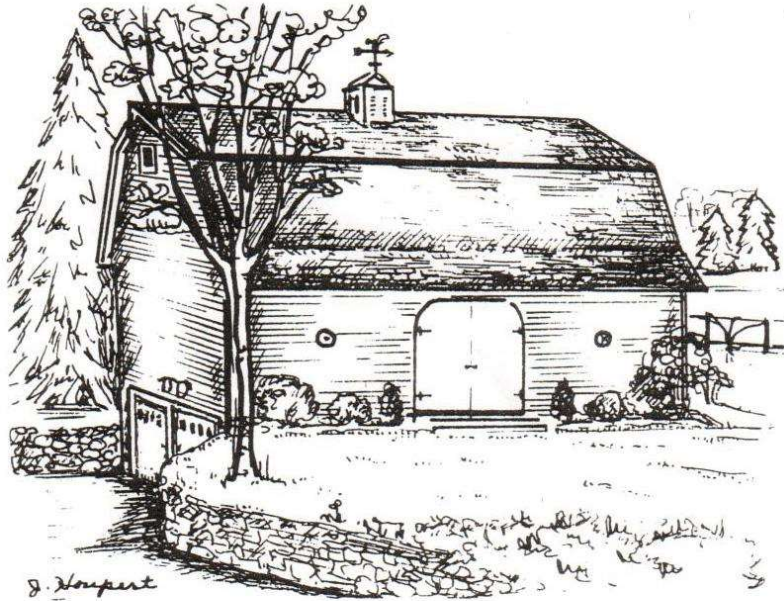


Red Barn Children's Center

Family Handbook

Early Education, Bunnies Program, Extended Care



Founded in 1971.

Director: Jessica Guelke
President: Christian Guelke
Assistant Director: Brittany Ryan

Revised August 2022

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“Recall your fondest memories as a child.

What were you doing, where were you? Were you playing inside or outside? Playing with friends—real or imaginary? Did you explore nature, play in the mud, and create your own story?

Our childhood experiences shaped and created lifetime memories. The early education programs we offer, combined with our classrooms—inside and out, provide the setting and experiences for your child to create their own memories that last a lifetime.

We feel very fortunate to be able to offer your child and your family the opportunity to create a memory with us.”

– Chris & Jess

This parent handbook is intended to be used for all Little Barn, Gray Barn, Bunny Program and Extended Care Families. While all policies are relevant to all families there are some Bunny Program specific policies and notes that do not apply to everyone. The Bunnies Addendum holds several aspects exclusive to that program.

Many of the questions that will arise during your child’s stay with us can be answered within these pages, please take the time to review this handbook.

A Better World Starts with a Choice

Thank You for Choosing Red Barn Children’s Center!

PHILOSOPHY

Red Barn Children's Center has been using Developmentally Appropriate Practice, or DAP, since the school's establishment in 1971. This time tested philosophy is based on research and its proven developmental theory focuses on how children learn and grow with a mindfulness of each individual child's needs.

More briefly, DAP can be thought of as a practice that is both **age appropriate** and focuses on each child's **individual learning needs**.

This method fits with our vision of child development as it addresses children's needs in a way that prepares them for kindergarten and beyond. We offer respect and kindness to each child and show and teach children how to respond in kind. We believe that early childhood play is vital and valid for learning socialization, teaching problem solving, and emotional development. These foundations of learning are integral parts of the developmental process. We approach environments and experiences with an awareness and appreciation of where children are developmentally and how to best help them learn and progress in a healthy way as a whole child. We meld the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards with DAP to form an effective teaching program which has served the school and the children of our community for over five decades.

PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- ❖ To recognize that children learn by doing.
- ❖ To provide guidance for age-appropriate activities in a group setting.
- ❖ To allow children to make choices and to become more independent.
- ❖ To encourage socialization through play.
- ❖ To foster the skills necessary for positive social interactions and problem solving.
- ❖ To provide a setting in which dramatic play is encouraged.
- ❖ To promote a positive self-image in each individual child.
- ❖ To provide a variety of manipulative toys and activities which help develop fine motor skills.
- ❖ To provide outdoor play equipment and activities which will facilitate gross motor development.
- ❖ To provide activities and experiences which will encourage foundation skills for writing, reading, and math.
- ❖ To encourage language development.
- ❖ To allow children to learn science by discovery.
- ❖ To promote understanding and appreciation of nature.
- ❖ To encourage solid nutritional, health, and safety habits.
- ❖ To help children see similarities and differences among people.

CERTIFICATION

Red Barn Children's Center holds a current license through CT's Office of Early Childhood Education for children ages 6 weeks to 10 years old. Our license number is DCCC.13032.

Regulations require certain information be shared with parents. You will find this information at the entrance to each barn. CT Office of Early Childhood's website is www.ct.gov/oec.

Red Barn is currently pursuing accreditation through the National Association of the Education of Young Children. Expected accreditation date is November 2023.

DEFINITION OF FAMILY

In this handbook we refer to “family” as a parent, legal guardian, sponsor or anyone else who provides for the well-being, best-interest and responsibility of the child in our care.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The Bunny Program operates from 7:00 AM to 5:45 PM, Monday through Friday.

The Little Barn and Gray Barn programs operate from 7:30 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

School age care is offered to siblings and is available from 7:30 AM to bus arrival, and from bus drop off to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Care is available on early dismissal days.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

In your enrollment packet (for new families) or in August (for enrolled families), we distribute the school calendar which includes vacation and holiday schedules. You can also view the school calendars at www.redbarncc.com/calendar.

Please note that the Bunny Program and Preschool Program calendars differ.

HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

We do observe, learn about and celebrate all holidays as part of our curriculum. The book shelves offer books about all holidays, customs and celebrations, depicting the diversity associated with the different traditions. The holidays are taught through the use of literature, the children sharing their family’s traditions and art. Most children are just beginning to collect experiences at holiday time. They can remember very little about the last time the holiday occurred. The excitement that is associated with holidays can make some children feel overwhelmed. Therefore, we leave most of the celebrating and magic for you to enjoy with your child at home.

Parents are welcome to provide the class with a birthday snack to celebrate their child’s birthday at school. Please see the above section on snack for details. If the child is accepting, the teachers make a crown for each child on their birthday and the class will sing “Happy Birthday.”

ADMISSION & ENROLLMENT

Every family begins the enrollment process by visiting Red Barn and touring with either the director or the assistant director. Some families choose to tour once with the adults only, and return at a later date to introduce the child. During the tour, you can expect to see the campus, discuss the general goals you have for your child, review the daily schedule and discuss our philosophy, objectives, and expectations. Any special considerations, such as medical needs or developmental accommodations, will be reviewed at this time.

Enrollment for early education and bunny programs is rolling based on availability. Currently enrolled families will be given advanced registration notice in January for the upcoming school year.

School Age extended care families may enroll at any time.

Fee schedules are updated annually and are available upon request and will also be provided each January. Tuition will not be adjusted mid-year. The rate families agree to will hold for the school year in which a child attends. Bunny program tuition rates will not adjust so long as the child maintains enrollment in the bunny program. Parents will be notified of any changes to tuition rates.

Weekly tuition is due the Friday of the week preceding attendance. Monthly tuition is due on the 1st of the month. There is a \$10 late fee if tuition is received 5 days past the due date. An additional \$10 may be charged for every 2 days past the initial past due date. Extended care bills are due 7 days after receipt of the monthly statement.

There will be a \$25 fee for all returned or insufficient funds charges.

WITHDRAWAL OF A CHILD DURING THE CONTRACTED PERIOD

Should a family need to move or change childcare arrangements during the year, the parents are required to submit a letter (email) to the Director 30 days in advance of the requested change. You will be responsible for full tuition costs during the 30 day period. Other occasions where a family might be asked by the Director to withdraw a child include:

- ❖ The child's consistent separation anxiety becomes a distraction and hindrance to the class.
- ❖ The family is not willing to consider outside counseling when it is suggested to help with developmental or behavioral issues.
- ❖ A parent's philosophy of early childhood education is in opposition to our program and actively opposes the philosophy.
- ❖ Failure to pay tuition as agreed in the contract/agreement.

SICK, VACATION, AND MAKE UP DAY POLICY

Bunny Program families, please see Sick, Vacation and Make Up Day policy in the Bunny's Addendum.

Little Barn and Gray Barn enrollment/tuition is based on schedule and not attendance therefore. If your child misses days, make up days may be allowed provided space is available.

CLOSURES

When Clinton Public Schools closed for weather events or power outages, Red Barn reserves the right to follow or not follow suit. You will also be notified by email or text alert of closings or delays. If there is a delay in Clinton Public Schools (regardless of 1 hour or 2 hour delay), we will open for children enrolled in early care at 9:00 am. We will open at 10 a.m. for children whose regular preschool program begins at 9:00 a.m. If there is an early dismissal due to weather, we reserve the right to close early.

Red Barn reserves the right to make up any days missed for weather or power outage or not. The preschool program may add extra days to the calendar in the event of five or more missed days due to weather or power outage. Tuition is due regardless of missed days due to weather or power related closures unless the closure is due to Red Barn negligence.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

At our Early Childhood Education Program equal educational opportunities are available for all children, without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, or parent/provider political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation or special needs, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state or local laws. Educational programs are designed to meet the varying needs of all students.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Each family is a child's first teacher. We value families as partners in the growth and development of children in our program. We encourage parents and other family members to be involved in the program, visit children's classrooms, participate in events, and provide feedback on the program. We offer a variety of ways in which families can participate in helping us establish and reach our program goals.

*Please review our COVID policy. Depending on the current status of the pandemic and the recommended guidance may/may not allow classroom visits.

Parent Advisory Board: Several times a year the director invites all families to attend evening on-line meetings to collaborate with event planning and organizing parent volunteer opportunities.

Special Talents and Classroom Helpers: Parents are invited to share talents, such as music or occupational skills, or help with their child's class by cooking, reading, playing games. There are times when the class is working on a multi-step project and an extra set of hands is appreciated. Make the arrangements with your child's teachers.

Holidays: We welcome all families to come into class to talk to the child about their family's holiday traditions and customs. You can do this by oral storytelling, a cooking project, sharing photos or bringing in specific items associated with the holiday or tradition.

Field Trips: A field trip is planned once a year for the Little Barn and Gray Barn classes. Please see the heading "Outings and Field Trips" for more information.

Family Day: Parents will be asked to help during this special end-of-the-year event, held the third week each May (see school calendar for date). This special day we come together for a school-wide picnic, where everyone brings a dish to share with the group. Games and events are scheduled beginning at noon. This day is scheduled on a weekday afternoon, so please mark your calendars early!

Pets: Children enjoy sharing their pets. Talk to your child's teachers about bringing animals to share during outdoor playtime. Because there are no rabies vaccinations for some animals, we have to be selective about some animals being handled by children.

Birthdays: Parents are invited to stay and celebrate their child's birthday with them or by reading a favorite book to the class. You may bring a special snack to help celebrate their child's birthday in school. Please see the section on snack for specific details. Please do not send any extras such as napkins, favors, hats, plates, etc. Sign up prior to your child's birthday on the snack calendar.

Art Materials, Books, and Toys: We recycle items and will accept most contributions – just ask! We love your donations of paper egg cartons, toilet and paper towel rolls, corks, and bubble wrap.

Parents observations of in class sessions:

To make your visit more meaningful we offer the following suggestions:

- You may come for the whole session or part.
- Please do not bring siblings.
- We encourage both parents to visit – together or separate.
- We have reading materials that you might like to browse through while you are observing.
- Please recognize that teachers cannot talk with you at length while class is in session.

What you will see:

- Your child may act somewhat differently with you present.
- You may observe some children engaging in inappropriate behavior. We ask that you allow the teachers to handle the situation and that you keep information about the situation confidential.
- Group times include morning meeting, story time, music, and snack. You will witness a wide range of developmental maturity in terms of listening skills and ability.
- Activity time includes dramatic play and table activities. Particularly during dramatic play, you will notice the teacher guiding the children in learning social skills. The dramatic play activity time may seem fairly loosely structured and the teachers will be involved at varying levels depending upon the maturity of the group. Table activities include using sensory materials; manipulatives such as puzzles, pegs, etc., and the project activity of the day, which could be art, math, science, language, or cooking. Teachers observe children’s skills closely, particularly as March conferences are near. Please be aware that much of this time is a choice for the children and all may not choose to do each activity.

While visiting, you may:

- Be a helper to the teachers. In this role, you would help wash hands, set up snacks, or read a book to small groups.
- Prepare a nutritious snack with the children.
- Help with a table activity that the teachers have planned.
- Play a musical instrument or lead music.
- Lead a group game.
- Share information about your occupation.
- Play with a small group of children.
- Share about your family’s traditions.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Each child’s health and safety file is confidential but is immediately available upon request to:

- Administrators and educators who have consent from a parent or legal guardian to access the records
- The child’s parents or legal guardians
- Our nurse consultant
- Regulatory authorities

CHILD TO STAFF RATIOS

Children are supervised at all times. All caregivers receive scheduled breaks which reduce fatigue and help to ensure alertness.

We maintain the following standards for child to staff ratios:

Age	Child to Staff	Maximum Group Size
< 12 months	3 to 1	8

13-35 months	4 to 1	8
3 year-olds	7 to 1	15
4 year-olds	9 to 1	18
6 to 8 year-olds	10 to 1	20

LET'S KEEP IN TOUCH

Red Barn communicates with families in a variety of ways. Our primary means of communication are:

- Daily communication for Bunny Program families is provided via app-based reporting platform
- Little Barn and Gray Barn families receive a daily write up of the activities offered that day
- Monthly newsletter from individual classrooms
- Closed-group Facebook page
- Face-to-face conversations at drop off and pick up
- E-mail
- Parent conferences or meetings
- Phone conversations
- Family handbook of program policies

English is the primary language we use to communicate with our families. If your family requires language translation, please let administrators know. Should your family require translation, Red Barn will make use of Google Translator for written communication or provide a translation coach for face-to-face meetings.

FAMILY CONTACT WITH DIRECTOR AND TEACHING STAFF

All email communication between families and the administration or teaching staff should be sent to jguelke@redbarncc.com. This includes attendance/illness information, questions, concerns or inquiring about volunteer opportunities.

If you have questions regarding billing or scheduling, call or email Chris Guelke at cguelke@redbarncc.com.

The Red Barn staff benefits from receiving information about your child. Prior to the start of the school year all pre-school attendees will receive a parent questionnaire concerning your child, which we hope both parents will carefully complete. This information helps us learn about your child prior to their school year so we can be in a better position to identify developmental concerns. Should you have information to share with us during the year, please try to do so when your child cannot hear the conversation. We prefer a phone call, an email to the director (jguelke@redbarncc.com) or assistant director (cguelke@redbarncc.com), or a written note.

Red Barn recommends using Sparkler, an app-based developmental tool, that allows families to input the activities and progress the child is making at home. The information inputted by the family can be reviewed by teachers and helps when the teaching team is assessing the child.

Please do not contact teachers on their personal email or communication devices for any reason. Should you have a question or concern before, during or after business hours, please contact administration via email or call the office at 8602-669-7246.

CT REGULATIONS

ABUSE AND NEGLECT: We are required by law to report any suspected physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect to the Department of Children and Families. The Careline number is 1-800-842-2288.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE: Should parents have concerns about the functioning of the Red Barn Children's Center, they are asked to follow this process:

1. Speak with the classroom teachers – perhaps they can clarify the situation.
2. Ask for a conference with the Director. If no satisfaction is gained from the above,
3. Phone the Office of Early Childhood at 1-800-500-4450 and file a complaint.

CURRICULA & LEARNING

Learning Environment

We provide a rich learning environment with curricula that are developmentally appropriate to the specific ages in each classroom. We strongly believe that learning happens through play. Learning and exploring are hands-on and are facilitated through interest areas. Our program is designed to enhance children's development in the following areas: creativity, self-expression, decision-making, problem-solving, responsibility, independence, and reasoning. We encourage openness to that which is different from us, and the ability to work and play with others.

Curricula & Assessment

Red Barn uses a combination of time-tested, Red Barn created curricula, the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards and Creative Curriculum that guide our daily activities and goals. As part of this curriculum, we gather information about each child's developmental abilities and evaluate progress so we can modify and adjust what we are doing in our classroom so as to deliver the best individualized instruction for each child. This evaluation is communicated to families periodically during the school year using various formal and informal tools, forms, and resources.

For information about your child's day, please see copies of daily schedules and lesson plans posted in each classroom.

INTENTIONAL TEACHING

Teachers make plans for classroom activities based on the established Red Barn curriculum, the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards (CTELDS) and the Creative Curriculum. Planning is also guided by practices put forth by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

DEVELOPMENTAL OBSERVATIONS AND CONFERENCES

During the year, teachers will make formal and informal observations of children and record how they are developing in the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive areas. Input from parents is very valuable in understanding the development of a child. We maintain a parent resource library and offer informative meetings during the year so parents can be made aware of characteristics to observe and discuss. The information collected by the teachers will be shared with the parents at conferences in November and in March.

Preschool

During your November conference, we will discuss your child's school experience and set goals according to the CT Early Learning and Development Standards. A variety of issues could be discussed including your child's favorite activities, the activities they shy away from, their chosen peers, separation anxiety, how we are helping your child learn self-control, your child's developmental progress and kindergarten readiness.

In March we revisit how your child worked toward their goals and offer suggestions for continued work at home or where we expect your child will be at the start of their fall program.

Bunny Program

Within your child's first 4 weeks with us we will evaluate your child using a standardized assessment created by the Office Of Early Childhood Education.

After the initial evaluation, your child will be formally evaluated in November and again in May. A copy of the assessment will be provided to each family.

Conferences are strongly encouraged, but are not mandatory in the Infant and Wobbler classrooms. Toddler families are asked to attend a conference in May.

DEVELOPMENTAL CONCERNS

Sometimes based on the developmental observation, we become aware that a child might benefit from special education programs offered in the public schools or by observation and counseling from an outside source, such as the Red Barn's social and emotional consultant. The parents will be asked to give permission to have their child observed by the school's psychologists or receive services at home or school through CT's Early Childhood Consultation Partnership (ECCP). At other times, the Director may suggest counseling to a family because of a child's behavioral characteristics (physical or emotional outburst, biting, sadness etc....). We will work closely with families whose children may be having difficulties. We recognize that early education is a place for all children to learn but we do have to keep the welfare of the group intact. A parent's refusal of services or refusal to participate in a developed plan could lead to their child's dismissal from the program. See heading "Refusal of services and/or intervention" for more information

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF CONSULTANTS & OUTSIDE SERVICES

Red Barn has professional relationships with three consultants, per our Office of Early Childhood licensing requirements.

Our dental consultant, Pediatric Dentistry Associates, reviews the written policies, plans, and procedures related to the dental well being of the children enrolled and are available by phone and in person for policies regarding problems.

Our Social Services Consultant, Sara Schmidt LCSW, provides the following services:

- Review written policies, plans, procedures annually
- Review of the educational programs annually
- Be available for telecommunication or email as needed to discuss issues with staff and administration
- Act as a resource for staff and parents
- Be available in person to consult at the school
- Follow the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health *Child Care Licensing* regulations for Social Service Consultants

Our Early Childhood Education consultant, provided through LEARN, has the following tasks:

- annual review of written policies,
- annual review of plans and procedures
- annual review of education programs
- availability by telecommunication for advice
- availability, in person to consult with program
- consults with administration and staff related to identified topic
- documenting the activities and observations required in a consultation log that is kept on file at the facility

Red Barn also maintains a relationship with local public schools and CT's Early Childhood Consultation Partnership. These resources provide support and evaluation of individual students or offer support to the teaching staff. We utilize these relationships on an as needed basis.

REFUSAL OF SERVICES AND/OR INTERVENTION

If a family refuses services and there is an issue related to the developmental or behavioral concern which is affecting the safety and well-being of the child, classmates or teaching staff, Red Barn reserves the right to follow the steps outlined below.

1. Notify the parent(s) to express our concerns and define what will follow if the child fails to meet the defined protocol.
2. If the child exhibits the defined behavior, the director will contact the parent and report the situation.
3. If the child continues exhibiting the defined behavior, the child will be removed from the program for the remainder of the day.
4. Communicate with the parents prior to the child's next school day and review concerns and strategies.
5. Continued behavioral challenges may result in permanent removal of the child from the program.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Should families and/or program staff have difficulties negotiating difficulties and differences that arise in interactions, the following procedures will be followed:

1. The family or teaching staff will bring the situation to the attention of administrators.
2. A meeting will be held between the family and the staff members, mediated by administrators, to define the issue at hand.
3. It is essential for both parties to realize that the goals for the child are 'shared goals'. Both must agree that the child's interest comes first.
4. The meeting will deal specifically with solutions to the identified issues.
5. All parties need to commit to the recommended solutions and agree jointly.
6. Should the family and staff member be unable to come to an agreement, all efforts will be made to minimize contact between the staff member and family.
7. If issues continue to arise, administration reserves the right to exclude the family or the staff member from the program.

MOVING ON UP

Children who begin their time with us in the Infant Room can expect to stay in the infant room until the child meets several developmental milestones such as walking independently with stable, rubber soled shoes on their feet, interest and ability to self-feed, be ready to nap once a day and have the muscle awareness to sit in a toddler chair independently.

Bunny program transitions between age groups will depend on three primary factors: Is the child developmentally ready to transition? Are they age appropriate for the group they will be entering? Is there room in the age group they will be entering?

Children entering the preschool program typically turn 3 by December 31st to be eligible to participate. Children in the Toddler room may transition to the Little Barn mid-year provided they have turned 3 by January 15th. Any child that transitions after December 31st will repeat the following school year in the Little Barn. This allows children to remain with their peer group and enter kindergarten at the proper age.

Children new to the program are eligible to join the Little Barn if they turn 3 by December 31st.

Children new to the program are eligible to join the Gray Barn PreK if they turn 4 by December 31st.

All children and their families are welcome to follow the guidance in the sections titled Starting Off On the Right Foot and Visit & Orientation.

If your child is currently enrolled at the time of their transition, the individual child or the entire class will visit the new classroom several times, in increasing increments, before their official first day in their new classroom.

TRANSFER OF AUTHORITY

Upon arrival

Your child must be escorted to the front door of your child's classroom. Children, regardless of age, must have an adult 18 years or older, escort them anytime the child is not in the care of Red Barn Children's Center staff.

On departure

Please observe the following procedure:

1. Check the bulletin board or door for announcements.
2. Collect child's artwork and other items to go home.
3. Allow the children time to complete activities that the teacher may still be directing, such as cleanup or dressing.
4. Recognize that the teachers' time to speak with you is limited; ask to be called later if you need to talk. Email is always welcome at jguelke@redbarncc.com.
5. At that time, you assume responsibility for your child.
6. **AT NO TIME SHOULD A CHILD BE UNSUPERVISED IN THE PARKING AREAS, ON THE LAWN AREAS OR ON THE PLAYGROUND.** Please do not allow your child to climb the trees, play on the stone walls or fences, or allow your child to run ahead to your car.

AUTHORIZATION AND TRANSPORTATION

Red Barn staff must have written authorization concerning who may transport a child and who may be called upon to remove a child in an emergency situation if the parent is unable to be contacted. The authorization may be via email or added through the parent portal. In addition to the child's parents there must be at least one other person included as an authorized pick up person.

Transportation is the responsibility of the parents. Please inform the teacher who will be picking up your child if there is a change to their regular schedule. We will not turn a child over to anyone other than a parent unless the parent has authorized that person to care for his/her child. We will ask for identification to verify that only the appropriately authorized person picks up your child.

Red Barn discourages idling vehicles (buses, families' automobiles) in our parking areas, except if vehicles need to idle in extreme heat or cold to maintain interior or engine temperatures.

LEGAL ASPECTS OF DISMISSAL

Car Seats: It is the legal responsibility of the parent to see that all children are securely fastened in appropriate car seats. If the teacher in charge observes a child not properly fastened in a car seat, we will report the parent to the Clinton Police Department.

Adults under the influence of Drugs or Alcohol: If the teacher in charge of releasing your child feels the adult picking up is impaired in any manner, the teacher will call other authorized adults to come. If the refused adult is aggressive or threatening, 911 will be called.

Custodial Parents: Certified court orders, not parent notes or lawyer written letters, determine if only one parent is allowed to enroll a child or pick-up a child. The Red Barn will not accept responsibility for determining which parent has rights to the child. If there are questions and no court orders exist, the director will have both parents sign written agreements should any problems arise. Again, the teachers have the responsibility to call 911 if there are any disturbances or threats.

Late Pick Up Policy: If a child has not been picked up within 10 minutes of the child's scheduled pick up time, a staff person will attempt to call the child's parents/guardians using the numbers provided. If they cannot be reached, the staff person will attempt to call the emergency and authorized alternate adults provided by the parent/guardians at the time of enrollment. The police will be called after 40 minutes if parents or other adults specified on the permission to release forms cannot be reached. At that time the child may be released to the police.

VISIT DAY & ORIENTATION

To make your child's introduction, or return, to school as smooth as possible, we plan a special routine for our preschool children at the start of school. Visitation and orientation is scheduled in late August to give the children a chance to visit their classrooms and meet their teachers with their parents. This also allows parents time to ask questions of the Directors'. The first part of their visit the child and parent will spend about 45 min in the classroom visiting with the other families, children and teachers. For the next 45 min the children will spend time on the playground with their parents. Please reference the school calendar for the specific dates.

Families and children attending the Bunny Program will visit and have orientation by appointment with the director or assistant director.

GOOD MORNING, START YOUR DAY!

Bunny Program families, please see addendum for Bunny Program specifics.

Early care is available every day from 7:30-9:00. The early care location may be in the Gray or Little Barn. Location will be determined at the start of the school year. Early care may be offered on an as needed basis. Please inform the Director if you require early care.

Both the Little Barn and Gray Barn school year program begins at 9:00. Doors open at 8:55. Please give the teaching staff the time they need to prepare the classroom and the children who are in attendance for early care for the children arriving at 9:00. Please do not knock or ring the doorbell before 8:55. If you require care before 8:55, please contact the Director.

The teaching staff will maintain attendance upon drop off.

PARKING

Little Barn: Please enter the Little Barn parking lot in the middle driveway and circle as far as you can either to the left or right, pulling up as far as you can to allow people to pull in behind you. You can park in front of the garage. If you are planning to stay at Red Barn for an observation or meeting, please park in the Gray Barn parking lot. **Please avoid parking on the grass.**

Gray Barn: Please park in the parking area next to Big Barn.

STARTING OFF ON THE RIGHT FOOT

1. Bring your child to visit at an open house in May or schedule a visit time with the director to introduce your child to Red Barn.
2. For Little Barn and Gray Barn families, attend visit and orientation days in August (each 1 hour). These allow the child to slowly adapt to the setting, get to know the teachers, and recognize that there are other children and playthings that they might like to enjoy. These visit times can also help the families feel more confident that their child will be safe and happy.
3. Set a comfortable pace at home prior to school. Know where the backpack, shoes, jacket, etc. are before you are ready to go out the door. Make school part of your routine.
4. If you anticipate your child having difficulty transitioning into the classroom, you may want to arrive a few minutes early to visit with the rabbits or walk through the gardens.

5. When you are ready to leave, make a clear signal to the child and the teacher—**“One last hug, big enough to last until I pick you up.”** Say good-bye to your child and reassure them of your return. Recognize that tears and clinging are more likely if you prolong your departure. If necessary, hand the child to the teacher. You are welcome to wait in the parking lot for a report. We may ask you to pick up your child early if their emotions prohibit them from being able to participate in the program.

Develop a ritual to follow; some examples are:

- Bringing a piece of blanket or favorite animal.
 - Leaving a stuffed animal in the car seat for the child to look forward to seeing.
 - Kissing your child’s hand so the child can “save the kisses” for during their school day.
6. Sometimes difficulty separating occurs at times other than the beginning of the year. It is common to see tears after a vacation or holiday break, the birth of a sibling, grandma leaving, or the days leading up to the child’s birthday.
7. Sometimes children say things like “I don’t want to go to school because no one plays with me” or “The teacher won’t let me play with the blocks”. A positive parent response would be, “I’ll mention that to the teacher. I’m sure they will help you.” Please communicate with the teachers if you have any concerns about what your child is reporting to you. Preschool age children have difficulty adding context to content.
8. Learning to separate is a developmental task, one that each individual human handles according to his/her personality. Children will mirror a parent’s attitude so the more confident and comfortable you can be at drop off the better your child will enter the program. Our goal at Red Barn is to help children and parents alike feel comfortable in our setting.

ITEMS FROM HOME

Toys / Other: We strongly discourage children from bringing toys and jewelry from home. Some children need security blankets or stuffed animals to ease their transition to school. If possible, we encourage that these are left in their school bags and checked or held only when needed. We would ask that you limit this to one item. No guns, war toys, or other toys of destruction are allowed in school. Please check your child’s bag daily to see what treasures it contains (it’s not just their personal items that make it into their bags)!

Backpack / Tote: Your child will need to bring a bag each day for transporting artwork, the daily write-up, book orders, school newsletters, and other assorted items. We ask that children have a labeled extra set of clothes in their bag. Periodically check this bag of extras for size and season. A traditional “school size” backpack or reusable grocery store size bag is best. Please label your child’s school bag with their name. If your child stays for all day program they may bring a stuffed animal or blanket to rest with. Please encourage your child to fit all of their belongings in one bag, as our hook and backpack area is limited. Once cold weather arrives, one backpack and one bag for winter gear is acceptable.

Snack: A calendar on the bulletin board shows what snacks are served a week in advance. According to state regulations, we must serve food from two different food groups. Usually this is crackers and cheese, pretzels and hummus or graham crackers and applesauce to name a few. We will also mix in seasonal fresh vegetables or fruits. You are welcome to pack your child a snack from home that they will be served at snack time but it must adhere to the allergy policy for the given classroom. The Director will let you know during orientation if allergies are present in your child’s classroom. At least once a month we serve a special snack that the children may help prepare. Please discuss with the director if you have any questions about our snack time routine.

We encourage families to provide the class with a special snack for birthdays or un-birthdays! If a child brings a snack for the class and it is a baked product, it must have enriched flour as its first ingredient (not cupcakes or brownies, but

muffins or wholesome cookies!) Please keep food allergies and sensitivities in mind please consult the director or teachers when planning a shared snack to ensure that all children can enjoy the treat.

Lunch: Families are responsible for providing their child a well-balanced lunch. All lunches must contain an ice pack. For the health and safety of all our students, we are a nut-aware campus. Please pack lunches that do not contain any type of nut or coconut. Lunches may be heated when needed. We provide milk or water at all lunches. Please label your child's lunch box. We recycle and compost at Red Barn.

We ask that you save cookies, candy, chocolate candy, donuts and chocolate milk for family meal times.

Lunch box suggestions for a nutritional, balanced lunch:

- Cheese quesadilla, mashed avocado with tortilla chips, fruit and vegetables
- Whole wheat pasta with red sauce or pesto, diced cheese, fruit and vegetables
- Boiled egg, granola bar and fruit
- Low-sugar yogurt, crackers and cheese, vegetables

SAY NO TO THE POUCH

We strongly suggest that you provide food in reusable containers or recyclable containers, versus food in pouches and tubes. We feel that offering the children food from containers that they must use a utensil to eat supports their self-help skills, fine motor development, oral motor development and healthy eating habits. Containers allow teachers to send home uneaten food that allows you to know how much your child is eating and can make adjustments to prevent food waste. Also, food pouches, tubes, and most juice boxes are not recyclable. Making the choice to give your child a nutritious lunch food from a container not only supports healthy development but is also the "greener" choice!

The Earth and Red Barn appreciates you packing your child a waste-free lunch.

CLOTHING / DRESS

"Play is a child's business."

Please dress your child in comfortable, washable clothes so that he/she feels free to participate in all activities without worrying about getting him/herself dirty. It is likely that children will get paint and dirt on themselves so be prepared. Most substances we use are washable when promptly laundered. If you encounter a stain, please notify the director.

We do not regularly utilize the use of smocks or paint shirts. We do this for several reasons which include:

1. Having to stop and put on the smock may deter some children from participating in the activity.
2. Smocks inhibit movement.
3. See earlier statement, "Play is a child's business." We believe that play is sometimes dirty or messy work.
4. Learning to stay clean or learning how to get dirty is developmentally appropriate.

To help your child gain self-help skills in the school setting, dress him or her in pants that are easy to get up and down for toileting time. Elastic waist pants are much easier than belts with buckles and zippers.

To follow our "Be Safe" rule, we ask that no jewelry be worn. Sneakers and rubber-soled shoes will help prevent playground accidents. Crocs, flip-flops and slip-ons are not allowed. Tightly secured sandals are okay if the child does

not mind sand in her/his shoes. In cold weather, dress your child in boots, snow pants, winter coat, mittens, and hat so he/she can play outside and stay warm and dry.

Please mark all outerwear with your child's name. Ask the teachers if you are missing an item that belongs to your child. We have extra clothes on hand that your child may need to borrow. Kindly wash and return them to us. We also accept gently used hand-me-downs to add to our borrow collection. Please check with the director to see which particular items are needed.

END OF DAY

Pick up locations vary between barns, programs and your scheduled pick up time. The teaching staff is responsible for maintaining attendance as your child departs the program.

Little Barn

12:00 & 3:00 pick up is from the playground gate by the pool.

3:00-3:30 pick up is from the front door of the Little Barn.

After 3:30 pick up is from the playground gate by the pool. In poor weather, pick up will be from the Big Barn.

Gray Barn

12:00, 3:00- 3:30 pick up from the front door of the Gray Barn.

After 3:30 pick up is from the playground gate by the pool. In poor weather, pick up will be from the Big Barn.

Bunny Program- Wobblers & Toddlers

Before 3:30, pick up from the classroom door.

Pick up after 3:30 will be from the playground.

Bunny Program- Infants

Typically, all pick up times will be from the classroom door. If the teachers and children are not present, collect your child's belongings and proceed around the front of the Yellow House to the infant playground.

Sometimes leaving school at the end of the day can be difficult for children. They may not be "ready" to leave. It can be helpful to say, "I'll watch for one more minute, then it's time to leave." The teachers can help you with this. Some children are emotional when they see their adult at the end of the day. Theoretically, these children have bottled their emotions during the day and let it all go when they see their trusted adult.

OUTINGS AND FIELD TRIPS

Weather permitting; we conduct at least 45 minutes of supervised outdoor play and/or walking trips around campus at least once a day for all children. Children are accounted for at all times.

From time to time, there will be supervised field trips, and we encourage you to join your child on the trip. Permission Slips for each trip must be signed by the child's family. Transportation to and from the field trip destination is provided by the family. The time, date and destination of the field trip is scheduled and shared with families in February, with the field trip date usually occurring in May.

Red Barn assumes the responsibility to carry each child's emergency contact information, first aid supplies and any emergency medications to and from the field trip destination.

For field trips, please dress your child appropriately for the season. Walking shoes are a must. Sandals and flip-flops are not appropriate for walking and make it difficult for your child.

The safety of children and staff will be guarded in all activities of child care programs. Proper restraint systems (seat belts) and the correct use of them are critically important during travel to/from the child care program as well as during field trips.

HEALTH AND MEDICATION

An examination by a physician is required by state regulation before a child may attend early education; and immunization against diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough), tetanus, measles, mumps, rubella (German Measles), polio, Hib, Hepatitis B, Chicken Pox, and Pneumococcal conjugate is also required. A flu immunization must be given to children between September and December and documentation brought to Red Barn. The provided and fully completed health form and a complete list of immunizations must be completed by the doctor and returned to us by the start of the program. It is necessary to have this form updated every 12 months when the child has his/her annual physical examination. You will be notified when your current health form is near expiration. A child whose health form is not updated will be excluded from attending due to State Department of Health regulations.

Religious Exemptions / Flu Occurrence: *Effective April 28th, 2021:* A religious exemption is only allowed for any child who, before April 28, 2021, is enrolled in a preschool program and has presented a Religious Exemption, and who has not presented a written declaration from a Pediatrician stating that additional immunizations are in process. All other children must be either immunized on schedule or on a catch up schedule as indicated on their state of CT health form to attend. If on a catch up schedule, a written note from the child's pediatrician stating as such is required.

Individual Health Plans: Individual health plans will be reviewed by our nurse consultant and must be on file for any child who has a health concern such as: food allergies, asthma, or any chronic disease or medical condition. The necessary forms will be provided by Red Barn to ensure that the proper forms are completed. If your child has a condition listed on their health that does not require medication at school, we require that your pediatrician provide us a document that states that no medication is required at school. All authorization forms have to list "child care center" at the top in order to be in compliance with state regulations.

Storage and Administration of Medication: Whenever possible, medication should be given at home by the family. When this is not possible, staff trained in medication administration will dispense the medicine. Children may not transport medication in their school bags. This includes prescription medication, over the counter medicines, sunscreen, insect repellent, hand sanitizer, topical ointments and lotions and lip balm. We will administer oral medication, topical medication, inhalant medicine, and injectable medication by a regulated injection system to a child with a medically diagnosed condition who may require emergency treatment with the proper medication administration paperwork on file. Before any prescription or non-prescription medication is given, the following steps must be adhered to:

1. Except when approved by the director, the first 24 hours' worth of medication must be given at home.
2. A detailed authorization sheet must be completed by the doctor prescribing the medication and by the parent. Forms may be obtained from the director.
3. The medication must be in its original pharmacy packaging with the child's name on the original pharmacy label. The date must be current.
4. Medication must be given to the director or the teacher designated by the director.
5. A written record will be kept of medications given while the child is at Red Barn.
6. It is the family's responsibility to provide Red Barn with completed medication paperwork from your child's physician. If the paperwork is not complete, the family is responsible for obtaining the completed paperwork before the Red Barn staff will administer the medication.

Most medications, including over the counter medications such as Tylenol, Motrin, Neosporin, or medicated diaper ointments, require a doctor's order for us to administer the medication. Please contact Jess Guelke with any questions regarding medications.

Emergency medications, such as Epinephrine and asthma medications, will be kept out of reach in your child's classroom, and will follow your child when they leave the classroom, to the playground, Big Barn, etc. Any other medication will be kept in a locked box or locked cabinet in your child's classroom, out of the reach of children.

If your child has written medical and dental procedures that specify that if a physician has ordered a special medical management procedure for a child in care, an adult trained in the procedure will be on-site whenever the child is present.

ILLNESS POLICY

If your child is not well, please keep your child at home – don't be generous with their germs! If your child is sent home with either a fever over 99.9, repeated diarrhea, or vomiting they may not attend the following day. Below is a list of reasons why you should keep your child at home.

- ♥ fever of over 100 (oral or temporal; should be below 100 for 24 hours without the aid of medication)
- ♥ the child has started a new medication less than 24 hours before the start of their school day
- ♥ the child has had a fever over 99.9 within 24 hours of the start of their school day
- ♥ unusual fatigue, paleness, lack of appetite, confusion or irritability
- ♥ unexplained rash
- ♥ suspect he/she may be contagious
- ♥ repeated diarrhea, vomiting
- ♥ thick mucus or pus draining from the eye or nose or ear
- ♥ coughing so that it is difficult to breath and talk
- ♥ sore throat, especially if combined with fever or swollen glands
- ♥ any head injury requiring careful observation

It is best to have alternative child care plans in place before your child is sick. Please notify us so we are aware of why he/she is at home. Should your child be sick in school, we will call the parent or listed care provider to take him/her home. All children in attendance must be well enough to play outside with the group. We strictly abide by our illness policy for the well-being of the teachers and the other children. Our nurse consultant is available via phone or email for parent questions or concerns and will also be on campus once a week.

COVID

Please visit our website to review our most current COVID policy.

LICE

Children may not attend the program with an active lice infestation. Should lice be found during a child's attendance, the parents or emergency contacts will be notified and the child will need to be picked up. He/she may be removed from the classroom until he/she can be transported home. Children may return to school when they are completely free of lice, eggs, and nits.

CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR

Children are guided to treat each other and adults with self control and kindness.

Each student at Red Barn Children's Center has a right to:

- Learn in a safe and friendly place
- Be treated with respect

- Receive the help and support of caring adults

Challenging behavior is defined as, “Any behavior that;

(1) interferes with children's learning, development and success at play,

(2) is harmful to the child, other children, or adults, [or]

(3) puts a child at high risk for later social problems or school failure.” (Kaiser & Rasminsky, *Challenging Behavior in Young Children* (2nd Ed.), Pearson Education Inc., 2007, p. 8).

Examples of challenging behavior: Physical aggression (hitting, biting, shoving, whacking with toys), relational aggression [“You can't play with us”], verbal bullying, tantrums, whining, testing limits, refusal to follow directions or observe classroom rules.

Our policy is written to protect the well-being of all individuals involved, but also to limit or eliminate the use of suspension, expulsion and other exclusionary measures. When a child becomes verbally or physically aggressive, we intervene immediately to protect all of the children. Our usual approach to helping children with challenging behaviors is to show them how to solve problems using appropriate interactions. When discipline is necessary, it is clear, consistent and understandable to the child. Please see the heading Discipline Policy for more specific information. We maintain a zero tolerance to bullying. If you have any concerns about this at any time, please report it to the Director.

If a child’s repeated behavior/circumstance is of concern, communication will begin with the parents as the first step to understanding the child’s individual needs and challenges. We will work together to evaluate these needs in the context of our program. A behavior plan will be created together with the family, the teaching staff and the director. The plan will lay out the positive behavior support strategies that will be implemented to avoid or manage the challenging behavior. For example, removing materials or modifying the classroom environment that triggers challenging behaviors, or creating a predictable daily schedule so children know what to do and when to do it. After 6 weeks of implementation and data collection, if the behavior continues, an in-depth appraisal of a child by a specialist to identify specific abilities and needs will be recommended. This may be through evaluation at the public school or ECCP services.

On rare occasions, a child’s behavior may warrant the need to suspend or expel a child from the program. Examples of such instances include:

- The child’s family and school personnel can not negotiate through difficulties and differences in how to best help the child.
- A child’s behavior history shows to be a danger to others.
- Continued care could be harmful to, or not in the best interest of the child as determined by a medical, psychological, or social service personnel.
- Undue burden on our resources and finances for the child’s accommodations for success and participation.
- After professional intervention, the child’s behavior continues to put others at risk of injury.

Exclusionary measures are not considered until all other possible interventions have been exhausted, and there is agreement that exclusion is in the best interest of the child. If exclusionary measures must be taken, the program will offer assistance to the family in accessing services and assist in finding an alternative placement.

Our policy acknowledges that it complies with federal and state civil rights laws.

DISCIPLINE POLICIES

Our foundation rules of behavior are “Be Safe” and “Be Kind”.

- Our teachers will express respect, acceptance, and comfort for all children regardless of the child's behavior.
- We recognize that the goal of discipline is to teach a child self-control.
- We offer guidance to the children by setting clear, consistent, fair limits for classroom behavior.
- We will help older children learn to set their own limits.
- Our teachers help children learn self-control by guiding them in ways to resolve conflicts using words and negotiating.
- We will redirect children, when necessary, to more acceptable behavior or activities.
- We listen when children talk about their feelings and frustrations and help children learn to express these feelings in a positive manner.
- Teachers will recognize possible causes of a child's behavior and speak with the parents and the director about helping the child.
- Our teachers exhibit patience in helping children understand rules and the rationale for rules.
- Teachers will demonstrate coping skills and model behavior for children.
- Staff may never use physical punishment, psychological abuse, or coercion when disciplining a child.
- Physical restraint is not used or permitted for discipline. There are rare instances when we need to ensure a child's safety or that of others and we may restrain a child by gently holding her or him only for as long as is necessary for control of the situation.
- We will not humiliate, ridicule, cause fear, physically punish, neglect, or abuse any child.

CELL PHONE POLICY

The times you spend in the center dropping off and picking up your child are the primary windows of time we have to communicate with you about your child. In order to make the best use of these opportunities, as well as to be attentive to your child and other children, we ask that you NOT use your cell phone at any time while visiting the center. This applies to all areas of campus, especially while driving in the parking lots.

Red Barn does not utilize computers, tablets, cell phones or the internet in the classroom as a teaching tool.

PRIVACY POLICY

Please respect the privacy of all by abstaining from taking photos of any children besides your own while in any area of Red Barn unless you have permission from the other child's parent. We ask that you do not use any photos taken at Red Barn of any children besides your own on any social media platforms. Red Barn does not utilize the use of photos of our students participating in daily activities and special events without permission. Photos may be used on www.redbarncc.com, the Red Barn's Facebook page or in other publications associated with the school; to include but not limited to newspapers, trade publications, magazines or other advertisements. Photos may be taken during the school day and shared with parents as well.

Red Barn maintains a closed group Facebook page. The director and president of Red Barn are the sole administrators of this page and therefore all permissions to join the group and all photos and information posted there are privy to their approval.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLANS

POWER OUTAGE:

1. The director and/or president reserve the right to cancel school due to power outages that cause the inability to adhere to the public health code.

ACCIDENTS CAUSING SERIOUS INJURY:

1. Teachers shall offer comfort, first aid, emergency medical treatment, as needed.
2. If needed, call 911 for an ambulance and emergency medical; transport to Yale New Haven Children's Hospital or Yale New Haven Shoreline Medical Center in Guilford.
3. Notify the person designated to be in charge, who would call the parents or designated emergency person.
4. Depending on the severity of the injury, parents or designees would pick up the child from Red Barn and seek medical attention, or meet the ambulance at the hospital or clinic.

FIRE:

1. Immediately evacuate the building.
2. Meet at the designated spot (Maple Tree in front of Big Barn)
3. One teacher takes attendance while one teacher calls 911.
4. Notify the director or person in charge; the children would be moved to safe areas and parents would be called.

WEATHER:

1. During forecasts for severe conditions such as tornadoes, hurricanes, thunderstorms, etc., teachers are expected to keep children in the classroom areas, seated quietly away from windows and doors; unless otherwise directed by the persons in charge.
2. With early warnings about storms, school would be canceled or dismissed early by notifying parents (see inclement weather information).

EVACUATION PLANS:

1. Should we need to leave the premises, we would go to the town hall. The directors or head teachers would decide on transportation arrangements. All emergency contact information would be taken with the children and teachers.
2. Should we need to leave only one of our four buildings, we could evacuate to another building on the premises.

National Disaster: Decisions would be made by those in charge.

Staff in charge: Director, President and/or head teachers.

Notification of Parents: would be by phone, text, or email.

Transportation of Children: would depend on the severity of the situation.

INCLEMENT WEATHER GUIDE

Bunny Program families, please see the heading Inclement Weather Guide in the Bunny Program Addendum.

Outside play at Red Barn does not occur if the temperature is **below 18 degrees and it is windy**. Please dress your child as though we will be going outside every day even if the temperature is forecasted to be below 18. We do not play outside during heavy rains but we do play outside in light drizzle, snow and fog. If you fail to send in appropriate clothing the entire class may have to limit their outside time that day or your child may be separated from the group if we do not have adequate spare clothes to offer. **Please do not let this happen.**

BUNNY PROGRAM ADDENDUM

PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- ♥ To recognize that children learn by doing.
- ♥ To provide guidance for age-appropriate activities in a group setting.
- ♥ To allow children to make choices and to become more independent.
- ♥ To encourage socialization through play.
- ♥ To nurture the skills necessary for positive social interactions and problem solving.
- ♥ To offer a setting in which dramatic play is encouraged.
- ♥ To provide a variety of manipulative toys and activities which help develop fine motor skills.
- ♥ To make available outdoor play equipment and activities which will facilitate gross motor development.
- ♥ To allow children to learn by discovery.
- ♥ To promote understanding and appreciation of nature.
- ♥ To encourage solid nutritional, health, and safety habits.

ENROLLMENT

Enrollment is offered on a rolling schedule based on openings and may be accepted at any time. Currently enrolled families in the toddler room transitioning to the Little Barn (pre-school) will be given advanced registration notice in January prior to the opening of registration to the public. If your child is in the infant or wobbler rooms you do not need to re-register for the next aged room so long as you maintain your enrollment.

TUITION

Fee schedules are updated annually and are available upon request and will also be provided in January. Families will be notified of any changes to tuition rates. Tuition rates will be locked for a period of 12 months from your child's start date. After 12 months the tuition rate may be adjusted to reflect current rates.

Weekly tuition is due the Friday of the week preceding attendance. Monthly tuition is due on the 1st of the month. There is a \$10 late fee if tuition is received 5 days past the due date. An additional \$10 may be charged for every 2 days past the initial past due date. Extended care bills are due 7 days after receipt of the monthly statement.

There will be a \$25 fee for all returned or insufficient funds charges.

EATING & SLEEPING & POOPING

Parent Communication Report: Communication between staff and families is crucial to success in our program. Communication report forms or our app based KidReports program will be used each day to provide highlights of your child's time with us. Upon registration a link will be emailed to you to gain access to the app. You do not need to download the app to receive emailed reports.

Infant Feeding Policy:

- A written statement will be provided from the parents stating whether formula, breast milk, other liquids or solid foods will be provided for the child. Each child's individual feeding schedule will be followed by the child care staff. Red Barn will provide this form.
- Parents will provide premixed bottles of formula daily in clean, labeled bottles. Quantity provided will follow the child's individual feeding schedule.

- Parents will provide individual bottles of breast milk daily in clean, labeled bottles. Quantity provided will follow the child's individual feeding schedule.
- Frozen breast milk labeled with the infant's full name and the date that the milk was expressed.

All infants must accept a bottle for the recommended amount of formula or breast milk over the course of the child's day. Parents will be notified and may be required to remove their child from the program if /when their child fails to feed within a 4 hour period (6 weeks to 1 year of age). If the child continues to refuse the bottle his or her enrollment may be postponed until they are willing to take the bottle. During this time of postponement families may be responsible for full tuition to hold the child's spot. **It is highly recommended to begin bottle training several weeks prior to attending Red Barn.**

- Per State of CT regulation, unused portions of formula, breast milk or other liquids must be discarded after each feeding.
- Infants will be held for all bottle feedings.
- Infants and toddlers being served non-bottled foods will be placed in either a high chair or child-sized chair at the table.
- Baby food shall be served from a dish unless the whole contents of the jar will be served. We will not serve solid foods to children younger than 6 months unless recommended by the child's physician. A written care plan is required.

Wobbler & Toddler Feeding Policy: The CT Early Learning and Development Standards suggests offering your child utensils to eat between 6- 12 months. As part of our philosophy and everyday classroom practice believe that children learn best by doing and learning through problem solving. We strongly suggest that you provide food in reusable containers or recyclable containers, versus food in pouches and tubes. We feel that offering the children food from containers that they must use a utensil to eat supports their self-help skills, fine motor development, oral motor development and healthy eating habits. Containers allow teachers to send home uneaten food that allows you to know how much your child is eating and can make adjustments to prevent food waste. Also, food pouches, tubes, and most juice boxes are not recyclable. Making the choice to give your child food from a container not only supports healthy development but is also the "greener" choice!

Children over 12 months will begin transitioning away from bottles as a vessel for milk or other liquid delivery. Bottle use is discouraged for children over 12 months. We will help transition to the use of a sippy cup. We will provide whole milk for a minimum of two meals and water for any additional snack periods. If you prefer an alternative to milk (soy, almond, or other non-cow milk) we will store it in the refrigerator. We use well water which is tested annually (results posted at entrance).

Juice: The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) policy on juice recommends that no children under the age of 1 year be given juice of any kind. Toddlers should not be given juice from bottles or easily transportable "sippy cups" that allow them to consume juice easily throughout the day. The excessive exposure of the teeth to carbohydrates can lead to tooth decay and weight control challenges. 100-percent fresh or reconstituted fruit juice can be a healthy part of the diet of children older than 1 year when consumed as part of a well-balanced diet. Consumption, however, should be limited to 4 ounces each day. In following the AAP's recommendations we will not serve juice to children under 12 months and will seek to limit juice intake from toddlers. Water or milk will always be offered first to your child at all meals.

MEALS: We require all Bunnies program snacks be tree and peanut aware. This means that we make every attempt to eliminate tree or peanut containing snack items from our program and ask that parents do the same. Children in the wobbler and toddler rooms must have enough snacks to sustain them over the course of their scheduled school day.

We have space for extra snack items for your child in storage areas within your child's space. Additional snacks will be placed in sealable bins with your child's name on them. Please check these weekly to ensure extra snacks are stocked as needed as this is a helpful option should additional snacks be needed. Children are not allowed to share any food with other children in the program.

Try to have your child fed prior to coming to the program if you are dropping off near or just after a planned meal time.

Provided foods must be prepared (cut to size) at home. Consider potential choking hazards when sending items such as: grapes, tomatoes, olives, cherries, hot dogs. Small round fruits or vegetables should be sliced in half and hot dogs should be cut lengthwise.

The Earth and Red Barn appreciates you packing your child a waste-free lunch

Sleeping: Children in the infant room must be able to fall asleep independently when placed for a nap. It is highly recommended that parents work on self-sleeping techniques several weeks before the child's start date. If the child is unable to nap in a crib with minimal staff support their enrollment may be postponed. During this time of postponement families may be responsible for full tuition to hold the child's spot until independent napping is achieved.

Per State regulations, there shall be nothing inside the crib with the child other than an approved sleep sack. Please be aware that favorite stuffed animals or toys, blankets, and homemade sleep sacks are not allowed inside the crib. Non-tethered or non-embellished pacifiers are allowed.

Red Barn will provide all crib sheets. Provided crib sheets will not be shared with other children without prior washing

Children in the Wobbler & Toddler rooms will rest on cots. You may send in a crib sheet for these cots but they are not required. Cots are sanitized at the end of each day. Blankets, a pillow, a stuffed animal, or small soundless sleeping toy are all acceptable to bring in for your child's rest time.

DIAPERING AND TOILETING POLICY: Staff will be responsible for changing diapers and assisting with toileting. As this is an opportunity for one-to-one time with the child, our teachers will involve the child by explaining what is being done and encouraging the child to interact/help as much as possible.

Teachers will:

- Follow the recommendations set by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for diapering and toileting procedures posted in the classrooms.
- Change diapers on the changing station in the child's classroom.
- Diaper each child with the diapers and wipes provided by the family. Should Red Barn need to provide a diaper, \$1.00 per diaper fee may be charged.
- Record diaper changes and toileting activities on the home communication form.
- Sanitize the changing station after each use with a disinfectant solution.
- Child's diaper will be promptly changed as needed or minimally checked every 2 hours.
- Wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water when the diaper procedure is complete.
- Encourage independence for dressing and toileting. Assistance and support will be given to the children to encourage these new skills.
- Encourage the development of healthy personal habits by ensuring that children wash their hands after using the bathroom.
- Decide with the family when a child is physically and emotionally ready to start to learn to use the toilet. Be patient, supportive and understanding during this learning process.

- Be respectful of the child's needs.

Cloth Diapers

Cloth diapering procedure will follow the above policy and in addition:

- Teachers will place soiled clothing and diapers in a sealed air tight container provided by the family.
- Families will remove soiled clothing and diapers from Red Barn daily.
- Families will clean and sanitize the container daily.

Toilet Training

The most important factor in making the toilet learning experience successful and as low-stress as possible is a family/teacher partnership that supports the child. Research indicates that children cannot successfully learn how to use the toilet until they are physically, psychologically, and emotionally ready. Many pediatricians say that most children under 24 months of age are not physically capable of regulating bladder and bowel muscles. Most positive toilet training occurs only after children show signs of physical control or awareness of their bodily functions and when they demonstrate an interest or curiosity in the process. We are committed to working with you to make sure that toilet learning is carried out in a manner that is consistent with your child's physical and emotional abilities and your family's concerns.

SICK, VACATION, AND MAKE UP DAY POLICY

Sick Days: Children scheduled for 4 or more full time days each week are credited 4 sick days per calendar year where tuition will not be billed. No more than 2 sick days may be used consecutively. Sick days do not carry over.

Vacation Days: One year of uninterrupted full time attendance with 4 or more days each week will earn you 8 vacation days per calendar year where tuition is not required. You may take all the days consecutively if desired. Your child's spot will not be held for extended vacations without full tuition. Vacation days do not carry over.

Make up Days: Children who miss school due to weather or power related closures will be offered in-kind make up days provided space is available. See the director to inquire about make up days. Days will be offered at no additional charge if your child attends the same number of hours as typically scheduled. Refunds for closures outside of Red Barns' control are not offered.

CLOSURES

Those attending in the bunnies program will follow a list of scheduled federal holiday closings for the entire year with some early dismissal days included. Additionally, the program will be closed for between 2 – 3 professional development days throughout the 12 month calendar period. Dates will vary each year and an updated calendar will be supplied each August and with program tuition agreements. Tuition is due regardless of the closure type except if the closure is due to Red Barn negligence.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL TIMES

Bunnies Program (all ages): Program doors open at 7:00 with a modified early care group from 7:00 – 8:00. 1 and 2 year olds will be grouped together in the 2's room until 8:00 a.m. at which point they will be separated to their respective rooms. Infants will begin their day in the infant room. All bunny program participants must enter and exit the program through the main front door of the Yellow House. Access through the main door requires a FOB which allows entry through the security keypad. Each family is given three FOB devices during the initial enrollment. Subsequent FOB's are offered at an additional fee.

PARKING

Yellow House: You may park at the front of the house, on the side adjacent to the school room, or in the lot under the maple tree by the playground.

BITING POLICY

Biting is unfortunately not unexpected behavior for toddlers. Some children and many toddlers communicate through this behavior. However, biting can be harmful to other children and to staff. This biting policy has been developed with both of these ideas in mind. Our goal is to help identify what is causing the biting and resolve these issues. If the issue cannot be resolved, this policy serves to protect the children that are bitten. If a biting incident occurs, state regulations require that the parent of the child biting and the parent of the child who was bitten be contacted. Names of the children are not shared with either parent.

When Biting Does Occur: The staff's job is to keep the children safe and help a child that bites learn different, more appropriate behavior. We do not use techniques to alarm, hurt, or frighten children such as biting back or washing a child's mouth out with soap.

For the child that was bitten:

1. First aid is given to the bite. It is cleaned with soap and water. If the skin is broken, the bite is covered with a bandage.
2. Parents are notified.
3. The Accident/Incident form is filled out documenting the incident.

For the child that bit: Teacher will move quickly to the scene and get down to children's level and respond to the child who did the biting. In a serious, firm tone make a strong statement: "No biting. Biting hurts. I can't let you hurt Josie or anyone else."

1. Next, offer a choice: "You can help make Josie feel better, or you can sit quietly until I can talk with you." Help the child follow through on the choice if necessary.
2. The child who did the biting can help comfort the bitten child—if both parties agree.
3. Finally, talk to the child who did the biting. Maintain eye contact and speak in simple words using a calm, firm tone of voice. Try to find out what happened that led to the incident. Restate the rule, "Biting is not allowed." Model the use of words that describe feelings: "Josie took your ball. You felt angry. You bit Josie. I can't let you hurt Josie. No biting." Discuss how the child can respond in similar situations in the future.
4. As a consequence, the child who did the biting will need to choose another activity.
5. The parents are notified.
6. The Accident/Incident form is filled out documenting the incident.

When Biting Continues:

1. The child will be shadowed to help prevent any biting incidents.
2. The child will be observed by the classroom staff to determine what is causing the child to bite (teething, communication, frustration, etc.) The administrative staff may also observe the child if the classroom staff is unable to determine the cause.
3. The child will be given positive attention and approval for positive behavior.
4. Rules and expectations will be reviewed daily.

When biting becomes excessive:

1. An "event" occurs if a child inflicts 3 bites in a two week period (10 weekdays) in which the skin of another child or staff member is broken or bruised or the bite leaves a significant mark, a conference will be held with the parents to discuss the child's behavior and how the behavior may be modified.

2. If the child has another biting “event” within a 2 months period of the initial event, the child may be suspended for 2 business days.
3. If a child has a third “event” within 6 months of the initial event, the child may be expelled from the program.

If a child bites twice in a 4 hour period, the child will be required to be picked up from the program for the remainder of the day.

INCLEMENT WEATHER GUIDE

Outside play: at Red Barn does not occur if the temperature is **below 25 degrees and it is windy**. Time spent outside may be modified according to weather conditions. Please dress your child and or send in appropriate clothing as though we will be going outside every day. We do not play outside during heavy rains but we may play outside in light drizzle, snow and fog. If you fail to send in appropriate clothing the entire class may have to limit their outside time that day or your child may be separated from the group if we do not have adequate spare clothes to offer. **Please do not let this happen.**

ITEMS FROM HOME

Families are responsible for providing: Disposable or cloth diapers, wipes, diaper cream, two sets of seasonal changes of clothes including socks and underwear (if applicable), lunch and snack, individual premade bottles of formula or breast milk and a sippy cup for water. You are expected to bring enough bottles to satisfy the anticipated number of feedings in a given stay. All bottles should have your child’s name written on all components of the bottle. Used and unused bottles and sippy cups must be taken home at the end of your child’s day with us. Blankets for Wobblers & Toddlers will be sent home at the end of the child’s week with us and must be washed prior to returning to school.

Pacifiers: Will be kept in a parent provided labeled container and used as necessary during rest times or times requiring temporary soothing. Children will not be allowed to roam the play areas or take pacifiers outside.

End of Bunnies Addendum

Please feel free to come talk with us regarding anything found in this handbook.