Dear Parent,

Congratulations on choosing Boyertown or Douglassville Children’s Center as your new child care center. We are proud to be KEYSTONE STAR 4 Centers. As star four centers, we offer excellent childcare as well as academic and summer camp programs! Enrollment is open to all families regardless of race, color, religious creed, life style, handicap, ancestry, national origin, union membership, age or sex. Boyertown and Douglassville Children's Centers provides care for infants six weeks of age to children in sixth grade.

This handbook has been designed to guide parents who are new to us as well as parents who have been with us for many years. Many of our policies are based on Pennsylvania State requirements. Please feel free see the Director if you have any questions or comments. Please save this handbook for future reference.

**Philosophy:** Boyertown Children's Center offers child centered care. We offer small class sizes in a stimulating environment where children are encouraged to interact in a positive age appropriated manner. Developmental curriculum incorporates all area of development including social, emotional, cognitive, small and gross motor.

**Mission:** We are a community of children, families and early childhood educators gathered to participate in meaningful, developmentally appropriate activities intentionally designed to promote the creativity, academic and social skills needed for future success.

Hours of operation:

Monday – Friday

6:30am – 6:00pm



# Center access:Our Centers have an open door policy. Parents are welcome to stop by unannounced at any time to visit their children.

* Our Center welcomes parent involvement and will provide many opportunities thought the academic year and during the summer camp program for parents to participate, volunteer and be involved in their children’s activities.
* Please be advised that classroom doors will be locked at all times. Please enter and exit through the lobby door using your key code number.
* Please remember never to hold the door open for anyone; all individuals must use the key code to gain access to the building.

**Smoking policy:**

There is no smoking permitted anywhere on center property or in the building. Please dispose of cigarette butts in your car ashtray. Cigarette butts are toxic to small children.

**Birthdays/special events:**

Children are welcome to celebrate birthdays at Boyertown and Douglassville Children's Center and we invite parents to send in a special treat. Please notify your child’s teacher in advance so that they may let you know how many children will be present on that day and if any allergies exist within the classroom. All treats that are to be shared must be store bought, unopened and have the ingredients clearly listed.

**Personal property:**

**Please do not allow your child to bring in toys from home unless otherwise instructed by the room leader**.

* In the circumstance that your child is asked to bring a toy from home please label it with your child’s name and be aware that the following things are never permitted in the center.
	1. money
	2. weapons
	3. toy weapons
	4. gum, cough drops/throat lozenges, chap sticks
	5. any small object that may be swallowed or choked on.
* Please label everything that comes in to center with your child’s name. This includes but is not limited to clothing, jackets, gloves, hats, blankets, toys, bottles, diaper and book bags, pacifiers, lunch items and toys.

**Snacks and meals:**

Children who arrive at the center by or before 7:00 am may bring breakfast into the center with them**. Breakfast time ends at 7:30am**. If your child will be arriving at or after this time, please be sure that they eat breakfast prior to their arrival at the center.

* The center provides both a morning and afternoon snack. Snack menus are posted in each classroom. Please inform the office in **writing** of any major allergies.
* Please provide a packed lunch for your child. Lunch must be ready to serve. We will heat lunches for a maximum of two minutes in a parent provided microwavable container. Please be aware that your child will be encouraged to eat most of his/her main course before dessert is offered. We do not keep spare lunch items at the center. If a child’s lunch is forgotten and a meal is provided, a fee of $3.00 will be charged.
* Be sure to label all food containers and lids as well as sippy cups and lids, lunchboxes, baby bottles etc.

**Holidays and closures:**

* Center calendars are handed out annually or at time of registration. A copy is posted in the lobby for your convenience.
* All changes in school schedule not listed on school district calendar must be communicated to the director in writing at least two days in advance.
* Please be prompt when dropping of or picking up your child. Boyertown Children's Center provides staff according to pick up and drop off times stated in your agreement. The center closes promptly at 6:00pm. A late fee of $5.00 for any part of 5 minutes after 6:00 pm will be charged **per child** to anyone who picks up after this time.
* In the event of an emergency closing or delayed opening please tune to WPAZ 1370 AM, WRFY 102.5 FM you can log onto www.wfmz.com and search for our center under the closings.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the above policies please see the Director.

**Registration and orientation:**

Families who are new to us will get a tour of the facilities, during which they will be introduced to our staff members. At this time these families will also receive all necessary forms and information so that they may complete the enrollment process.

* All applications and forms (with the exception of the health form) must be completed in full and signed by a parent or guardian prior to attendance. Agreements and parental consent forms must be updated every six months.
* Health forms must be handed in no later than sixty days after the child’s start date. Health forms must be updated each time your child has a physical or whenever there is a change to their health/allergy status.

**Confidentiality:**

We take the confidentiality of our clients very seriously; therefore center staff will not release any information regarding the children in our programs without prior written parental consent. Please be sure all questions and comments are relevant to your own children only.

**Referrals:**

The center will make referrals for any child that may need intervention. If you feel your child needs early intervention please communicate your needs with the Director.

**Drop off and pick up policies:**

Boyertown and Douglassville Children's Center will release children to parents or legal guardians only, unless we have prior written notification. The below listed forms are available for circumstances when someone other than a parent/guardian will be picking up. Proof of I.D. may be requested upon pick up.

* Parents must accompany their children into the building and to their classrooms each day.
* Parents must initial the arrival and departure of their children each day using the attendance sheets located in the lobby.
* Please inform your child’s caregiver if he/she has had any resent illnesses, accidents, traumatic experiences or has been exposed to any contagious illnesses.

**Daily pick up:**

Daily pick up forms are to be used on occasions when a party listed on your emergency contact form other then yourself will be picking up your children. Daily pick up forms are good for one use only. Any and all pick up persons must present photo I.D. All pick up persons must sign children out

**Long-term pick up:**

Long term pick up forms are to be used on occasions when a party listed on your emergency contact form other then yourself will be picking up your children regularly. Long term pick up forms will be honored for six months at a time, after six months a new form must be completed. Any and all pick up persons must present photo I.D. All pick up persons must sign children out.



**Court orders:**

Boyertown and Douglassville Children's Center must abide by all court orders. We require that all communication between the concerned parties take place prior to arrival at the center and that all parties be fully informed of any and all court order prior to arrival at the center. Parents must provide the center with a certified copy of any and all court orders and /or custody papers immediately upon issue. Failure to comply with the above listed regulations may result in termination of care.



**Health policy:**

Our Center’s health policy has been designed based on the model health policies provided by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Strict adherence to this policy will minimize the risk of exposure and protect the ill child. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

In the event of suspected illness, staff members are to request a health check from the director or acting director. Parents will be notified via phone call and children will be sent home in the case that the following symptoms are confirmed.

* The presence of a temperature of 101 or greater in a child over the age of two months as confirmed by auxiliary method.
* The presence of a temperature of 100.4 degrees in a child under the age of two months as confirmed by auxiliary method.
* Any vomiting or diarrhea. Diarrhea is defined as two or more loose stools.
* Any symptoms indicating the presence of contagious illness such as skin eruptions, a discharge of puss, rash, etc.
* The presence of lice or nits in hair
* The presence of a persistent cough, and at least one other symptom.

*Children younger than six months of age require close monitoring and parents may be contacted with even the slightest of symptoms, we also consider the general health of a child when requesting a pick-up.*

**Procedure for the removal of an ill child:**

In the event of a suspected illness and upon confirmation by the director or acting Director, the following steps will be taken.

* If staffing allows a staff member will immediately isolate the child. That staff member will provide comfort and quiet activities.
* The director or acting Director will telephone parents and request pick up within one half hour, if parents cannot be reached the emergency contact person will be called and asked to pick up within **one half hour**.

**Returning to the center:**

 Children may return to the center once they are symptom free for 24 hours. **Therefore a child who was sent home due to vomiting may not return to the center for at least 24 hours.** In the event of continued symptoms or medications the child must be under the care of a physician, and no longer contagious prior to their return to the center. Children should not return to the center unless they are able to participate fully in the program, which includes time spent outdoors.



**Medication procedure:**

The American Academy of Pediatrics strongly recommends that parents do not bring medicines to childcare centers and instead make provisions to administer medications to their own children before bringing the child to childcare and after picking them up. In the event that your child needs medicine, please discuss this procedure with your physician.

In the event that medication needs to be administered at the center the following procedure will be strictly enforced.

**Medication:**

* All medications must be in the original, labeled container.
* Child’s name must be on the container.
* No medications will be given without prior written consent from a parent or guardian.
* Medication must be handed to the room leader who will put it in its appropriate place. At the end of the day the room leader will get the medication and hand it back to you.
* All medication must be taken home daily. No medication will be stored at the center overnight.
* **No medication is to be transported or stored in children’s pockets, lunch boxes, diaper bags, book bags or cubbies**.
* No medication will be administered in the center for the first time. All medications must have been given before and the child observed for reactions.
* All outdated medications will be disposed of.
* Cough drops/throat lozenges, lotions, rash creams, diaper cream, lip balm, etc. are considered medication by the state of Pennsylvania, and must comply with the above medication procedures.
* When administering prescription medication, we must follow that directions on the label and cannot administer differently, without a doctor’s note.

**Medication log:**

* The medication log must be completed and signed by a parent or guardian every day that the medication is to be given.
* Any medication not signed in will not be administered.

**Doctor orders:**

* All doctors’ orders must state quantity of dose, frequency and indicate specific dates of use.
* Any over the counter medication administered for more then two consecutive days must have a doctor’s order. The order will be in **good standing with the center for three months,**at which time you will need to provide us with an updated order.
* No over the counter medication will be given for more then one day without specific written directions from a physician
* **Talc powder will not be administered**, any baby powder administered must be cornstarch based and accompanied by a doctor’s order.
* Dosage and age administration written on the package will be followed unless a physicians orders state otherwise. Parents of young children: please be advised that over the counter medications state: if the child is under two consult a physician before administering. A doctor’s note is required for us to administer this medication

**Outside time: Outdoor play is Daily**

Our playground is not “just for play”! it is a valuable place to learn! We love to run and shout, exercise, and perfect our gross motor and fine motor skills outdoors.

But we also learn about the natural world, science, and math. We learn about temperature, weather and seasons

 We measure, pour, and estimate volume with sand, dirt, leaves, snow and water. We calculate distance and speed with ball play, running , jumping, and bike play.

We learn about Bugs! Birds! Worms! Habitats and habits!

 We learn to play cooperatively and imaginatively. We learn in a group, and we explore independently.

The possibilities are endless, and we are always discovering something new! Indeed, our playground is a wonderland of outdoor learning, and the weather is part of our exploration and learning.

SO….depending on the weather and season, Please send in our jackets, coats, raincoats, boots, snow pants, hats and gloves!!! Because we LOVE to go exploring outdoors, and we go outside every day!! Even in the cold! Especially in the snow! Sometimes in a drizzle! Please label each item with our name, and teach us to store our gloves and hat in our coat sleeve. Layers work well in spring and fall.

The American Academy of Pediatrics, US Dept of Health and Human Services, and The American Public Health Assoc all recommend DAILY outdoor play to keep children healthy, EXCEPT when the temperature is above 90, below 15 or when there is a significant air quality alert.

Thank you for helping us to experience the sheer joy of a childhood of outdoor play!!!

**Field trips:**

Permission to transport a child is given by signing the appropriate spaces on the child’s emergency consent form. You will be notified prior to any field trip that you child is invited to go on.



**School bus and van policy:**

To insure the safety of all our children as they wait for and get on the van and bus, the following rules must be followed.

* All children must line up in an orderly fashion when told to do so.
* Children must walk at all times.
* Children must sit or stand in assigned waiting areas.
* All center rules apply at the bus stop.
* Children must keep their hands to themselves.
* The school district mandates that we must wait outside regardless of the weather. Please dress your child for the weather.
* Children must sit in assigned seats if so instructed.
* Van riders must use booster seats and/or seatbelts at all times.
* Children must follow van/bus rules at all times as directed by driver or staff.

*An incident report will be written each time a child does not comply with the above rule.*

When a child receives a third incident report concerning bus stop behavior, the child will lose bus privileges for one to five days. Parents will be contacted regarding these behaviors and the consequences.



**Communication:**

At Boyertown and Douglassville Children's Center we believe that open communication between caregivers and parents is crucial. There is a message box in the lobby next to the fee box for parent’s convenience. Please feel free to schedule a conference with your child’s teacher to discuss any concerns you may have. The following are some of the forms we use to keep parents informed as to their child’s day and any concerns the caregivers may have.

* Ouch reports, let you know that you child had a slight injury, how it happened and what the caregiver did. A parent must sign that they received a copy. (If any significant injury were to occur you would be contacted immediately.)
* Oops reports let you know that you’re child’s clothing were changed and the reason why. No signature is required. We ask that all children keep a spare change of clothing at the center including socks, pants, shirts and underwear.
* Incident reports are designed to make parents aware of a behavior problem that occurred during the child’s day and how it was handled by the caregiver. A parent must sign that the received a copy.

Infants and toddlers receive daily sheets in addition to the above. Daily sheets are designed to keep parents informed as to the following:

* What and how much your child ate.
* What activities your child took part in.
* Your child’s bathroom or diaper report

**Center rules:**

All children are expected to abide by developmentally appropriate classroom rules. These rules include but are not limited to the following:

* Treating other children as well as staff with respect.
* Treating the property of other children as well as the property of the center with respect.
* Using appropriate language.
* Never threatening to physically harm or physically harming others.
* Using equipment both in the classroom and on the playground appropriately.

**Center consequences:**

When a rule is broken and the staff must discipline the following methods may be used in the order that they are listed.

* A warning – The child is pulled aside and spoken to about the offending behavior.
* Redirection - The child is directed to another more appropriate activity.
* An incident report – A letter is sent home making parents aware of the problematic behavior.

 The children of Boyertown Children's Center will never be humiliated, threatened, physically or mentally harmed in any way.



**Children’s dress code:**

Children learn through play. To ensure the safety and comfort of your child, *please dress them in clean, comfortable, play clothes with* ***sneakers****.* Children who come to the center wearing dresses, sandals, or dress shoes with a heel will not be permitted to use some of our out door play equipment for safety reasons. We ask that your child not come in to the center wearing clothes that feature alcohol, cigarettes, drugs or inappropriate language. Our center monitors the use of jackets, sweatshirt etc throughout the day. Please make sure that your child has a light jacket during fall and spring months for those cooler afternoons or early mornings.

**Staff babysitting:**

Employees of Boyertown Children's Center are not permitted to baby sit for clients. Please do not request babysitting from any staff member.

**Serving children with special needs:**

When serving a child with special needs we ask that the parent provides a current IEP and the appropriate support staff when needed. The center will make every effort to accommodate the child’s individual needs. The center will also make referrals for children that may be identified as special needs, or developmentally delayed.

 The center will make every effort to accommodate support staff. Center directors and teachers request to be included in IEP and regular meetings with parents, support staff and support staff agencies to provide the best possible, most consistent service possible to children. Arrangements foe IEP, parent and support staff meetings at the center can be arranged at any time.

Communication between parents, center, and all support staff is required regarding any and all changes.

**Family discounts:**

A discount is available to families with more the one child enrolled on a full time basis. There is no discount available for before and after school care or other part time services.

**Our programs include:**

 The following services are available to all families at no extra charge.

* Speech, hearing and vision screening. (Ages three and up.)
* Morning and afternoon snacks.
* Juice and milk.
* Cots and cribs.
* Infant and toddler daily info sheets.
* Educational evaluation parent conferences.
* Monthly newsletters.
* Educational programs for infant, toddler, preschool and prekindergarten children.
* Summer camp programs.
* Computer education. (Ages three and up.)

**Registration fee:**

A registration fee of $60.00 per child is due upon initial registration. A registration fee of $60.00 per child will be charged each year by August when parents register their children for the fall academic program. Registration fees are non refundable.

**Deposit:**

A one-week deposit is required upon initial registration, and will be returned upon satisfaction of all payments, vacation and withdrawal policies. Deposit is reflected as a credit on your statement. Late payment will cause the deposit to be used.

**Contracted hours of care are as follows:**

For a complete price list ask your director. All care is provided according to the hours specified on your agreement. If the hours are exceeded, the next rate level will be charged. \*Children who attend over 50 hours per week (over 10 hours per day) will be charged $5.00 per hour.

**Full time care:**

 Full time care is defined as over 26 hours per week, up to ten hours per day

**Half time care:**

 Half time care is defined as between 16 and 25 ¾ hours per week.

**Quarter time care:**

Quarter time care is defined as 15 ¾ hours per week or less there is a 3 hour daily recommended

minimum.

**Absentee/late policy:**

Please call the center if your child will not attend. All calls **need** to be made prior to 9:00 am each day. *If your child will arrive late on any given day, it is important that you call the center to inform their teacher*. Extending this courtesy will make scheduling activities, staff breaks and staff arrival and departure times easier. If a child is more than 1 hr late and a phone call is not received, the child will be marked absent for the day.

**Payment policy:**

Tuition may be paid in cash, by money order or by check and must be paid in advance. Please place cash payments in an envelope with your name on it before dropping your payment into the fee box. Childcare fees are due on Monday of each week. A late fee of $5.00 per day will be charged to all unpaid balances as of 6:00pm each Tuesday evening when the center closes. All returned checks will be charge a 20.00 returned check fee. There is a 5.00 per day late payment fee if the payment is not received by Tuesday pm of each week.

Please put all payments directly into the fee box. Employees have been instructed not to accept payments.

**Subsidized childcare:**

Subsidized care is available for those who are eligible. Eligibility is determined by calling (610) 987-8444 in Berks County and by calling 1-800-281-1116 in Montgomery County.

**Credit for days missed:**

 No credit for tuition is given on holidays, sick, snow or in-service days.



 **Infant, Toddler and Preschool Vacation policy:**

 Children who are enrolled full time are eligible for the following vacation credit:

* One week of vacation time during the academic year. Children must attend full time the entire academic year, and must give written notice to the director at least two weeks in advance to be eligible.
* One week of vacation time during the summer camp program. Children must attend full time the entire summer, and must schedule vacation time upon enrollment in the summer camp program.
* A vacation week is five full days beginning on a Monday and ending on a Friday; full tuition is due for weeks in which an unplanned absence occurs.
* Vacation credit does not apply to families who are enrolled part time in summer camp programs.
* Spent vacation time will be deducted from deposit if a family with draws children prior to the completion of a full academic year or summer camp program.
* Vacation time may not be saved.

**Schoolage vacation policy:**

Children who are enrolled in the before and after school program for the entire school year are entitled to one week of vacation credit during the academic year. The parents must give the Director at least two weeks’ notice.

Children who are enrolled full time in the summer program for the entire summer are entitled to one week of vacation credit during the summer. Parent must schedule this week upon enrollment in the summer camp program.

**Withdrawal policy:**

 Two weeks written notice of intent to withdraw is needed for security deposits to be returned.

 ***Inclusion Policy:*** Boyertown and Douglassville Children’s Center Inclusion Statement

Boyertown and Douglassville Children’s Centers welcome children of all abilities and backgrounds to join our community of learners. Our learning environments are designed to be safe, welcoming, relaxed, respectful, accessible and of high interest to all learners.

Teachers build upon the strengths while addressing the individual needs of each child. Provisions are made for individual learning styles and special needs, so that everyone can fully participate. All staff receive continuing education to explore, learn and grow their skills to serve children of all background and abilities.

Developmental screenings are provided to identify early any special needs. Support and referrals to appropriate agencies are provided, and center staff and facilities are made available to support staff from other agencies. Parent conferences are held twice annually, and teachers are available on request for a conference at any time. Parent participation in center programs, screening events and parent conferences is encouraged.

We strive to maintain a safe, respectful, welcoming and inclusive learning environment for all children, and reserve the right to insist that no child present a safety risk to themselves, staff or other children. Children who present a safety risk may be asked to not attend until a mutually agreeable plan is in place to provide adequate, ongoing support services that ensure the safety of all members of the learning community at all times.

**English as a second language policy**

Every effort will be made to obtain an Interpreter for families who do not have English as a primary language.

**Discharge policy:**

Boyertown Children's Center reserves the right to discharge a child or parent at any time who present a risk to the health, safety or well being of members of the BCC community. Children may be asked to not attend until a mutually agreed upon plan is in place to assure the safety and well being of all staff and children.

**Release of Children’s Records**

Every Parent is asked to sign a release log at the time of enrollment. Parents may request an appointment to view their child’s records at any time. When a child leaves our facility a parent may make a written request to the Director to transfer records to the child’s new facility or to the parent themselves. All transfer of records will be documented on the release log signed at the time or enrollment.