

Expanding Minds Early Learning Center LLC

Parent Handbook

Welcome to Expanding Minds Early Learning Center LLC! We are excited to have the opportunity to partner with you and your family as we help your child to reach each developmental milestone and beyond! We strive to have our students be prepared socially, emotionally and physically, for their next steps in life!

Hours of Operation: 7:30am - 4:30pm

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Our Philosophy -

~Nurturing young minds, empowering little futures~

Expanding Minds Early Learning Center LLC is an early learning childcare center dedicated to providing high quality, hands-on education and development for children ages birth through 5 years old. We believe in inspiring our students to discover who they are by exploring their world around them. Whether that be through the local food they eat, the mud and paint they play in or the community hands they hold. We strive to have all people represented in our classrooms. That's why Expanding Minds Early Learning Center LLC we believe the first five years in a child's life are the most critical developmentally. During this period, one million new brain connections form every second. We want to lay a strong foundation for social and emotional development by cultivating lifelong learners.

Research shows that children who have high quality early learning opportunities experience greater success in school, relationships and life. Our goal is to give our students the best possible start to life.

For all these reasons our mission is to create a diverse, adventurous and inspiring space for Vermont's children and families to learn, grow and become active members of their community.

Our Classrooms

Our classrooms are designed specifically for each age group they serve. Below is the table of classrooms and their associated age groups for each location:

Expanding Minds South Location

<u>Classrooms</u>	<u>Age Groups</u>
Penn	6 weeks - 18m
Yale	18m - 24m
Princeton	2 - 3 years old
Harvard	3 - 5 years old

Expanding Minds North Location

<u>Classrooms</u>	<u>Age Groups</u>
Champlain	6 weeks - 2 years
Columbia	6 weeks - 2 years
Cornell	6 weeks - 2 years
Hopkins	6 weeks - 2 years
Dartmouth	2 - 3 years
Bucknell	4 - 5 years
Duke	3 - 4 years

Our Daily Schedule

Our daily schedules are designed for each specific age group in order to best serve their developmental goals. Below are the schedules for all classrooms at our two locations.

Expanding Minds South Location

Penn	730am-830 am Breakfast and arrival	830am-930am curriculum / Sensory play	945am-1030am Outside	1030am-1050am Story time	1050am-1130 am Lunch	1130am-130pm Nap/rest time	130-2 snack	2pm-230 pm Outside time	230pm-430 pm Structured Activity
Yale	730am-830 am Breakfast and arrival	830am-930am curriculum /sensory	945am-1030am Outside time	1030-1050- story time	1050am-1130 am Lunch	1130am-130pm Nap/rest time	130-2 snack	2-230pm Outside time	230pm-430 pm Structured Activity
Princeton	730am-830 am Breakfast and arrival	830am-930am Outside time	930am-1030am Curriculum time	1030-11am Sensory play	11am-1130 am Lunch	1130am-1230pm Free Play	1230pm-230 pm Nap/Quiet time	3pm snack & 330pm Outside time	330-430pm Structured Activity
Harvard	7:30am-8:30am Breakfast and arrival	9:00am-9:30am Bathroom and Sensory play	9:30am-10am Curriculum time	10am-11:30 am Art and outside play	11:30am-12pm Lunch	12pm-2pm Nap/Quiet time	2pm - 2:45 Bathrooms and Snack	3pm snack & 330 outside time	3:30pm-4:30pm Structured play

Expanding Minds North Location

Cornell	Arrival breakfast 730-830	830-9 structured play	9-10 outside play	10-11 circle/cu riculum	11-1130 lunch/nap prep	Nap 1130-130	Snack 130-200	2-230 structure d play	230-330 outside	330-430 free play/home
Champlain	Arrival/ breakfast 730-830	830-9 structured play	9-10 circle / curricu lum	10-11 outside play	11-1130 lunch/nap prep	Nap 1130-130	Snack 130-200	2-230 structure d play	230-330 outside	330-430 free play/home
Columbia	Arrival/ breakfast 730-830	830-9 structured play	9-10 circle/ curricu lum	10-11 outside play	11-1130 lunch/nap prep	Nap 1130-130	Snack 130-200	2-230 structure d play	230-330 outside	330-430 free play/home
Hopkins	Arrival/ breakfast 730-830	830-9 structured play	9-10 outside play	10-11 circle/cu riculum	11-1130 lunch/nap prep	Nap 1130-130	Snack 130-200	2-230 structure d play	230-330 outside	330-430 free play/home
Duke	Arrival/ breakfast 730-830	830-930 structured play	930-10 30 outside play	1030-113 0 circle/cu riculum	1130-12 lunch/nap prep	Nap 12-2	Snack 2-130	130-2 structure d play	2-3 outside	3-430 free play/home
Bucknell	Arrival/ breakfast 730-830	830-9 structured play	9-10 outside play	10-11 circle/cu riculum	11-1130 lunch/nap	Nap 1130-130	Snack 130-200	2-230 structure d play	230-330 outside	330-430 free play/home
Dartmouth	Arrival/ breakfast 730-830	830-9 structured play	9-10 curricu lum/cir cle	10-11 outside play	11-1130 lunch/nap	Nap 1130-130	Snack 130-200	2-230 structure d play	230-330 outside	330-430 free play/home

Curriculum

Expanding Minds Early Learning Center LLC will explore a wide variety of activities with our students. We will experience music, language, reading, writing and science to name a few. We will go out into our community and learn with our hands. We want to inspire our students to become the best version of themselves, to be kind, honest and creative.

We will be following the basic overview of the mother goose time curriculum as it follows the VELs(Vermont Early Learning Standards). The curriculum will be created with age appropriate themed work, activities, games, etc. to ensure your children are receiving a well rounded mind expanding curriculum. Our staff and director will work together to ensure the best taught curriculum will be planned for your child. Creating our own

curriculum will ensure that we are able to adjust to each child and classroom needs.

Parent/Teacher Meetings

Expanding Minds Early Learning Center LLC will put on two parent teacher meetings each year for all classrooms. These will be planned out in advance and parents will be required to partake in them. If you are unable to make the assigned meeting times, please reach out to the Director who will make an accommodation for you. You as parents / guardians are required to attend these two meetings as part of your enrollment agreement. Conferences may be done over zoom or in person depending on the parents' needs. Meetings are 30 minutes and each parent / guardian will receive a copy of reports from each meeting. You will be given access to their portfolio that will be given to you at the end of the year, see our evaluations and observations on what they know based on what they let us see in the classroom. We also ask that you are involved with your child's learning and attempt to help continue their learning into their home life.

We believe in communication, respect and teamwork between families and educators. If you would like to have a meeting at any time during the year for any reason, please just ask and we would be more than happy to accommodate this as quickly as possible. Additionally, we will conduct a thorough assessment that includes input from parents / guardians, staff, and children about our program at least once a year to be always innovating and growing. We understand your time is valuable, but please attend our parent teacher conferences, family/school events etc. so we can build our family and teacher bridge even stronger.

Monthly Newsletter

Families will receive a monthly digital newsletter with any information about what we have coming up in the month such as field trips, our monthly menu, holidays and reminders of closed days, curriculum, community involvement, and any extras for parents such as school picture day.

Adjustment Period

Expanding Minds Early Learning Center LLC allows an adjustment period of two weeks. Students and families may have this time to adapt to the new environment, schedule, peers and staff. At any point during this trial period either party, the parents or provider, can end care without notice. At any point during the two week trial the parent / guardian may decide they would like to end care immediately and can do so free of charge. We as providers also reserve the right to end care immediately within these two weeks if your child is not deemed fit for the program based on our classroom requirements / expectations. If the parent / guardian would like to end care after the adjustment period of two weeks, we require a two weeks notice. Whether the family decides to still bring the child in or not during this two week period we will still charge you for these weeks. This gives you time to still have reliable care while finding new care for your child and this gives us time to find new families to fill our space that has opened up. If the family leaves our program without giving a two weeks notice after the adjustment period, they will be charged a "Space Waste" fee of \$350.

General class requirements

We expect your child after the initial trial weeks to begin to understand and follow our class routines with us. Depending on age, age appropriate responses will be what we use as guidelines to their behavior in our classrooms. We will work with your child as they grow from babies to preschoolers from learning to hold their bottles, walking, talking, running, writing, basic manners, potty training, etc. If your child is disruptive in the classroom, hurts other friends repeatedly, is distraught for more than 20-30 minutes. Due to situations like these they may be sent home upon the directors decision and observation of the situation. If behaviors continue consistently a behavioral plan will be written for your child and signed by the parent. If the behavior plan doesn't work we will ask Rutland Mental health services for their services for your school, and or Child integrated services to get services for your child. With help from parent interaction, teacher interaction, and outside services we will continue to work with your child until the director, owner and or

parent see and feel that the situation is unfit.

Our Partnership and Parent Access/Open door policy

We expect our parents and staff to work together to ensure each student can develop to their full potential. We expect to communicate often about each student's physical, emotional, social, and intellectual growth. Parents may come and visit their child whenever they would like throughout the day/week. We just ask that you be mindful of naptime(See page 3 for nap schedules) so as not to disturb the other children while napping.

Please understand- Our center is here for all students and staff. Anything heard at the center or overheard at the center, we ask that you do not share anyone's personal information if in any event you may hear something.

Privacy Policy

We expect that overall as people we respect everyone's personal information and privacy of their situation, we will ensure to keep your personal information private with us and we ask that you would do the same. If for some reason you are violating the privacy of our center such as taking and sharing images not posted by us, talking about families or children in our center outside of the center, talking down about families or children with other families in the center that are not both parties' own children. While we encourage children making friendships and love seeing children and parents bond in and out of our program we do not want to see any negativity towards any families or our center whatsoever. This is also to do with staff, please do not talk down about any staff members to other staff members, inside or outside of our building. If you have any issues with any staff please come to the director, and if you don't feel comfortable going to the director please go to the owner. We will do all we can to protect private information and follow the Vermont Privacy Law. We will keep all records and information about our students, families, and staff members confidential. In order to reveal specific information, we will require written permission by legal parents/guardians we have on file if wished to be shared.

Social media posting

We ask that the only things posted about our center on social media is what we personally

share on our social media page. We post all about our daily adventures, projects, and fun activities that we do with our children either daily or weekly. Please note that we do have a social media posting form in our enrollment packet where you can allow or disallow your child to be posted on our page. Parents and staff are absolutely not allowed to post about our center, staff, or children on social media. If this is to happen, legal action may be taken. Also please note that if you are to post negatively about the center this may cause your family unenrollment in our facility depending on the severity of the situation. The decision of this would be made at the discretion of the owner. If you have any concerns or issues with our center we ask that you reach out to the owner, Mary McDonald, and or the director, at any time to address the issue. We are more than happy to address all concerns and will do so as quickly as possible. We absolutely want everyone to understand if you feel you have any issue with our center, a staff member, or anything whatsoever. Please contact the owner or director @ any time!!!!

Brittney- Brittneymatte14@gmail.com 802-417-7973

Mary- Mperfectone@aol.com
802-353-8091

Guest Speakers

Throughout the year we will invite speakers from the community to come in and speak to the children. We will have people such as firefighters, police officers, doctors, dentists, and even some family members. These interactions will aid children in connecting with the community and highlighting the important roles in it. We also would love to encourage parents to come in as guest speakers to talk about their career, life, etc. You will be notified by your monthly newsletters of any guest speakers for that month.

Field Trips/Off Site Activities

We will go on a few field trips a year, we will plan to go places that go well with our seasons and curriculum. For example September will be apple picking, and October would like to go to Hathaway farm. We will ask parents to tag along if they would like! If parents do come they are able to bring their child to and from the field trip as long as they have filled out our transportation release consent form and have it handed in at least one week before the scheduled field trip. If you do not hand one in we will automatically assume that your child will be riding on the bus with us. We will work with Rutland City Public Schools to have a bus available to safely transport all children to and from our field trip location. Field trip permission forms will be sent out 2 weeks before any planned trip. We would like hand signed copies handed into the front desk 1 week before the field trip.

Nutrition

Expanding Minds Early Learning Center LLC will serve Breakfast, Lunch, and two Snacks each day. We are dedicated to sourcing the food we serve from local farmers. This means our school menu will be changing with the seasons. We will also follow the requirements of the CACFP(Children and Adult Care Food Program) to ensure that each student receives the right portions and we will adhere to high quality food standards. We believe in healthy fats, less artificial sugars, grass fed meat and local dairy. We will also follow the requirements of the BROOC food program which ensures that we are serving your children the proper servings of grains, dairy, fruits, veggies, and proteins throughout their day. Our food is prepared and served on site in our kitchen which is located towards the back

of our building just past the UPENN room. Groceries are freshly restocked weekly and menus are constantly updated and posted for you to see what your child is being served. Nutrition is a major part of keeping our little ones healthy and we strive to serve the best possible food for your little ones.

We pride ourselves on being a NO JUICE school.

We ask that any child that wants to come in with a home lunch will come in with healthier options. We ask that they are still sent in with my plate portions, no chocolate bars, candies, soda, etc. We expect breakfasts to have a grain, fruit/veggie, and a protein. We expect lunches to have one fruit and one veggie or two veggies, a protein, and a grain. We can still serve milk to your child for each meal.

We also ask that if you have specific religious exemptions, allergies, or personal exemptions of foods that you do not want your child eating, please ask us for a dietary restriction form.

Breastfeeding:

We encourage breastfeeding at Expanding Minds Early Learning Center LLC. Breast milk is nature's perfect baby food. It contains immunity boosting antibodies and healthy enzymes that scientists have yet to replicate. If you are a breastfeeding family, we can create a plan together to best fit the needs of the parents and children with their schedule. Please reach out to the director directly to receive this accommodation.

Medication Administration

North- LNA on site to administer meds

South- Director on site will administer meds

Expanding Minds Early Learning Center LLC will only administer prescribed medications that are brought in with a doctor's note explaining the reasoning of the medication. The medication must be brought in, in its original box with the prescription stating the dosage, child name, dob, date, rx number and medication name. The same rules still apply for emergency medications such as EpiPens and Inhalers(for emergencies), any medicated creams, lotions, sprays, etc. Please note we would only like to give out medication in cases where it is absolutely needed. Tylenol and or motrin/ibuprofen may not be used for pain or comfort during the day, as we feel if a child needs tylenol they are uncomfortable and should be home comforted with their parent/family/guardian. We will only apply topicals with a signed form such as sunscreen, bug spray, or diaper rash cream, etc. If your child may be teething we will ask you to bring orajel that we can use for your child, we can use

ice pops, or frozen teethingers to help ease the pain of teething.

****If your child is given medication before attending for the day we need to be notified at drop off. No fever reducing medication, or benadryl is to be given to your child before attending childcare. They will not be accepted for the day if they have been given benadryl or fever reducing medication.****

SUNSCREEN

Blue Lizard spf 50 mineral sunscreen will be kept on site. We ask that you please bring your own sunscreen for your child. Please when you bring your child's personal sun screen from home bring a non aerosol sunscreen and we will mark it with your child's name ensuring that is the sunscreen they use daily, we will let you know when we run low. If we run out of your child's sunscreen or you forget to bring any in or are unable to get any for any reason, Blue Lizard spf 50 mineral sunscreen will be kept on site and we will use that until your child has their own brought in.

Rest/Sleep

Every day the students will be able to rest or take a nap. Each classroom has a different napping schedule

0-24m- (2) 1 hour naps- Rest whenever tired

24m-5y 1-2 hour rest/nap

We follow the regulations on safe sleep. This refers to infants being able to sleep when they need/want to without pillows, blankets, toys, stuffed animals or anything else in the crib with them. Pacifiers are allowed with a signed permission slip but without any clips or strings that could be a safety hazard.

We will NOT force any student to take a nap or rest. If they do not want/need to, they will be provided with a quiet activity on their mat or in an area of the room away from the rest of the children who are still resting. Such as a book, puzzle, or fidgets. Children are expected to be quiet and calm during nap time out of respect for the other children. If your child is unable to remain calm and quiet for this time we may need to create a rest time plan for your child. Further information will be provided to families by the director if this is needed.

Incident Reports

Expanding Minds Early Learning Center LLC will document incident reports on paper. The report will be sent directly to the director about the situation that occurred right after it has happened, what our team did to solve the issue, how we cared for the injury and any other information along with witnesses. We want our families to know exactly how a student scraped their knee. The child's teacher will show the parent the incident report at the end of the day and have them sign the form understanding what had happened to their child. We will keep these in your child's file, and a copy will be offered and or provided to a parent if and when needed. The family will be called immediately to notify them if there is a more severe injury such as excessive bleeding, being bitten, or any kind of head injury.

Positive Behavior Guidance

Here at Expanding Minds Early Learning Center LLC, we believe in positive behavior guidance rather than punishment. Our staff will communicate with students and support the solving discrepancies on their own. We will teach our students that communication is key. We will always use behavior guidance that is fair, reasonable, and suited to the age of the child. If the child exhibits a severe behavioral problem such as biting, hitting, or breaking toys we will communicate expectations and separate that child from the other classmates while we discuss with them. We will then document the incident and discuss it with parents that same day.

Behavior Plans

If students are repeatedly showing unsafe behaviors that include but are not limited to: hitting, biting, kicking, foul language, etc. to staff members or other children at the center. The Director and family will have meetings to create a behavioral plan for that child. We will ask for the full cooperation of the family in solving the problem together. Parents will be informed if a behavioral plan needs to be created as soon as the director and teachers see fit. This plan will be documented, the teachers will be involved and understand their role in the plan and it will have goals to measure the plan's success.

Behavioral plans depending on the situation, we can involve Child integrated services and Rutland mental health offer behavioral services for your child. If this is scheduled for your child and you are to end the Rutland mental health services on your own, this would be going against your child's behavioral plan, causing a disagreement in the plan, resulting in being given a 5 day notice to end care with our childcare services. Lastly, if your child is unable to make progress within a month of the assigned behavioral plan this will also result in a 5 day notice from our center to end child care with our childcare services.

Pick Up and Drop Off Policy

Expanding Minds Early Learning Center LLC requires parents to submit an Authorized Pick up/Drop Off form with names of all authorized persons who may pick up or drop off students. We will require said person to provide a photo I.D. to verify identification at pick up, until we know who the person is. We will also need written permission from the parent either by hand or text of who will be picking up other than either parent, and what time they will pick up. We will not release students to people that are not listed. Additionally, we will not release any student if we feel they cannot be transported safely or if we feel the child will be in danger. The child will also need to be signed in and out by staff in the classroom and by the authorized drop off/pick up person with the date, time,

child's name and signature of the person doing drop off/pick up at the sign in/out book located in the front of the building the directors desk. The director or staff can show you the book if you do not see it.

We will not accept any kids in our building after 9:30am. Our program closes at 4:30pm and if parents are late there will be a \$5 per minute, per child late fee that will need to be paid upon pick up or upon drop off the next morning.. If there is an emergency, we ask parents to try to reach out before closing time so we can make arrangements (please see fees section for more details).

Court orders/Custody Arrangements

If a court order limits the rights of one parent, we will need a physical copy to have on file. We will adhere to the court's rulings. If two parents are involved in a disagreement and one parent requests that we not release the child to the other parent, we are unable to deny the other parent's pickup without a valid court order or other legal documentation. An exception may be made if, in our professional judgment, there is a reasonable concern that the child's safety may be at risk due to the parent being under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Child drop off requirements are that your child will come in with all required items needed in the morning. This is typically 2 shirts, 2 pants, 2 sets of socks, 2-3 pairs of underwear and or diapers and wipes. (weather permitting- swimsuits in the summer, sweatshirts/coats in the winter) Some teachers may ask for slightly more or less, please ask your child's specific teacher.

Upon arrival, your child will be thoroughly checked at the door for any signs of illness by the lead teacher / assistant teacher of their classroom or our designated nurse on site. Parents are also asked to assist your child with washing their hands before dropping them off in their classroom.

Parents will then be asked to proceed to their child's designated classroom door/gate and complete drop-off at the front gate. If your child is in the back classroom, Narnia, you will be asked to hand your child to the staff member in Terabithia. A staff member will then safely escort your child through to their classroom.

For the safety and well-being of all children, we ask that parents and guardians do not enter the classrooms during drop-off or throughout the day. However, we understand that you may want to check on your child or see how they are doing. Parents are welcome to request access to their child at any point during the day, and a staff member will be happy to assist you.

Tuition Payments, Financial Assistance, and Other Fees

Tuition is due every Friday for the following week of care. We will not provide care for the following week until we have received this. You may choose to pay cash or check.

There will not be any tuition adjustments for days students are not in care due to illness, holidays, unexpected closures etc. If your child no longer attends and you didn't provide us with a two week notice we will have to charge you a "space waste" fee for leaving us with an empty spot and no notice.

We do not charge for the dates that we are closed for staff/building vacation weeks. If you do take a vacation on days that we are open we will still charge for those dates.

We accept a VT state subsidy for qualifying families. A large percent of Vermonters can qualify. Below is a chart of all fee types we may charge, their associated cost, when they are due, and the reason why we charge each fee. Note, if you do not follow the due by column you are ineligible for care. Please reach out to the director or owner with any questions

Fee type	Cost	Due By	Reasoning
Late Pickup	\$5 per minute	At the door for pickup or next morning before receiving care	We would have to pay our educators overtime and we are not licensed to offer care past our hours of operation
Late Tuition Payment	\$10 per day until paid- Including weekends	Attached to your next week's tuition. The following week of care may not be allowed until full tuition is paid plus late fee.	We cannot pay our educators on time if we do not receive tuition on time
Bounced Checks	1st- \$25 2nd- \$50 3rd- \$100	Due immediately upon check bouncing along with tuition payment- child may not attend until paid	Our bank charges us fees if there's not sufficient funds when we try to cash checks
Fees For Extras	Determined specifically by case	Attached to your next tuition payment	We provide parents a checklist of items you will need to provide for your child. If these items are not provided and we have to use our own supplies we will charge the parent for these extra costs
Damages	Determined specifically	Attached to your next tuition payment	If your child breaks or damages any of our property you will be responsible for paying to replace or repair the item

Space Waste	\$350	Due Immediately	This fee is due when a family leaves our program without a written two week notice to cover costs till we enroll another student
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Mandated Reporter

Here at Expanding Minds Early Learning Center LLC, we are state mandated reporters of suspected physical, mental and sexual abuse or neglect of children. If we have reason to believe that any child in our care has been neglected or abused in any way, we are required to report to the Family Services Division. If for any reason we see abuse or neglect to a child by a staff member in our program we are required to report to the Child Development Division along with the Family Services Division . If parents suspect that any child in our program is being physically, mentally, sexually abused or neglected, please talk with us immediately. We are here to help with support and to help you take the right steps. The child abuse hotline is 24 hours 1-800-649-5285.

Discrimination

Expanding Minds Early Learning Center LLC will not discriminate against any child, parent or family for any reason including but not limited to race, culture, age, diverse ability, national origin, gender identity or public assistance status. We believe in celebrating our differences and embracing each other's uniqueness. If you feel we are not accommodating to any of these things, please let us know so we are able to make any changes to accommodate!

Diapering Policy

We will ensure wet or soiled diapers are changed safely and in a timely manner. Vermont requires us to visually check every two hours, our policy is to check every hour. We do not provide diapers for our students. If cloth diapers are preferred, they will be sent home with that student daily for cleaning as we do not clean cloth diapers on site. We expect parents to replenish diapers every couple of days. Teachers will be in communication with parents if a student's diaper/wipe stock is getting low. If you fail to bring in diapers after reminders from our staff your child will not be able to attend until you replenish their supply. If you're unable to afford diapers and need assistance please reach out to the Director in order to receive any accommodations we may be able to provide. As we do typically have extras on site for parents/children in need of diapers and extra supplies.

Toilet Training Policy

Together parents and staff will form a plan based on the individual needs of the child. Please talk with us when you feel your child is ready to start learning how to use the toilet. When ready, we will use incentives such as stickers, dancing and lots and lots of praise. We will read books and talk about using the toilet. We will use different training methods to get students excited about using the toilet. When toilet training, parents will need to provide two extra sets of clothes instead of one, in case of accidents throughout the day. We highly recommend children to start potty training before age 4.. It is our goal to adequately prepare children for kindergarten after they graduate from our program and potty training is a requirement of kindergarten. All children age 4 and up are expected to be working on potty training while attending our center unless they are already potty trained or you have spoken to the Director and Owner about receiving an accommodation. If potty training has begun we ask parents to keep up the training at home as well. If students have an accident during nap time without a diaper on, their soiled sheets will be placed in a bag and washed by us on Friday, and extra sheets will be provided for the rest of the week. Your child's soiled clothing will be sent home with you the day it has been soiled.

Open Door, Grievances and Licensing Regulations

Our door is always open if you have any questions, concerns or just want to talk. We will always try our hardest to resolve any issues. Communication is key! If you need a longer session, you can always schedule a meeting with us. Please reach out whenever you have comments, questions, or concerns about the center and we will do our best to accommodate you with a meeting. Reminder, all concerns about our center should be brought to our attention first so we may address the issue with you before posting on social media as per our privacy policy. Additionally the Child Care Consumer Line is 1-800-649-2642 where you can get information about childcare providers such as when they became licensed, if they are accredited or have a STARS rating and if they have ever had any licensing violations in the past year. You may also make a formal complaint about a childcare provider by calling that number as well

You may find additional contact information at <https://dcf.vermont.gov/contacts/concerns>

You may also find child care licensing regulations at

<http://dcf.gov/cdd/laws-regs/childcare> This is where the minimum requirements are laid out that we as a childcare provider must follow in order to meet compliance and to ensure that the health and safety needs of the children in our program are being met.

Holidays, Birthdays and Food From Home

We celebrate holidays such as Valentine's day, Indigenous People day, Halloween, Christmas, etc. We welcome all beliefs. If you are not comfortable with your child celebrating a certain holiday, please let us know! Also feel free to suggest holidays for us to celebrate if you notice we do not!

On our students' birthdays we will always make them feel extra special. Please speak with us before bringing anything extra into class that day. We may have a child who has a food allergy or sensitivity and we want to ensure all of the little ones are in a safe eating environment. We also require that any food that is brought in for events be store bought to ensure the safety of everyone.

Unexpected Closed Dates

If unexpectedly we do not have enough staff to operate for a full ratio of teacher:child we will reach out to all parents that morning by phone call or text message, and we will ask that only parents who absolutely need care for the day bring their children in. We will work to keep all of our teachers in ratio and if we would have to we could switch children to another age appropriate room for the day to accommodate. We would notify you of this change at drop off, unless throughout the day a teacher needs to leave then we would notify you of the switch at the end of the day. If we do not have enough staff for teacher:child ratio that day we would close down that one room. We would hope for you to all understand that we will work as hard as we can to ensure this won't continue to happen.

Children with Diverse Abilities and other Accommodations

We welcome all children here at Expanding Minds Early Learning Center LLC. Our staff has experience and skills in caring for children with diverse abilities or special accommodations, or will be trained to do so. Here are a few:

*ADD

*ADHD

*Physical Challenges

*Allergies

*ESL children and families

*ASL children and families

- *Autism
- *and more...

We ask that families please provide us with written instructions for special therapy, individualized plans, or behavior guidance if your child requires it. These instructions may come from the parent, physician, therapist, or another qualifying person who understands the child. If none of the above prevails we can create them together. We could start by working with the parent to make a plan within the center for their child. If it is agreed that we may need additional help we would recommend beginning services for your child. Which would be behavioral, speech, occupational, physical, etc. Depending on your child's case. We will be able to help start this process for you and get you the proper information and paperwork

Sick Child Policy

We will not provide care for your child if they are ill. If your child has a temp above 99 we will notify you and keep a close eye on them. Once the child reaches between 100.1-100.4 they will need to be sent home for the day and unable to return until 24 hours fever free with no fever reducing medication. Depending on the severity of the illness sent home for the director will let you know if your child needs a doctor's note to return. If a child becomes ill throughout the day we will isolate them from the other children and call parents for a pick up. The expectations are for parents to pick up the child within one hour of our call. We will notify the parents of any exposure to contagious illnesses, disease, or infection within our program within 24 hours of when we become aware of it. This will be notified to you by letter in your child's cubby upon pick up or drop off.

If a child has any of the listed symptoms below, they will not be permitted to attend until 24 hours after the last bout of fever, vomiting, severe diarrhea or until 24 hours after medical treatment has begun as prescribed by a physician. Unless stated otherwise. For example, if your child is sent home early due to illness they will not be allowed to return until 24 hours later. This means if your child was sent home at 8am they may return to daycare the following day at 8am. However, if they were sent home after our drop off time of 9:30 am, they will not be allowed to attend daycare the following day.

- *Positive test for coronavirus/covid-19 (5 days before returning/ 24 hours fever free/ no cough)
- *Fever of 100 degrees or higher
- *A skin rash (other than diaper rash) the child will not be allowed to return without a statement from a doctor stating the rash is not contagious.
- *Severe diarrhea (two or more times in a day)

- *Vomiting (may return 24 hours after last time vomiting)
- *Any parasite infestation/ nit free before returning
- *Pink eye - needs 24 hour med treatment before returning
- *Discharge any color other than clear from the eyes or ears
- *A runny nose with colored discharge
- *Chicken pox(the child may not return until all blisters have dried up and formed scabs, usually 6 days after initial onset of the rash)
- *Hand Foot Mouth (up to 10 days at least before returning, all blisters must be dried up and healing, no liquid in any spots left)
- *Rsv(48hrs fever free)
- *Cough that is not allergy/asthma related
- *Head Lice (no live bugs, and no nits allowed)
- *No bed bugs- clothes will be changed upon arrival, tied up, and be left outside. (please work to eliminate this problem at home for the safety of our building and all others)

It will be at the discretion of Expanding Minds Early Learning Center LLC to decide if a student is too ill to participate in daily activities and will need to be picked up, even if they are not showing any signs or symptoms from above. We also will have a signs and symptoms chart posted in our main area when you come in to drop your child off where you can refer to these symptoms on a chart.

Drug and drop: Expanding Minds Early Learning Center LLC will NOT tolerate when parents give their child drugs such as fever reducers to hide symptoms before dropping them off to us. This intentionally exposes other students, families, and staff to that sickness (who may be immune compromised) please think of others health and safety!!

Health checks

Please be aware that all children will have a health check upon arrival to ensure that they have no serious bug bites, bruises, scrapes, scratches, head lice, fever, rashes etc. This is to keep our staff, children and all families safe from any illness spreading or to notify parents of any mark that was there upon arrival if they have any questions at the end of the day. Parents are encouraged to stay and assist the health check of their child, this way if the child is asked to go home the parents will still be on site. All health checks are recorded and kept on file. You may request to see your child's health check chart at any time, please ask the Director.

Vaccinations

We are regulated by the state of Vermont to keep your child's updated immunization

records on file, and if your child is unvaccinated we will need an updated vaccine exemption form filled out yearly.

We ask that all children who receive vaccines at a doctor's appointment will receive them on a Friday. They may not leave the center, get vaccines and then return. We ask that vaccines are given on a Friday after pick up to allow your child to rest at home and be watched closely in case they are to spike a fever or come down with any symptom after their vaccines. Children who get vaccines on a day when they shall be attending will be asked to stay home until 48 hours after their vaccines to ensure they are symptom free. If a fever is to develop at any point, the child may not return until 24 hours fever free with no tylenol.

Emergency Plans and Procedures

Here at Expanding Minds Early Learning Center LLC, we care about safety! We practice fire drills once a month. This includes when the children may be asleep or awake. Additionally we will utilize 911 during a life threatening emergency or if there is a strange person attempting to trespass on our property. We will call parents as soon as possible for all emergencies life threatening or not. If we cannot reach parents, we will then call the other persons listed in the emergency contact page. We have a commercial fire alarm system in place, as well as smoke detectors, and fire extinguishers in all required places in the building. All doors and windows will be locked at all times for safety.

Our fire plan is as follows:

Students capable of walking will be asked to line up at the door and the teacher will do a head count. They will proceed as a group to evacuate the building. Our school meeting spot is the back parking lot towards the Rutland fairgrounds. Once the group makes it there the teacher will do another headcount. Then wait for instructions from the director or the fire department.

Students not capable of walking such as infants will be placed into our fire evacuation crib/cribs. The teacher will do a head count and then roll the full crib/cribs out to the meeting spot. Once at the meeting spot the teacher will do another headcount. Then wait for instructions from the director or the fire department.

We have a map posted in each room of the building showing our meeting location/our evacuation plan!

Events

Here at Expanding Minds Early Learning Center LLC we want to provide our families with fun and extra events throughout the year. Below is a list of some things we may offer.

- *Student Art Show
- *Student/Teacher Talent Show
- *Fundraisers
- *Student/Class Photos
- *Connection to Local Farmers
- *Holiday parties
- *Birthday parties
- *Family get together/meals
- *Trunk or treat
- *Halloween parade

No Smoking Policy/Drug and Alcohol Policy

Here at Expanding Minds Early Learning Center LLC, we want our program and property to stay smoke/drug and alcohol free. This includes cigarettes, e-cigarettes, vapes of any kind, marijuana, and any other smoking devices. We also expect there to be no alcohol or illegal drug use outside or inside our facility. There shall be no smoking or drug/alcohol use of any kind while your child is in your vehicle. If we see smoking or drug/alcohol use of any kind in your vehicle with your child present we will report it to the Rutland City Police Department, Family Services Division, and Child Development Division. If you or another individual are seen with any smoking devices, drugs, or alcohol on site you will be asked to leave the property immediately.

The CDC has stated that "Second hand smoke causes numerous health problems in infants and children, including more frequent and severe asthma attacks, respiratory infections, ear infections, and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)."

Water Testing

The Licensee shall ensure that any outlet for drinking, cooking, and brushing teeth is

tested through Vermont Department of Health for lead to ensure that it is safe for the children's use. Water will be tested annually, and test results will be posted in our main entry way.

Resignation

After the adjustment period of two weeks has been completed please remember we will require a two week written notice in order to end care. If there are any overdue tuition left unpaid you will be responsible for them. If we do not receive a two week notice you will be charged a "Waste of Space" fee and if any amount owed is left unpaid, we will pursue a small claims action.

Termination

In the event that a child's continued enrollment is at risk, due to child behavior, any sort of parent disagreements/issues/concerns, the following shall apply:

- The program director shall consult with the child's parents and professionals, as appropriate, to develop and implement a plan to address concerns, with the goal of continuing the child's enrollment
- In the event that the concerns cannot be resolved, written notice to the child's parents is required within at least five days' notice prior to expulsion.
- When a child is expelled from the program, a full copy of the child's file may be provided to the child's parents on or before the child's last day in the program

Expanding Minds Early Learning Center LLC will exhaust all options before terminating.

Enrollment Documents:

Well child checks:

Please ensure that along with your child's enrollment forms you give us an updated well child check form from their last check up. We will require this at the time of handing in all other information, if your child does not have a recent check up from the last year we will need you to have them seen before they begin attending.

Enrollment forms:

You will be given a welcome packet with your child/childrens full enrollment forms

Immunization record:

We will have a form for all immunization records to be filled in, but we also require a print out of all immunizations your child has gotten. Any time your child receives a vaccine we will need an updated copy of this.

Any other forms:

All other forms such as permission slips, picture consent forms, medication permission forms etc. will be included in your welcome packet!

Enrollment Agreement

By signing the 2026 Expanding Minds Early Learning Center LLC handbook, you are indicating you have read our policies and procedures and agree to follow them.

We will update our book yearly

(This page is required to be returned in your enrollment packet)

■

Parent/Guardian Signature

■

Date

■

Parent/Guardian Signature

■

Date

Updated September 2026

