we have an active Facebook page that provides photographs, information, and updates on school holidays, closings, and events. (Please see the front cover.)

Family members are encouraged to visit and participate in the class when possible. If at any time a problem arises that you cannot solve with the teaching staff, please schedule an appointment with the Executive Director.

Brown/Fox Point has a Family Association whose mission is "to promote a sense of community in the school and to develop and support enrichment programs and services for our children and families." The Family Association sponsors potluck dinners and picnics and raises funds for an arts enrichment program, as well as field trips. The Family Association meets regularly at the

Center, planning workshops and family events. All families are encouraged to participate in the Family Association and to consider a leadership role.

Brown/Fox Point has a lending library for family members of books on parenting, early childhood, and many other topics, available in the main office. We also have a selection of children's books dealing with sensitive topics. If you are looking for information on a particular subject, please feel free to spend time in the family area of the office. Materials from the lending library may be borrowed for one month.

Brown/Fox Point hosts evening workshops for adult family members on a variety of topics different times during each year. Information about upcoming events will be distributed in advance, and childcare will be provided. Please feel free to suggest topics that are of interest to you and your family.

Brown/Fox Point maintains relationships to many organizations and individuals that provide resources and opportunities for families with young children. We work closely with organizations such as the Providence public schools, Ready to Learn Providence, the Fox Point branch of the Providence Public Library, the RI Department of Education's early childhood office, and many others. We also have on-going relationships with experienced experts in the field of early childhood, including Haven Miles, the past director of the Early Childhood Institute who maintains her pro bono work for the Center each week by observing classrooms, convening a weekly "Haven Meeting" to discuss social, emotional, and behavioral development, and meeting with families as needed. We strongly encourage you to approach us with any questions you may have concerning your children's health, mental health, behavior, and future educational needs, so that we can put you in contact with these beneficial resources.

## **14. Health and Safety**

*RI State Law Regarding Pediatric Health Documentation.* Rhode Island requires documentation by your child's pediatrician prior to enrollment. Every child must have annual documentation of:

- a general pediatric health examination;
- a lead screening (FeP); and
- up-to-date immunization records (or documentation of a release from immunization from parents or guardians – see [www.health.ri.gov/immunization/](http://www.health.ri.gov/immunization/)).

If your child has any medical conditions, including asthma, any allergies (including foods, medicines, and environmental) and/or any developmental concerns, your pediatrician's report should also address these conditions in detail. You can use the Brown/Fox Point Pediatric Information Form, available on our website and in the office.

*RI State Law Regarding Medicine Dispensation.* Due to recent changes in RI child care licensing, Brown/Fox Point staff are unable to dispense medicine to children except in emergency situations. For that reason, Brown/Fox Point will only accept and store emergency medications, such as epipens for children that may require them.

*RI State Law Regarding Child Abuse/Neglect.* Rhode Island requires that "any suspected case of child abuse and/or neglect must be reported to the Department of Children Youth and Families by calling 1-800-RI-CHILD." If the staff at Brown/Fox Point has any reason to believe that a child is being or has been abused or neglected, we will, as required by law, report the information to the DCYF. RI law also states that children under the age of 7 should not be left alone in a car or elsewhere, and children also must use appropriate car seats (Children under 8 years old, less than 57 inches tall, and weighing less than 80 lbs. must be transported in the rear seating position of a motor vehicle and properly restrained in a child restraint system).

*Policies Regarding Illness.* Brown/Fox Point is a place for healthy children. If in our estimation an illness prevents a child from participating comfortably in activities, then the illness requires a greater need for care than we at the Center can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children. If your child is ill, please call the Center to provide information as soon as you have it. If a child at Brown/Fox Point has a communicable disease such as measles, mumps, or chicken pox, we will notify all families as soon as possible.

Children who become ill while at the Center will be kept in a quiet area of the classroom or the office until the adult family member arrives. When you receive a call that your child is ill, *please make arrangements to pickup your child as soon as possible* in order to protect the health and well-being of the other children.

*Do not bring your child to the Center if he/she has had any of the symptoms listed below in the previous 24 hours:*

A. Diarrhea:

- If your child has more than one loose stool, we will call you to pick up the child as soon as possible.
- The child may return to the Center after having no diarrhea for 24 hours.

B. Fever:

- If a fever is suspected, we will check the child's temperature.
- If the child's temperature is 101° or higher, we will call you to pick up the child as soon as possible.
- The child may return to the Center after his or her temperature has dropped below 101° for 24 hours.

C. Rash:

- Rashes can be symptoms of contagious diseases such as chicken pox, impetigo, ringworm, etc.
- If we note a rash, we will notify you and check the child's temperature.
- If the child's temperature is 101° or higher or if the rash is concerning for a possible communicable disease, we will call you to pick up the child as soon as possible.
- The child may return to the Center after his or her temperature has dropped below 101° for 24 hours and/or the rash has been deemed non-contagious by the child's

physician. We reserve the right to request a physician's note to indicate that the child's condition is not contagious or is being appropriately treated.

D. Congestion, Cough, and Nasal Discharge:

- Admittance of a child with lung congestion, a continuous cough, or purulent discharge from the nose is at the discretion of the Center's Executive Director.
- A child diagnosed with pertussis (whooping cough) may return to the Center only after 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment.

E. Conjunctivitis (pinkeye):

- There are many different causes of pinkeye, some of which are contagious and some that can pose serious risk to the eye.
- Viral conjunctivitis, while not serious, can be extremely contagious. Like a child with congestion, a cough, or nasal discharge, a child with pinkeye will be admitted at the discretion of the Executive Director or Assistant Director and a physician's evaluation may be requested.
- Any child with purulent eye discharge, eye pain, visual changes or fever should be evaluated immediately by a physician. A note from the physician may be required for the child to return to the Center.

F. Head lice:

- The first time we find nits in your child's hair, we will call you immediately. Until you arrive for pick up, we will limit your child's interactions with other children, doing our best to provide developmentally appropriate activities during that time.
- Your child may return after completing treatment that has removed all lice and nits, which we will confirm upon arrival the next day.
- If we find nits in your child's hair on a subsequent day, or if we find a live louse in your child's hair, we require that you pick up your child immediately for treatment.

G. Vomiting:

- Children who have vomited must be kept at home for 24 hours since their last vomit.
- If a child vomits while at the Center, we will call you to ask that you pick up your child as soon as possible.

H. Sore Throats:

- Occasionally, sore throats are caused by strep bacteria, and one cannot determine this without a strep culture taken and tested by a physician. A child who tests positive for a strep culture must be on antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to the Center. As strep is contagious, please inform the center so that we can notify other families.

In all other situations, the Center reserves the right to request a doctor's written release if such a statement is deemed necessary by the Executive Director.

*In Case of a Minor Injury.* The staff at Brown/Fox Point will provide treatment for any injury requiring basic first aid. The teacher will complete an incident report, a copy of which will be given to you, and you will be contacted as soon as possible.

*In Case of a Medical Emergency.* We work closely with the Brown University EMT and security staff and will call 911 if necessary to insure prompt medical care of your child. In addition, the majority of our staff is trained in CPR and first aid, and we have been trained in the use of the AED located in our office. Every effort will be made to contact adult family members or emergency contacts immediately. In order to authorize staff to assure prompt medical care, you are required to sign the emergency form provided in the enrollment packet.

*Handwashing.* Brown/Fox Point will teach your child the steps to effective handwashing: wetting hands, getting soap, making suds while counting to 20, rinsing, drying. This healthy habit promotes good hygiene and helps to stop the spread of disease. We wash hands after bathrooming, when entering the classroom, before eating, and before and after wet or messy classroom activities.

*Toothbrushes.* Brown/Fox Point is happy to provide your child with opportunities to brush her teeth. Simply bring in a toothbrush and case, which your child will keep in his or her cubby.

## **15. Emergency Plans**

The Center conducts regular evacuation fire drills to familiarize the children with evacuation procedures. Each classroom has two evacuation routes (primary and alternate), and a designated spot outside the building to gather and await permission to return to the classroom.

In the event of an evacuation, we follow the following emergency procedures:

- Administrators inform Brown police and security, who help to facilitate the transfer of students and staff to the Barbour Hall Building, on Charlesfield Street.
- Administrators post signs on the doors of the building to inform families.
- Staff walk calmly with children, the emergency contact binder, and the classroom attendance sheets.
- If the Center must close during a school day, we begin contacting families to pick up children. If the evacuation is temporary, we contact parents as soon as possible and before the end of the day.

In case of an unforeseen emergency requiring children and staff to remain on the premises beyond regular hours, the Center has a supply of food on hand to keep children as comfortable as possible.

We are also required to practice "lockdown drills," during which children are moved to safe areas of a room and kept there until released by the building administrator or a safety officer. We call the procedure "gathering time," so named because teachers gather children in an area

and keep them still and quiet until released. We do not discuss the reasons for this requirement with your children, nor do we share the official "lockdown" name with them. Instead, we use research-based best practices to approach this requirement in a calm, trustworthy manner while taking every precaution to make sure we both comply with the regulations and keep your children safe.

## **16. Arrival and Departure**

*Start of the day.* Arrival time is between 7:30 and 9:30. Please call the center to let us know if you will be late, which helps the teachers to transition your child into a day that is already in progress. Unless there are urgent, extraordinary circumstances, you may not bring your child to school after 11:00.

*Parking areas.* You may use the following for pick-up and drop-off parking:

- the six-car Brown/Fox Point lot off Hope Street.
- Hope, Charlesfield, and Benevolent Streets. Signs indicate when these parking spots are available.
- the north Brown University lot directly behind King House off Benevolent Street. *Put on your car's hazard lights to indicate that you're a B/FP family or your car may be towed or ticketed.*

Please do not park in the six-car staff parking lot or in the main lot behind the Brown security building off Charlesfield Street at any time.

*Sign in and out.* You or the adult responsible for your child must sign that child in and out everyday. Each classroom has its own "sign-in" sheet. You should write the times of drop-off and pick-up with your initials.

*Transition challenges.* Arrival and pickup can be stressful transition times for children and families. Children are often confused by the differences between "home rules" and "school rules," and they may respond to those differences by testing limits. To help children during these transitions, families are asked to follow classroom rules while at the Center. Teachers and administrators have many strategies to assist families that have difficulty separating from or picking up their children in a timely fashion; please talk to us if this is an issue for you or your child.

*Please stay with your child at all times!* Children may never be left alone by any adults while at Brown/Fox Point. You must accompany your child into the child's classroom and acknowledge to the teacher that your child has arrived. Children may not enter or exit the building or classrooms alone and may not visit the bathroom alone.

*Playground rules during pickup times.* Brown/Fox Point is fortunate to have a wonderful playground, with varied activities available to all of the children in the Center. During pickup time, the playground is filled with excited children, socializing families, and busy teachers and staff. While this makes the playground a wonderfully social part of Brown/Fox Point, it also can

lead to a lack of consistency, structure, and safety for the children. As a result, we ask that you recognize and follow these guidelines:

- Children often use pickup time to test the rules of teachers, parents, or both. For the safety of your child and of the other children, it is crucial that everyone follow the guidance provided by the teachers on the playground.
- When you sign your child out, please take a moment to notify your child's teacher as your family is leaving the playground. Please do not arrive, leave without your child, and then return later for pickup; this is very confusing to children and staff alike.
- Because it was not designed for infants and toddlers, the playground is unsafe for children who are younger than three years old. If you do bring a toddler with you, please limit his or her play to the sandbox.

*Door codes.* At the start of the year, every family is given a unique door code at the beginning of the school year consisting of four digits and an asterisk. Please provide this door code to other adults who regularly pick up your child.

*Authorized adults.* Children can be picked up only by those adults who are authorized to do so. If an individual other than the child's parent or guardian is picking up the child, we must be notified in advance, preferably in the morning when the child is brought to school. If changes occur during the day, you must notify us by email or phone. Persons unknown to us will not be allowed to pickup your child unless we have been notified in advance and a picture ID is presented at the time of pickup.

*Legal matters.* If your child's situation involves a court-ordered custody arrangement or restraining order, you must provide Brown/Fox Point with a copy of such arrangements for your child's file.

## **17. Late Pick-Up Policy**

Parents or guardians are required to pickup children no later than 5:30 pm. If you are late picking up your child, your child will remain with an administrator and/or teacher in the office until an appropriate adult arrives. In addition, a staff person will attempt to contact home, work, and your emergency telephone numbers after 5:30 pm, and if we reach someone, we will ask that person to pick up your child. If you know that you are going to arrive at or after closing, please call the Center no later than 5:15. Although a phone call will not dismiss the late charges, it will enable us to inform your child where you are and why you're late.

You will be charged a fee for each late pickup, which increases with each occurrence. For the first occurrence, you will be charged \$0.50/minute; for each additional occurrence, the fee increases by \$0.50/minute. Late fees will be calculated at the end of the month, and a bill will be taped to your child's cubby.

## 18. Food and Drink

We provide a nutritious and child-friendly breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack for all children daily at no additional cost to families. Monthly lunch menus are posted on the office door, on our website, in each of the classrooms, and on your child's cubby. We also insure that your child is well hydrated throughout the day with water readily available at all times and other drinks available with meals.

You are welcome to send food from home, bearing in mind that we are a nut- and pork-free school; please do not send any nut and pork products to school with your child. All food from home must have your child's name and the date written on it. Please do not bring in food to share among children unless you've consulted with the Executive Director beforehand, who may have to deny your thoughtful offer due to allergies or program requirements. If your child has any food allergies or dietary restrictions, please submit a detailed list to the main office.

## 19. Children's Clothing and Other Items from Home

*Clothing.* Children at Brown/Fox Point are active and creative, and you should dress your child each day in clothing that can get dirty and messy. Please provide your child with simple clothing that is free of complicated fastenings and is washable and sturdy. The temperature changes rapidly here in Rhode Island; provide sweaters and jackets throughout the fall and spring. Please provide all children with long pants from at least October through May. If your child wears a dress, we require that they wear shorts or tights underneath.

Please keep a complete set of extra clothes in your child's cubby in case of accidents, and replace those clothes as they are used. Label all personal clothing and belongings with your child's name. If something is missing, please check the lost and found box in the office.

If your child borrows clothing items from school, please launder and return them to us as soon as possible. For sanitary reasons, we keep a supply of new underwear and socks; if your child has an accident and does not have his or her own undergarments, we will provide a new pair that you must pay for and can keep.

*Footwear.* Outdoor play requires sneakers or other rubber-soled, closed-back and closed-toe shoes. Please do not dress your child in flip-flops, clogs, or high-heeled shoes. They are often responsible for stubbed toes, splinters, trips and falls, and they do not give sufficient support when children go on walks or play on our climbing equipment.

*Items for Your Child's Cubby.* Please bring the following items from home and keep them at the Center. Label everything!

- a tot-cot (available in the office) and a soft toy for rest time;
- an extra set of season-appropriate clothing, including underwear, pants or shorts, shirt, and socks;
- in summer, a bathing suit, a towel, and a bottle of sunscreen.

Although your child is welcome to bring books or music CDs to share with the class, we ask that all toys remain at home. Pacifiers (binkies) are unhygienic in a classroom setting and must also stay at home.

## **20. Outdoor Play**

Weather permitting, children generally go outside to the playground twice per day, once in the morning and a second time in the afternoon (with the exception of some winter weeks when it gets dark quite early). This time is important because a growing child's body needs exercise and practice in physical coordination and gross motor skills. Please do not ask teachers to keep your child indoors! *If a child is too sick to be outdoors, she should not come to school.*

## **21. Field Trips**

Field trips are an important part of Brown/Fox Point's curriculum. They allow students to explore, in groups and independently, the world around them, developing the social, cognitive, cultural, behavioral, and emotional skills they need to negotiate their worlds. To ensure that all field trips are safe and developmentally appropriate, please follow these guidelines:

- You will need to submit a special permission slip for each long trip. (You will submit a general one for community field trips.) Your child's teachers will provide these at least one week in advance of any trip that requires them.
- Please provide appropriate clothing and footwear, including weather-appropriate outerwear. During summer months, please apply waterproof sunscreen.
- Teachers coordinate many logistics on the day of a field trip, and children arriving late present substantial challenges. As a result, on the day of the trip, please do everything you can to get your child to Brown/Fox Point at the appointed time, which will be posted by the teachers (as a reminder) and stated on the permission slip.
- Children who arrive after the class has left for their field trip may stay at Brown/Fox Point, either with office staff or in another classroom. The only exceptions to this rule involve families who can arrange transportation to the field trip site; in that situation, the child can join his or her classroom.
- We welcome chaperones from children's families. Please ask your child's teachers what would work best on a given field trip. If you do serve as a chaperone, we ask that you help teachers with all the students, and not just with your child.

## **22. Rest Time**

After their busy, active mornings, your child will be tired! All children rest on cots in a darkened room for 1 ½ – 2 hours each day between 12:30 and 3:00 p.m. This is an important quiet time in the child's day in the Center, a time for sleeping, daydreaming, reflecting, and quiet individual play. Children who do not fall asleep by a teacher-designated time can choose books to look at quietly on their cots.

## **23. Center Calendar and Closings**

The last page of this handbook has a calendar of center closings. We also have a Google calendar on our website that you can add to your own online calendar.

We are closed most federal/state holidays, and we close 2 days per year for staff development and planning (in early spring and in early summer), and once in late January or early February for Parent-Teacher conferences. We also close for winter break between Christmas and New Year's Day and for staff development week during the last week of the summer. (You will not be charged tuition for winter break and staff development week.)

If you want to know whether or not the Center will be open on a stormy day, check local media sources, our Facebook page, and your email. (We rarely are able to change our telephone voice mail message in the build-up to a storm!) We make a decision no later than 6:30 am on the day of any given storm, and sometimes on the night before. Generally, in inclement weather, Brown/Fox Point follows the Providence school system and city-wide parking bans, tending to close when schools close and parking is banned and to remain open when schools are open and parking is available. We rarely delay opening the Center.

## **24. Birthdays and Holidays**

Birthdays can be complicated times for children this age, particularly when their peers may have fewer or more resources for gifts and parties. We do not have birthday parties at school. Please do not bring party items from home. If you are having a party for your child outside of school and plan to invite children from Brown/Fox Point, please do not distribute the invitations in school unless every child in the class is invited. If you do not plan to invite everyone in the class, we will gladly supply you with addresses so that you can mail invitations to the homes of the children you plan to invite.

We approach holidays in a purposeful manner. We do not celebrate holidays as a Center; instead, we rely on you, our families, to help us to validate and commemorate those holidays that are important to you and your children, in a manner that recognizes your traditions and respects those of others. Please talk to your teachers or to the director if you'd like to share your family's traditions with us. Families who wish to give presents should speak directly to the

teachers in their rooms about classroom purchases that the children can use. Instead of providing gifts to particular staff members, we ask you to please share a kind word or note.

So we can find that balance between including our families' traditions, but prohibiting children's exclusion, we ask that families not send their child to school expecting celebrations of events that are meaningful to particular families. For example, please do not send your child to school while wearing Halloween costumes, and please do not send in valentines: even if they are "for everyone," not all children can participate in giving.

## **25. Family/Teacher Communication**

Our guiding principles in parent-teacher interaction are mutual respect, transparency, courtesy, and recognition of the importance of both parents and teachers to the child's successful school experience. Our goal is to develop a relationship of trust with all families. However, despite all efforts to ensure clear communication, misunderstandings may develop between you and your child's teachers.

Under these circumstances, we encourage you to set up a meeting so that you can speak directly to the teachers to express your concerns. (Drop-off and pick-up are not good times for these conversations, as teachers have to oversee their classrooms.) In most cases, an open, respectful discussion produces a mutually agreeable resolution. If your concerns are not addressed adequately, you should meet privately with the Executive Director to discuss the issue. Often, the Executive Director will offer to facilitate a meeting between you and your child's teachers, with the goal of determining what each of us can do address your concerns.

**BROWN/FOX POINT  
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CENTER  
2016-17 CALENDAR**

**2016**

Monday August 29 .....First day of 2015 program year  
Monday, September 5 .....Closed, Labor Day  
Monday September 26, 6:30-8:00 ..... Overview Night for Current B/FP Families  
Monday October 10 .....Closed, Columbus Day  
Friday November 11..... Closed, Veterans Day  
Thursday & Friday November 24 & 25..... Closed, Thanksgiving

*Closed Thursday December 26<sup>th</sup> through Monday January 2nd for Winter Break*

**2017**

Monday January 16 ..... Closed, Martin Luther King Day  
Friday February 3.....Closed for parent/teacher conferences  
Monday February 20 .....Closed, Presidents' Day  
Friday March 31.....Closed for spring cleaning and professional development  
Monday May 29 ..... Closed, Memorial Day  
Friday June 23..... Last day of program year  
Monday June 26 ..... Closed for summer prep  
Tuesday June 27 ..... First day of summer program  
Monday July 4 .....Closed, Independence Day  
Friday August 25..... Last day of summer program

*Closed Monday August 28<sup>th</sup> through Friday September 1<sup>st</sup> for staff development*

Monday September 4.....Closed, Labor Day  
Tuesday September 5.....First day of 2017 program year