



Parent Handbook

“Big Love in a Miniature World”

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to Miniature World In Home Daycare. We are thrilled to have you and your child join our family! This handbook provides essential information about our program, policies, and procedures. We believe in open communication and collaboration, ensuring that your child's time with us is enriching and fulfilling.

Sincerely,
Courtney Marshall-Prescod
Owner & Toddler/Preschool Lead Teacher

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1. Mission and Philosophy

At Miniature World In Home Daycare we are committed to providing a nurturing, safe, and stimulating environment where children can grow, learn, and thrive. We aim to foster each child's emotional, social, physical, and intellectual development through age-appropriate activities, ensuring they feel valued and supported in a family-like setting.

Miniature World In Home Daycare believes that children learn best in an environment where they feel safe, loved, and respected. We provide a warm, home-like atmosphere that promotes curiosity, creativity, and the joy of discovery. Through play-based learning and guided exploration, we support each child's unique development at their own pace.

We value open communication with families and strive to create a partnership that nurtures the whole child—emotionally, socially, physically, and intellectually. Our goal is to lay the foundation for lifelong learning and positive self-esteem for every child in our care.

2. Non Discrimination & Inclusion

Miniature World In-Home Daycare is committed to providing an inclusive, welcoming environment where every child and family feels respected, valued, and supported. We celebrate the diversity of our children, families, and community and believe that inclusion enriches everyone's learning experience.

Enrollment, participation, and daily activities are offered without discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, culture, gender, gender identity or expression, family structure, disability, age, or any other characteristic protected by law. All children are treated with equal care, dignity, and opportunity to grow and learn.

Our curriculum reflects and respects the differences in our community by introducing books, songs, materials, and activities that promote empathy, fairness, and understanding. We encourage open communication with families and welcome feedback to ensure every child's needs are recognized and supported within the scope of our licensed home environment.

3. Program Overview

Miniature World can serve up to six (6) children ages 6 weeks through 12 years. No child will be denied admission on the basis of race or religion. All information provided will be kept confidential and is for our records only. All new children will be cared for on a two-month (60 calendar day) trial period beginning on your child's first actual day of care. During that time, the parent or provider may terminate the childcare agreement with 24 hours' notice. No pre-paid fees will be credited upon cancellation during the Trial Period. After the trial period, two weeks' written notice is required by either party to terminate the agreement (see Termination Policy). Your deposit is not refundable if services are cancelled during your Trial Period.

In our childcare program, we take pride in the education of our little ones. We do not "just watch" children; we actively engage them in learning. We incorporate a Montessori-inspired curriculum alongside traditional play-based teaching. While we are not a certified Montessori daycare, we embrace Montessori principles combined with play and guided exploration in areas such as sounds, animals, nature, fine and large motor skills, music, arts and crafts, and cognitive learning. This blended approach assists in the development of young minds at each child's individual pace.

Mixed-Age Learning:

Miniature World provides care in mixed-age groupings. Activities, materials, and expectations are adapted for each developmental level so all children can participate safely and meaningfully. Older children model skills for younger peers, while staff adjust group size, pacing, and supervision to meet DCYF ratios and individual needs.

Kindergarten Readiness & Transition Support

Preschoolers are supported with daily school-readiness experiences (pre-literacy, counting and number sense, fine-motor practice, self-help skills, and social-emotional learning). Families receive tips and progress notes to help with a smooth transition to kindergarten.

4. Enrollment Process

To enroll your child, please complete all enrollment forms provided in the enrollment packet (including the acknowledgment/signature page of this handbook). Communication is key to a successful partnership. A non-refundable registration fee is due at the time of enrollment to hold your child's spot. Below is a checklist of enrollment requirements:

- Child Care Registration Form
- Certificate of Immunization Status (CIS) Form
- Child Care Agreement
- Sunblock Authorization
- Insect Repellent Authorization
- Release to Administer Medication
- Field Trip Authorization
- Photo Release
- Screen Time Authorization

5. Daily Schedule

Our daily schedule is designed to offer a balanced blend of learning, play, and rest. We take pride in our educational program for the children. We incorporate a variety of activities throughout the day, including free play, structured learning, outdoor time, meals, and naps. A sample schedule is posted on the Parent Board to give an idea of how your child's day will be structured. The schedule is tailored with age-appropriate activities and flexibility to meet the needs of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers in our care.

*The schedule is subject to change based on the children's needs, weather, and special events. We maintain a consistent routine to provide stability, but also remain flexible to ensure each child's well-being.)

6. Absent Policy

No Credit for Absences: Tuition pays for your child's spot not your child's attendance. We do not provide refunds or credits for days missed due to illness or vacation.

Payment Timing: Payment of fees is expected regardless of absences (see Billing section for details). Tuition is typically paid via automatic withdrawal through the Brightwheel app on the 1st of each month (invoices are sent 2-3 days prior). The initial tuition and registration fee must be paid prior to the first day of attendance.

7. Health and Safety

The well-being of your child is our top priority. We maintain rigorous health and safety standards, including regular cleaning and sanitization, proper handwashing routines, and allergy awareness. Miniature World In Home Daycare is equipped with essential safety tools to respond to emergencies. This includes a fully stocked first aid kit, fire extinguisher, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, and a LifeVac device. The LifeVac is a non-invasive airway clearance tool designed to help in the event of a choking emergency. All staff members are trained in its proper use, as well as in CPR and first aid procedures. We follow safe sleep practices (detailed in the Safe Sleep Policy) for infants and take precautions to reduce the spread of illness.

We provide nutritious meals and snacks (see Food/Meals/Menus) and encourage good personal hygiene and manners. Our home is childproofed and child-friendly. We use dye-free and fragrance-free laundry detergent with no fabric softener to protect children with sensitive skin or allergies.

If your child has any specific health needs, allergies, or requires medication, please inform us so we can accommodate them according to our Medication/Immunization Policy. We strive to create a safe, healthy environment where children can explore and learn with minimal risk.

Ventilation & Air Quality Maintenance:

Miniature World In-Home Daycare ensures that all ventilation systems, including bathroom and kitchen exhaust vents, are kept clean and in safe working order. Proper ventilation supports indoor air quality, reduces moisture, and prevents dust buildup in accordance with WAC 110-300-0241(7).

Vent covers are vacuumed monthly to remove dust and lint. Deep cleaning of vent covers and fan housings is completed quarterly or as needed. Bathroom vent covers are removed by releasing spring clips, washed in warm soapy water, dried fully, and reattached. The fan housing is gently vacuumed or wiped with a dry cloth to avoid contact with electrical components. Exterior vent caps are checked regularly to ensure the flap opens when the fan is running and closes when the fan is off. Any buildup, damage, or malfunction is corrected promptly to maintain safe and sanitary airflow.

Pest Management:

Miniature World follows an integrated pest management approach. Any pesticide use will occur outside of operating hours, and families will be notified in advance.

Prevention of Exposure to Blood and Body Fluids:

Miniature World In-Home Daycare follows universal precautions to prevent exposure to blood and body fluids. Any staff or child exposed to blood or bodily fluids will follow proper cleaning and sanitizing procedures using gloves, soap, water, and approved disinfectants. Contaminated materials are placed in a sealed plastic bag and disposed of safely. Surfaces are sanitized immediately following exposure.

Handwashing and Hand Sanitizer Use:

Proper handwashing is the first line of defense in preventing illness. Staff and children wash hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds before eating, after toileting or diapering, after outdoor play, and after contact with bodily fluids. Hand sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol) is used only when soap and water are not immediately available and under adult supervision.

Exclusion of a Staff Person When Ill:

Staff members experiencing symptoms of contagious illness (fever, vomiting, diarrhea, respiratory illness, rash, or any communicable condition) will be excluded from work until symptom-free for 24 hours without medication. Staff must report exposure to contagious diseases and may return to work only when cleared per public health guidance.

Contagious Disease Notifications:

Families will be notified in writing or through Brightwheel if a contagious illness is identified within the daycare (such as RSV, flu, COVID-19, hand-foot-mouth disease, or strep throat). Notifications will not include identifying information about the affected child or staff member.

Cleaning and Sanitizing Provider Surfaces

All food contact surfaces, kitchen equipment, toys, toilets, and other commonly touched items are cleaned and sanitized daily or more often as needed. Cleaning products are used according to manufacturer instructions and kept out of children's reach at all times.

Caring for Children with Special Needs:

Miniature World In-Home Daycare provides care within the scope of a small, home-based program. We do our best to support each child's development and individual needs within the limits of our environment, staffing, and training.

If a child requires care beyond what can be safely and appropriately provided in a family home setting, families may be referred to a program better equipped to meet those specialized needs.

This ensures that all children in care receive the attention, supervision, and environment they need to thrive safely.

Holiday, Cultural, and Religious Activities:

Miniature World In-Home Daycare celebrates cultural and seasonal holidays in an inclusive, non-religious manner. Activities focus on community, kindness, and learning about traditions from many cultures. Families who prefer their child not participate in a particular celebration may notify the provider in advance, and alternate activities will be offered.

Diapering, Feeding, Toilet Training, and Sleep Practices:

All diapering, feeding, toilet-training, and nap routines follow DCYF sanitary and safety standards. Individual care routines are documented in Brightwheel. Each child's comfort, privacy, and developmental readiness are respected during these daily routines.

Water Play Safety

Water play activities (sprinklers, sensory tables, and small containers) are always directly supervised by staff. Standing water is emptied immediately after use. Miniature World In-Home Daycare does not provide swimming or any activity involving deep or wading pools.

No Overnight Care

Miniature World In-Home Daycare does not provide overnight care. Operating hours are limited to daytime, as stated in the enrollment agreement.

Kindergarten Transition Support

Preschoolers preparing for kindergarten are supported through daily readiness activities focusing on early literacy, math, fine-motor skills, self-help, and social skills. Families receive transition tips and progress updates to help ensure a smooth move into school.

Parent-Provided Supplies

Parents are asked to provide a complete change of clothing, diapers or pull-ups (if applicable), wipes, seasonal outdoor gear, and any comfort items approved for nap time. Additional requested items will be communicated as needed.

Consistent Care Policy

Children are cared for by consistent staff members each day to promote security, attachment, and continuity of care.

Record Maintenance

Child records, including contact and medical information, are reviewed annually or whenever changes occur to ensure all information remains current. Families are encouraged to update information promptly through Brightwheel.

Menus and Nutrition Information

Menus are posted weekly and available to parents upon request. All meals and snacks meet CACFP guidelines and are adjusted for allergies or dietary restrictions noted in the child's file.

8. Technology Use

We understand the role of technology in sharing moments and communicating with families; however, we use it thoughtfully and sparingly around the children. Photos of the children engaged in activities are taken occasionally throughout the day. These are typically shared with you through our secure childcare app (Brightwheel) so you can enjoy updates at your convenience (you will receive a notification via the app). We may also share highlights on our social media pages (e.g., private daycare Facebook or Instagram) to showcase our activities and community – with parental permission only. If you do not want your child's photograph to appear on social media or in any external materials, please let us know and sign the appropriate waiver in your enrollment packet.

We also request that parents refrain from using social media or text messaging to contact staff after hours. Messages or emails sent outside of communication hours (6:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.) will typically be answered when the daycare reopens the next business day. We encourage you to use the Brightwheel app for all communications – it enables you to see real-time updates on meals, diapering/toileting, injuries, and more, and it provides a messaging platform that we check regularly.

Screen Time Use:

We strictly limit screen time for children during daycare hours. Our program is focused on interactive play and hands-on learning rather than passive screen viewing. On rare occasions, as part of a special theme or educational experience, we may show a short age-appropriate video or a theme-based movie. For example, during a week of learning about animals, we might watch a 10-minute educational nature clip, or for a seasonal celebration, we could play a brief children's movie that aligns with our curriculum (such as a storybook-based film). These screen time moments are infrequent and carefully selected to be wholesome and beneficial. All media content is previewed by the provider to ensure it is suitable for young children. Outside of these occasional instances, television and tablets are not a regular part of our day. We believe children learn best through direct engagement, and we appreciate your support in limiting screen time for young learners.

9. Billing, Fees, and Payment

Timely payment of tuition and fees is essential for the operation of our small business. We appreciate your cooperation in making prompt payments a top priority. Below is an overview of our fee structure, due dates, and related policies:

Tuition Rates (Monthly):

- Full Time Infants (3 months-18 months): \$1500/month
- Full Time Toddlers (19 months-3 years): \$1,400/month
- Full Time Preschoolers (3-5 years): \$1,300/month
- Part Time Infants (3 days): \$950/month (2 days): \$775
- Part Time Toddlers (3 days): \$875/month (2 days): \$725
- Part Time Preschoolers (3 days): \$825/month (2 days): \$675
- Drop-In Care: \$100 per day (as needed, subject to availability)

***Please note that part time care is extremely limited. Families choosing part-time care should understand that it still occupies a full time spot. If a full-time family inquires about enrollment and space is needed, part-time families will be given the option to either assume the full-time rate or forfeit their spot. This ensures we can meet the needs of families seeking consistent, full-time care.**

Payment Schedule: Tuition is due on the 1st of every month (for the month ahead). We accept payments through the Brightwheel app. Full payment must be received prior to services being rendered.

Enrollment Fee: A non-refundable enrollment/registration fee of \$100 is due at the time of signing the contract to secure your child's spot. There is a yearly \$100 re-enrollment fee due on January 1.

Tuition Late Payment Fee: A late fee of \$25 per day will be applied for payments not received by 6:00 p.m. on the 1st. This fee accrues each day (including weekends) until tuition and late fees are paid in full. If payment (including any accrued late fees) is not made by your child's next scheduled day of care, the position will be considered abandoned/terminated and made available to another family.

Preschoolers must be fully potty trained in order to qualify for the preschool tuition rate. Children who are not fully potty trained (including those still in diapers or pull-ups, or those who require significant assistance with toileting) will be billed at the higher toddler tuition rate until they meet the preschool readiness requirement.

Late Pickup / Overtime Fees: We understand that occasionally you may need extra care outside of your contracted hours. The following fees apply:

- Scheduled early drop-off (with at least 48 hours notice and prior approval): \$6 per 15 minutes early.
- Scheduled late pickup/overtime (with notice and approval): \$7 per 15 minutes late.
- Unscheduled late pickup (no prior notice given): \$5 per minute after your scheduled pickup time. (This higher rate is to strongly discourage unexpected late pickups, which can be disruptive.)

There are no unscheduled early drop-offs allowed. For example, if your contracted time is 7:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., do not arrive at 6:55 a.m. We may be tending to other tasks or children and not ready to supervise your child before your scheduled time. If you do arrive early, you will be asked to wait outside with your child until 7:00 a.m. Similarly, consistent tardiness at drop-off/pickup or payment can be considered a breach of contract; more than three violations in a year can lead to termination of care.

Holiday/Vacation Policy on Tuition: We do not offer discounts or refunds for days your child does not attend due to illness, family vacation, or holidays. To provide our family with a reliable income, tuition remains the same each month regardless of attendance variations (except in cases of an agreed schedule change). Please do not put us in a position to have to ask for payment. If you know a payment will be late, communicate with us before the due date to discuss possible arrangements.

By enrolling in our program, you are reserving a spot for your child. We cannot fill that spot on a short-term basis if your child is out. Therefore, tuition is not adjusted for absences. Thank you for understanding that this policy enables us to provide stable, quality care for all children.

10. Attendance

Consistent attendance helps your child adjust to the routine and benefits their development. If your child will be absent for any reason, please inform us as soon as possible (a quick message through Brightwheel is fine). This helps us plan our day and ensure proper staffing and meal counts.

Pick-up Authorization: For safety, only parents/guardians or individuals listed on the Authorized Pickup List may pick up your child. If an authorized person unfamiliar to us will be picking up, please notify us in advance and ensure they bring a valid photo ID. We will check identification before releasing your child the first time an individual arrives whom we do not recognize. This is not meant to offend; it is purely for your child's safety.

Smooth Transitions: Well-prepared drop-offs and pick-ups ensure a smooth transition for all children. We encourage parents to develop a consistent routine for saying goodbye in the morning. If your child senses you are calm and confident, they will feel more secure. Most children, even if they cry at separation, calm down within minutes after the parent departs and they become engaged in play or activities. You are welcome to send a quick message after drop-off to ask how your child is doing; we will respond when able.

If someone else will be picking up (even if they are on the authorized list), please inform us ahead of time. Unexpected arrivals who are not on the list will not be permitted to take a child from our care without verification from the parent.

11. Parent Involvement

We believe that caring for a child is a team effort between parents and providers. Your involvement and communication are crucial to a successful childcare experience. Here's how we encourage partnership with our families:

1. Open Communication: We encourage you to communicate regularly with us about your child's needs, routines, and progress. Please share any insights or changes (e.g., potty training progress, bad night's sleep, new fears, favorite new activity) when you drop off. We provide daily updates through in-person conversation at pick-up, notes, or via the Brightwheel app. For any significant concerns or questions, you can always request a meeting or phone call. We maintain an "open-door" policy – you should never hesitate to bring up a question or concern regarding your child or our program.

2. Parent-Teacher Meetings: We offer bi-annual parent-teacher conferences to formally discuss your child's development, milestones, and any concerns either of us may have. This is a great time to set goals together for your child. If needed, additional meetings can be scheduled at any time throughout the year (at a convenient time when we can talk without interruption). We want to work with you to ensure your child is thriving.

3. Home Learning Support: Learning doesn't stop at the end of the daycare day! We encourage you to reinforce and extend daycare activities at home. We may occasionally send home a newsletter or notes about what themes we're exploring (for example, colors of the week, letters, or a certain topic like "farm animals"). You can support your child by reading books on these topics, practicing songs or finger plays we've taught them, or engaging in simple activities (like sorting laundry by colors, counting objects, etc.). Consistency between home and daycare helps children solidify their learning. We're happy to suggest fun at-home activities upon request.

Responsibilities of Parents:

In our partnership, we ask parents to:

- **Keep Us Informed.** Let us know about any changes in your child's routine, behavior, or health. Even seemingly small changes (new medication, teething, a rough night, family visiting, etc.) can affect your child's day. The more we know, the better we can care for your child.
- **Update Family Information.** Inform us of any significant family changes that might affect your child (e.g., moving to a new home, parents' travel, new baby, changes in custody arrangements). These changes can influence a child's emotions and behavior; knowing about them helps us provide the right support.
- **Follow Policies.** Adhere to our daycare policies for drop-off and pick-up times, absences, and providing required supplies (diapers, wipes, extra clothes, etc.). This consistency helps our day run smoothly. If you're running late or need to deviate from the usual routine, communicate with us as soon as possible.
- **Provide Supplies.** Ensure your child has the necessary supplies at daycare (see "Supplies" section for a list). Check your child's cubby regularly and replace items as needed (clean spare clothes, diapers, etc.). Label all personal items with your child's name.

Our Commitment to Parents

As caregivers, we commit to:

- **Open-Door Policy.** We welcome parents to visit or observe at any time during our operating hours (see Parent Visits/Nap Time regarding minimizing disruption). You should feel confident and comfortable with the care we provide.
- **Consistent Communication.** We will provide clear and timely communication about your child's day, any incidents (good or bad), and upcoming events or changes at the daycare. You will receive incident reports for any injuries or behavioral issues, and we'll touch base regularly about your child's progress.
- **Respect and Inclusion.** We respect each family's unique culture, values, and traditions. We aim to celebrate diversity and include all children and families. If there are holidays or customs important to your family, please share them with us so we can incorporate that knowledge and make your child feel at home.
- **Collaborative Care.** We view our relationship as a partnership. We will work with you to meet your child's developmental needs, whether that means coordinating on potty training, supporting speech development, or addressing behavioral challenges in a consistent way between home and daycare. We are on the same team – your child's team!

Communication Boundaries

While we value open communication, we also recognize the importance of healthy boundaries to ensure everyone's respect and well-being. Please be mindful of the following communication guidelines:

- **Business Hours:** Our primary communication hours are (Monday–Friday, 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.). We kindly ask that non-urgent messages or calls be limited to these hours. We will respond as promptly as possible during the day. Messages received after hours will generally be addressed the next business day. (If there is an emergency or urgent situation outside of hours, please call or message and we will of course respond as needed.)

- **Channels of Communication:** The best way to reach us is through the Brightwheel app or via our daycare email. These are monitored throughout the day. You may call or text the daycare number for urgent matters. We prefer to keep communications on the record (app/email) when possible, as it helps us track requests or concerns.

- **Respectful Interactions:** We promise to speak to you with respect and ask the same in return. Difficult conversations (if ever needed) should be scheduled at a time when we can talk without children present. We will not discuss serious issues during drop-off or pick-up in front of the children or other parents. If you have a concern, please bring it to us so we can resolve it together professionally. Gossip or negative talk among parents or in front of children can be harmful; let's always address issues directly and constructively.

By observing these communication boundaries, we can ensure a respectful, productive partnership. We genuinely value your input and want to keep the door open, while still protecting everyone's personal time and energy.

12. Policies and Procedures

This section outlines important policies and procedures to ensure the daycare runs smoothly and that all children are safe, healthy, and happy. Please familiarize yourself with the following topics, and feel free to ask if you need clarification on any policy:

Arrival and Departure

Parents must sign in their child each morning upon arrival and sign out at pick-up. We use an attendance log (or the Brightwheel app's check-in feature) as required by state regulations to track attendance.

Children are expected to arrive on time according to your contracted schedule. Late drop-offs can disrupt the routine; if you are running more than 10 minutes late for drop-off (after your scheduled time), please notify us. If you arrive more than 10 minutes past your scheduled drop-off without notice, we may not be able to accept your child that day, as we will have moved on to our planned activities and staffing. You may need to make alternate childcare arrangements for that day.

- **Cut-off for Drop-Off:** No drop-offs are permitted after 9:30 a.m. If your child will be arriving late due to appointments or other circumstances, please discuss arrangements in advance. After 9:30 a.m., late arrivals may disrupt the schedule and will generally not be accepted for care that day.

Children should arrive clean and fed (unless arriving just before a meal time, in which case we will feed them). It is normal for some children to have difficulty separating from parents at drop-off (tears or clinging are common, especially in the early days). A quick, loving, and confident goodbye from you is the best way to help your child. Prolonging the goodbye or showing your own hesitation can make it harder for your little one. We suggest a routine such as: give a quick hug/kiss, say “See you this afternoon! I love you, have a great day!” and then calmly depart. We will take it from there, offering comfort and engaging your child in something fun to distract them. In most cases, children stop crying within a couple of minutes after parents leave and they become interested in toys or friends.

No mid-day pickup during Quiet Hours: To maintain a peaceful environment during our scheduled nap/quiet time, we do not allow drop-offs or pick-ups between noon and 2:00 p.m. (except in emergencies). This quiet period is crucial so all children can rest without disruption. If you have an appointment and need to pick up your child early, please do so before noon or after 2 p.m. Minimizing interruptions during nap time helps all the children (and staff) have a better afternoon.

When you pick up in the evening, please arrive by your scheduled pickup time. If you anticipate being late, notify us immediately. Repeated late pickups (without prior arrangement) will result in late fees (see Billing) and possible termination of care after multiple offenses. We know traffic or unavoidable delays happen on occasion—**just keep us informed.**

During pick-up, your child may be excited to see you and want to show you what they’re doing. We encourage a positive, unhurried reunion. However, please keep your child with you once you have taken them from the caregiver. They should not run out of the door ahead of you or run into the yard or street. Our rule is that no child is to go outside without their parent/guardian. Hold your younger child’s hand or ensure they stay by your side as you leave. Safety is our utmost concern from the moment you arrive until you drive away.

Phone-Free Zone: Drop-off and pick-up times should be phone-free zones. We ask that parents not use cell phones or other devices during these transition times. Your child is excited to see you and needs your full attention, and our staff may need to briefly communicate with you about your child’s day. Being present and attentive ensures you don’t miss any important information (such as an incident report or a supply reminder) and it models good social behavior for the children. Please finish calls before you arrive, or wait to make calls until after you and your child have departed. If you must take an urgent call, please do so after ensuring your child is safely with a teacher. Thank you for helping make arrivals and departures focused on the children.

Quick Goodbyes and Hellos: Drop-off and pick-up are not ideal times to engage in lengthy discussions about problems or concerns. Little ears hear everything, and discussing an issue in front of your child or others can cause confusion or stress. If you need to have a deeper conversation, let’s set up a time to talk privately (on the phone after hours or a meeting at a convenient time). For day-to-day updates, we will give you a brief summary at pick-up, and you can always check the app for notes. If we need to discuss anything sensitive or detailed, we will request a meeting or phone call at a separate time.

Once your child has been picked up, please supervise them closely on the way to the car. In the excitement of reunion, children might forget the rules and run or wander. Hold your child's hand in the parking area. If you have other children with you, make sure they are also safely supervised.

(Please note: If a parent or authorized pickup appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or otherwise in an unsafe condition to drive, we cannot legally or morally release the child without further action. We will insist on calling another authorized pickup or even the authorities if necessary to ensure the child's safety. Please understand this policy is in place to protect your family.)

Illness/Injury Policy

You are the best judge of your child's health. Please do not bring a sick child to daycare, both for their comfort and to protect others. If your child is ill in the morning (feverish, vomiting, severe cough, etc.), keep them home and notify us of their absence. We have to strictly enforce our illness policy to keep everyone as healthy as possible.

If, in the opinion of the daycare staff, your child becomes sick while in our care, we will call you to pick up your child within one hour. Your child will be kept comfortable and away from other children as much as possible until you arrive. We will contact the parent/guardian first and if unreachable, we will call the emergency contacts on file.

This illness policy is intended to prevent unnecessary spread of infection. While it may be inconvenient to leave work to pick up a sick child, remember that this policy also helps ensure your child is not exposed when others are ill. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

Symptoms Requiring Exclusion:

We will ask you to keep your child home or pick them up if they have:

- Fever of 100°F (37.8°C) or higher (axillary/armpit, oral, or forehead scan). Must be fever-free for 24 hours without medication before returning.
- Vomiting (more than one instance or accompanied by other symptoms).
- Diarrhea (more than one loose/watery stool not contained in diaper/toilet, especially with other symptoms).
- Thick, constant, or colored nasal discharge.
- Persistent runny nose requiring frequent wiping that prevents full participation.
- Frequent or disruptive coughing (not asthma-controlled).
- Eye discharge, crusting, or redness (pink eye) until treated for 24 hours and improving.
- Persistent heavy cough, wheezing, or labored breathing.
- Lethargy, irritability, fussiness, or inability to join group play without constant one-on-one care.
- Unexplained rash, especially with fever or behavior change.
- Head lice: child may return after treatment and when no live lice are present.
- Any other contagious illness as identified by a health professional (chickenpox, RSV, strep throat, hand-foot-mouth, flu, COVID-19, etc.).

Special Note for Toddlers:

Toddlers are not developmentally able to cover coughs or manage runny noses. For this reason, even “mild” respiratory symptoms may be cause for exclusion in our toddler program. We will err on the side of caution to prevent rapid spread.

Return to Care:

Children may return when:

- They are symptom-free for 24 hours without medication, and
- They are able to participate in group care without needing extra one-on-one support.

We understand these rules may cause inconvenience, but one child returning too soon can cause multiple children and staff to become ill. We appreciate your cooperation in helping us maintain a healthy daycare environment.

Sometimes very young children may not show classic symptoms but will be unusually fussy, lethargic, won't play, and/or require constant one-on-one attention. If your child cannot participate in normal activities or needs more care than we can provide without compromising the care of other children, you will be called to pick them up, even if no obvious illness has been diagnosed yet. We realize this can be hard to quantify, but we appreciate your understanding that we must ensure adequate attention for all children.

When your child is out sick (or sent home sick), please follow the 24-hour rule: they should be symptom-free (or on antibiotics for 24 hours) before returning. For example, if your child is sent home with vomiting on Tuesday, they should not return on Wednesday.

Reporting illnesses: Please inform us if your child is diagnosed with a communicable illness (like flu, strep throat, COVID-19, RSV, etc.) so we can confidentially alert other families to watch for symptoms. We will always protect your privacy when making any general announcements about exposure.

We take many precautions to reduce illness spread: frequent hand washing (for children and staff), cleaning and disinfecting toys and surfaces, teaching children to cough into elbows, use tissues, and not touch each other's faces, etc. We also ask for your help in one specific area: the doorbell and front doorknob. These are high-touch areas for arriving parents and children. We prefer that only adults touch the doorbell and door handle. Please do not allow your child to press the doorbell or handle the front door. We sanitize these surfaces, but preventing kids from touching them further reduces bringing outside germs into our clean environment.

Minor injuries (scrapes, bumps) will be treated with appropriate first aid (cleaning wound, bandage, ice pack, etc.) and we will tell you what happened and how it was treated. You will receive an incident report for anything beyond a very minor scratch. If a serious injury or medical emergency occurs, we will contact 911 first if necessary, then contact you immediately (see Emergency Procedures for more details). All costs associated with emergency medical care are the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

By working together on these health policies, we aim to keep everyone as healthy as possible! Thank you for doing your part.

Medication Administration/Immunization Policy:

Medications:

We will administer medication only with a written request/authorization from a parent or guardian and in its original container. Prescription medications must have the pharmacy label including the child's name, dosage, and instructions. Over-the-counter medications will only be given according to package instructions (or as directed in writing by a physician). A medication consent form must be filled out for each medicine (including dosage, time to administer, etc.), and we will log each dose given. All medications must be handed to a staff member to be stored out of reach of children (do not leave medicines in your child's bag). Please provide any necessary measuring tools (syringe, spoon) and, if applicable, a doctor's note for over-the-counter meds that aren't age-standard.

We take the responsibility of giving medication seriously. Medications will be stored safely (refrigerated if needed, or in a locked box for others) and will be returned to you or disposed of after the course is completed. We will not administer the first dose of any new medication (in case of allergic reaction, we prefer that happen under parent supervision). And we will never exceed recommended doses.

Immunizations:

We follow state licensing requirements regarding immunizations. All children must have a current Certificate of Immunization Status (CIS) on file before attendance. We require that children in our care are up-to-date on recommended vaccinations for their age. This policy is in place to protect infants, immunocompromised children, and everyone in our community from preventable diseases. We do not accept enrollments of children who are not immunized.

If your child receives vaccinations, we prefer that you schedule them such that your child has 24 hours to be monitored at home (for example, getting shots on a Friday so they have the weekend to rest). This helps us because sometimes children develop a fever or feel unwell after shots. However, this is a preference, not a requirement. If your child is feeling fine, they may attend after immunizations.

Please provide us with updated immunization records whenever your child gets new vaccines (your doctor can print one, or you can access the state immunization registry for a copy). We must keep our files current.

Illness after shots:

If your child develops a fever or other concerning symptoms after a vaccination, they will fall under our illness policy for fevers, etc. This is another reason we advise monitoring at home after shots when possible.

Thank you for understanding that these medication and immunization policies are for the safety and well-being of all children in our program.

Safe Sleep Policy:

We adhere to safe sleep practices for infants in our care, in accordance with the latest recommendations to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and other sleep-related dangers. If your child is under 1 year of age (or still in a crib), please be aware of our infant sleep procedures:

- 1. Back to Sleep:** Infants will always be placed on their backs to sleep, unless there is a physician's note specifying otherwise for a medical reason. Once an infant can roll over on their own, we will continue to place them on their back, but if they roll to another position, we will allow them to sleep in that position. We will not use any positioning devices unless prescribed.
- 2. Safe Crib Environment:** Infants sleep in a safety-approved crib or play yard with a firm mattress and a tight-fitting sheet. No soft objects or loose bedding are allowed in the crib. This means no pillows, blankets, stuffed animals, bumpers, etc. The crib will be bare except for the infant themselves. If additional warmth is needed, we use wearable blankets or sleep sacks that you provide. We'll discuss with you how to dress your baby for sleep (a onesie, pajamas, sleep sack combination appropriate for the room temperature).
- 3. Monitoring:** Sleeping infants are continuously monitored by sight and sound. We check on sleeping babies regularly (at least every 15 minutes, as required, often more frequently).
- 4. No Co-Sleeping:** Infants will not share cribs, and we do not allow infants to sleep in swings, bouncers, car seats, or other equipment. If a baby falls asleep in a car seat (arriving from a drive, for instance), we will gently transfer them to their crib.
- 5. Pacifiers:** If you choose, infants may be put to sleep with a pacifier, as evidence suggests this can help reduce SIDS risk. However, the pacifier cannot be attached to a string or clip on their clothing while in the crib (those present a strangulation risk). If the pacifier falls out during sleep, we will not reinsert it once the baby is asleep.
- 6. Temperature and Smoke-Free:** The sleeping area is kept at a comfortable temperature (we won't overdress the baby). Babies' heads will remain uncovered (no hats or hooded clothing during sleep). Our entire home is smoke-free at all times; no one smokes in the home or around the children, ever.
- 7. Tummy Time when Awake:** We give infants plenty of supervised tummy time when awake to strengthen their muscles and prevent flat spots on their heads. However, tummy time is only for when they are awake and supervised.

If you have any questions about safe sleep or have specific instructions, please discuss them with us. We know every baby might have unique needs or routines, but we will always prioritize safe sleep practices as recommended by pediatric experts and state licensing.

(Parents of infants will receive a separate Safe Sleep policy document to sign, acknowledging that you have read and agree with these practices.)

Potty Training/Toothbrushing Policy:

Potty training is a big milestone! We are here to support your efforts when your child is ready. Our approach is to work as a team with you, following a consistent plan between home and daycare. Here's how we handle toilet learning:

Readiness: It's important that the child shows signs of readiness both at home and here. These signs can include: staying dry for longer periods, expressing interest in the potty, can communicate needs, can pull pants up/down, dislikes being wet or dirty, etc. We generally find that children are developmentally ready somewhere between 2 and 3 years of age, but it varies widely. We require that you start the process at home and have had at least two weeks of success at home (with your child indicating and using the potty regularly and minimal accidents) before we initiate training at daycare. This is because the daycare environment is more distracting and we want the child to have a basic understanding of the process before adding the complexity of group care.

Process at Daycare: Once we agree to begin potty training at daycare, we ask that you dress your child in "easy" clothing – elastic waist pants they can pull up and down themselves. No overalls, no one-piece outfits, no belts, and ideally no tights or super skinny jeans. We will take the children to the potty at regular intervals (for example, upon arrival, after breakfast, before nap, after nap, etc., and any time they indicate they need to go). We use seat adapters. We never force a child to sit on the potty, and we keep the experience positive. We celebrate successes with praise and maybe stickers or high-fives. If accidents happen (and they will), we handle them calmly and without punishment – we simply clean up and remind the child that next time we'll try to get to the potty sooner.

Pull-ups vs. Underwear: At the start of training here, we require children to wear disposable pull-ups (the kind with velcro sides only) at daycare. This allows for quick changes after accidents and less mess on our floors. Once a child has been using the potty here consistently and has stayed dry in their pull-up for about a month (and perhaps is even waking up dry from nap), we can discuss transitioning to underwear during daycare hours. We typically like to see a child completely accident-free in pull-ups for a good stretch of time before risking underwear here. Even then, we ask that you continue to use pull-ups at nap time until the child routinely wakes up dry. All soiled clothing or wet items will be bagged and sent home for washing.

Supplies for Potty Training: Parents should provide plenty of pull-ups and at least two complete changes of clothes every day (including socks, and extra shoes wouldn't hurt if accidents are frequent). Also, if your child wears training underwear or underwear at certain times, send several extra pairs. We also encourage you to bring a plastic bag or wet bag for sending home soiled clothes. We maintain spare clothes here as well, but children feel more comfortable in their own things.

Consistency and Communication: We will communicate with you daily about how potty training went – how many successes, any accidents, what worked, etc. Likewise, please let us know how things are going at home. If your child is having a lot of accidents at daycare, we may ask you to pause and try again in a few weeks – no worries, it's common for children to start and stop a couple of times before it "clicks." Patience is key. We promise to be patient and positive, and we ask that you do the same. No punishment for accidents – it's all part of learning.

Toothbrushing: In accordance with licensing guidelines (WAC 110-300-0180), we offer children an opportunity to brush their teeth once per day in our care, usually after lunch. We make this a fun, learning activity about self-care and health. We provide toothbrushes and toothpaste unless you prefer to bring your own. Toothbrushes are individually labeled and stored properly to prevent cross-contamination (no two brushes touch each other). We replace toothbrushes regularly (every 3 months or after illness). If you would rather opt out of on-site tooth brushing for your child, you can sign an opt-out form (though we encourage it as a healthy habit!). We ensure the activity is safe and sanitary: children either brush at a sink with supervision or use disposable cups of water and individually dispensed toothpaste to avoid sharing germs.

Our goal is to make potty training and toothbrushing stress-free and encouraging. We celebrate the small steps towards independence in self-care!

Discipline & Guidance Approach:

We believe in positive guidance techniques to help children learn appropriate behavior and develop self-control. Discipline is never about punishment here; it's about teaching and guiding. Below are the principles and methods we follow:

- **No Corporal Punishment:** We do not use spanking, hitting, slapping, shaking, or any form of physical punishment, ever. We also do not use humiliation, intimidation, or withholding of food as punishment. These approaches are both unethical and against state regulations. We will never subject a child to frightening or degrading techniques. This holds true even if a parent were to request or approve it (which we know you wouldn't – but it's worth stating clearly).
- **Respect and Safety:** Your child will be treated with respect at all times. Our home is set up to minimize the need for constant "no's." Many potentially dangerous or problematic items are simply kept out of reach or behind child locks. This environment helps prevent issues before they start. We believe that a locked cabinet or a closed door is a teacher in itself – it teaches boundaries by removing temptation and keeping children safe. When redirection is needed, we aim to guide rather than scold.
- **Positive Reinforcement:** We make a point of praising and reinforcing good behavior. Children respond well to positive attention. You will often hear us say specific compliments like "I love how you shared the blocks with your friend!" or "Thank you for using your walking feet inside." By acknowledging the behaviors we want to see, children are encouraged to repeat them. We also use encouragement and incentives appropriate to the age (stickers, being the line leader, choosing a story, etc., especially for toddlers and preschoolers).
- **Clear Rules:** We have a few simple "house rules" that are consistently enforced. They are phrased in simple language and often in a positive way. For example: "Nice touch" (meaning we use gentle hands, no hitting or hurting), "Walking feet inside" (no running indoors), "Indoor voice" (no yelling inside), "Only food in our mouths" (to prevent choking hazards like putting toys in the mouth), "Take care of our toys" (no intentionally breaking or throwing hard toys). We explain these rules and the why behind them in terms children understand (e.g., "If we throw that, it could hurt someone or break.").

- **Redirection and Choices:** For infants and toddlers (under ~18 months), discipline is mainly redirection. If a baby is doing something unsafe or undesired (like chewing a shoe or banging a toy on the TV), we gently remove them from the situation and distract with a different activity. They are too young for “time out” or explanations, so consistency and redirecting their attention works best. For older toddlers and preschoolers, if they exhibit inappropriate behavior, we first identify and explain briefly why it’s not okay: “No hitting. Hitting hurts our friends.” Then we show them an appropriate alternative or simply redirect them to a different play area if emotions are high.

- **Problem Solving:** We encourage children to solve minor disputes on their own, if they are able, with our guidance. For example, if two children want the same toy, we might coach them: “It looks like you both want the truck. What could we do? Can we take turns? Let’s set a timer for 2 minutes, and then it will be the other friend’s turn.” This way, they learn negotiation and turn-taking. If they are too upset, a teacher will step in more directly to resolve it.

Physical Restraint Policy:

- **Prevention First:** Staff will use redirection, verbal cues, and de-escalation techniques before considering any form of restraint.
- **Last Resort:** Physical restraint may be used only when a child’s behavior poses imminent danger and other interventions have failed.
- **Method:** If restraint is necessary, it will be minimal, time-limited, and conducted in a way that prevents injury to both the child and staff. The child’s airway will never be restricted, and restraint will end as soon as the child is safe.
- **Supervision:** The child will be continuously supervised, reassured, and comforted throughout the incident.
- **Documentation and Notification:** Any instance of restraint will be documented immediately, including the reason for restraint, duration, and actions taken before and after. Parents/guardians and the licensor will be notified the same day.
- **Training:** All staff are trained in safe, appropriate methods for calming and supporting children in crisis situations and in DCYF guidance on prohibited practices.

Prohibited Practices:

Miniature World In-Home Daycare strictly prohibits mechanical restraints, seclusion, or any form of restraint that restricts breathing, causes pain, or uses objects or furniture to confine a child.

- **Calm-Down Time (Time-Out):** We do use “time-out” or, better phrased, a calm-down spot as a last resort for serious or repeated inappropriate behavior (especially if a child is hurting others and not responding to redirection). Our approach to time-out: the child is removed from the activity and asked to sit in a quiet, safe spot in view of the teacher for a short period. A general guideline is one minute per year of age (e.g., a 3-year-old might sit for 3 minutes). Time-out is not meant to shame; it is meant to break the cycle of misbehavior and give the child a chance to calm down. Before a time-out, the child will usually have had two or three reminders or chances to correct the behavior. For example: “This is the third time you threw the sand. I’m sorry, but I need you to take a break from the sandbox now.” After time-out, we talk to the child about what happened and why it was not acceptable, and then we happily let them join back in activity with a “fresh start.” We do not continually bring up past misbehavior after it’s resolved.

- **Natural Consequences:** When appropriate, we allow natural consequences to teach a lesson, as long as it's safe. For instance, if a child intentionally throws their snack on the ground, the natural consequence is that they have no snack to eat (we will not give a second serving in that moment). We would explain, "You threw your food, so I guess you're done with it. We can try again at the next meal." This is not done in anger, but calmly, to let the child experience the result of their action. Of course, we wouldn't allow a dangerous natural consequence (like "if you run outside, you might get hit by a car" — we would never let that play out!). But safe, manageable outcomes can be good teaching moments.

- **Aggressive Behavior:** If a child hits, bites, or otherwise harms another, we attend first to the victim (comfort them, administer first aid as needed). Then we address the child who caused harm. Depending on age, we might say, "Look, Sam is crying. It hurt when you bit him. Biting is not okay." Even if the child is too young to fully understand, we remove them from the situation ("I can't let you play when you are hurting your friends"). We might have them help in a gentle way ("Can you get the tissue for Sam?") to foster empathy, if appropriate. Chronic aggression will be documented and discussed with parents so we can work on a plan together.

- **No Forced Apologies:** We encourage children to apologize when they've hurt someone, but we do not force apologies, especially if the child is not developmentally at a point of understanding it. Instead, we might model an apology ourselves: "I'm sorry that happened to you," and try to facilitate a genuine gesture of making amends (like helping rebuild a knocked-down block tower). With older preschoolers, we discuss why apologizing is important and encourage them to do so, but we want it to be sincere, not just a forced word.

Our discipline philosophy in a nutshell is consistency, positivity, and teaching. We set clear boundaries, and we enforce them in a loving, matter-of-fact way. If a child's behavior is continually disruptive or harmful despite our best guidance (see Termination policy regarding behavioral issues), we will involve parents to create a behavior plan. Our ultimate goal is to help children develop self-discipline, empathy, and the skills to navigate social situations.

Emergency Procedures:

We are prepared to handle emergency situations to the best of our ability, and we have plans in place for a variety of scenarios. Our first priority in any emergency is to keep the children safe and calm. Here's an overview of how we handle emergencies and what you can expect:

General Emergency Response: In any emergency (fire, evacuation, etc.), the provider will keep the children together and take our emergency backpack (which contains contact information, first aid kit, etc.) if at all possible. Parents will be notified as soon as it is safe and feasible to do so. If we must leave the premises, we will inform you of our location via phone or Brightwheel app alert.

All staff are certified in Infant/Child/Adult CPR and First Aid. We also practice emergency drills with the children so they know what to do (especially for fire drills, which we conduct monthly).

Medical Emergencies: If a child has a medical emergency (e.g., severe injury, allergic reaction, seizure), we will call 911 immediately. We will then contact the parents (or emergency contacts if parents are unreachable). One staff member will remain with the injured/ill child at all times. If a child needs transport by ambulance, a provider will accompany them if possible, and continue trying to reach the parents. Parents are responsible for any medical costs from emergency care. We will document exactly what happened and what actions were taken.

For less severe injuries (needing stitches, a possible broken arm, etc.), we will still call you right away to come and take the child to the doctor. We won't hesitate to call 911 if we think it's warranted, but often parents prefer to drive the child to urgent care if the situation allows.

Evacuation Emergencies: We have a clear plan for evacuating in case of fire, bomb threat, or other immediate dangers. We practice the fire evacuation monthly. Our primary meeting spot is on the sidewalk in front of the house (a safe distance across the yard). If that area is unsafe, our alternate evacuation site is the People's Community Center down the street (this is in case of something like a neighborhood gas leak or other large emergency requiring us to move further away).

- **Fire:** In case of fire, we evacuate immediately. Children are taught to follow the teacher, and we use an evacuation crib or wagon for infants/toddlers who cannot walk quickly. We do a headcount and take our sign-in sheet to ensure everyone is out. Once outside at the meeting spot, we will call 911 (if not already triggered by alarms) and contact parents once children are safe and settled. We do have smoke detectors and fire extinguishers in the home as required by licensing.

- **Bomb Threat:** Treat as real until proven otherwise. We would evacuate just like a fire. Likely we'd move further away (to our alternate site) since the location of danger is unknown. Parents would be notified to pick up as soon as possible from whatever safe location we go to.

- **Natural Disasters:** For an earthquake, we teach children to "Drop, Cover, Hold" – meaning drop low, take cover under a sturdy table or against an interior wall away from windows, and hold on until shaking stops. After an earthquake, we will evacuate if the home seems unsafe or if instructed to by authorities. For severe weather like a tornado (rare in our area, but we plan), we would shelter in an interior room (like a hallway or bathroom) away from windows, possibly the basement if time permits. Flooding is not a major risk at our location (not in a floodplain), but if there were ever any flooding or similar event, we follow emergency management instructions and evacuate if needed.

Missing Child: We maintain close supervision at all times, but we have procedures if a child were ever unaccounted for. We would immediately secure the group (make sure all other children are safe and together), then search the house and yard thoroughly. If a child is not found within a very short time, we will call 911 and then the parents. We practice diligent headcounts, especially during transitions (coming in from outside, etc.), to prevent this scenario. If we are on an outing (walk or field trip) and a child became separated (again, highly unlikely as ratios and safety harnesses/strollers are used), the same immediate search, then 911 call, would occur.

Utility Outages/Other Situations: If we experience a power outage, loss of water, or heat, we will assess how long it might last and whether we can continue to safely care for children. Lack of power for light is not an immediate issue during daytime (we have emergency lights and flashlights), but lack of heat in winter or water could be cause for closing if it's extended. If something like this happens, we will contact parents to pick up if needed (for example, no heat in the house during cold weather beyond 1-2 hours might require closure). If it's a minor short-term outage, we will shelter in place and keep children comfortable until it's resolved.

If there's an emergency in the neighborhood like a chemical spill, gas leak, or police action (e.g., suspect search) we will follow instructions (either evacuate or lockdown as appropriate). For lockdown (violent situation in area or intruder scenario), we will lock all doors, turn off lights, move children to a safe interior area away from windows, and keep them quiet and calm with books or quiet toys. We have a "busy bag bin" with special toys for such situations to occupy children. We practice a form of lockdown drill as well, making it a "quiet game" for the kids so as not to scare them.

Communication During Emergencies: We will do everything possible to keep you informed. The primary number to reach out to is the daycare phone (which we will have if possible). We might send a message via Brightwheel or text if that's quicker. In wide emergencies (like a natural disaster), sometimes phone lines are tied up, so we might use text or email. Please ensure we always have your current contact info and that you list several emergency contacts in case we can't reach you.

Reunification: If we have evacuated to an alternate location (like the community center), we will notify you to pick up your child from that location. You or an authorized pickup will need to sign out with us even in an emergency, so we know the child has been safely released. Bring your ID because, in a chaotic situation, we may need to double-check identity (for everyone's security).

We hope never to face serious emergencies, but we prepare and train so that we can respond effectively. Your child's safety is our absolute priority. Please feel free to ask to see our detailed emergency plan or drill logs – we're happy to share what we do to keep your little ones safe.

Parent Visits/Nap Time/Clothing:

Parent Visits: You are welcome to visit and drop in unannounced at any time during your child's scheduled hours with us. We have an open-door policy. That said, we have found that surprise visits during the day can sometimes be disruptive. Often, if a child sees a parent unexpectedly, they may get upset when the parent leaves again, or they may want to go home right then. It can also stir up the other children ("Why did Johnny's mommy come and not mine?"). So while you are allowed to drop in, consider your child's temperament and whether it might upset them. If you do drop in and your child has a hard time separating again when you leave, we might recommend holding off on future visits until pickup time to avoid repeated distress.

Phone Calls: Similarly, you can call to check on your child, but keep in mind that if we're attending to children, we might not be able to take the call right away. Also, hearing a parent's voice on the phone can confuse or upset a young child who can't understand why Mommy or Daddy is talking but not here. We suggest using the Brightwheel app to send a quick message if you just want an update— we can often reply in writing more easily than getting to the phone. Rest assured, if there were any issue with your child, we would contact you. No news is usually good news! We certainly understand the desire to check in, especially in the beginning; we will do our best to accommodate quick calls or messages, but please limit them to what's truly needed so we can remain focused on the kids.

Nap/Quiet Time: All children have a rest period after lunch, generally from around 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. Infants follow their own schedules to some extent, but by about 12 months old, we transition them to the after-lunch nap schedule. Each child has their own crib or cot for nap time. We set up a calm environment with soft music or white noise and dim lights. Children are not required to sleep, but they must rest quietly so as not to disturb others. If an older child (3+ years) truly does not sleep, we provide a quiet activity after an initial rest (like books or puzzles on their cot) so they remain calm while others sleep.

We do not allow drop-offs or pick-ups during nap time (roughly 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m., as stated in Arrival/Departure). This is to avoid waking sleeping children. If you arrive during this window, you will find that we will not answer the bell (because we are likely trying to maintain the quiet). Please plan outside of these hours for any appointments, etc. If you must pick up early for an emergency during nap, let us know so we can try to have your child ready at the door or outside without significant disruption.

We do not wake children from nap unless requested (some parents may not want their child to sleep past a certain time to protect nighttime sleep). Otherwise, children are allowed to sleep until they wake on their own. Typically, naps do not extend past 2:00 p.m. anyway for most. Infants under one are allowed to nap according to their own schedule and needs (morning and afternoon naps as needed).

Clothing: Please dress your child in play clothes suitable for active, and often messy, play. We paint, play outside, do sensory activities, and spills and messes are part of our day. We don't want their "good clothes" to get ruined, so save party dresses and nice outfits for special occasions outside of daycare. Every child should have at least one, preferably two, complete changes of clothes at the daycare at all times (shirt, pants, underwear, socks, and seasonally appropriate extras like a sweater or sunhat). Accidents, spills, and surprises happen. We will remind you if your stash needs refilling.

Clothing should be comfortable and easy to manage. Avoid hard-to-fasten pants or tight pants, belts, and overalls, especially if your child is toilet training or learning to dress themselves. Slip-on or Velcro shoes are preferable until they can tie laces on their own. Closed-toe shoes are safest for outdoor play (no flip-flops, please). In summer, sandals should have a heel strap.

Weather Preparedness: We go outside almost every day (unless weather is truly prohibitive, like heavy rain all day or extreme cold). State guidelines require children to have outdoor time. We will stay inside if the wind chill is below 35°F or the heat index above 90°F, or if conditions are dangerous (ice, lightning, poor air quality). But drizzle, light snow, or light wind won't stop us! Please dress your child appropriately for the day's weather: coat, hat, and mittens in winter (yes, mittens even if they insist they don't need them—cold little hands say otherwise after 10 minutes outside!), boots for rain/mud, sun-protective clothing or extra shirt for cool mornings that may turn hot later. Layers are great because we can remove one if a child gets warm.

All removable clothing must be labeled with your child's name or initials (jackets, sweaters, hats, etc.). Many children have similar looking items and labels prevent mix-ups or losses.

Special Clothing Notes:

- If your child arrives in something really fancy or not suited for play (e.g., a frilly dress, dress shoes), we may change them into spare clothes for the day to keep the special outfit clean, then change them back at pickup. But it's easier if you just dress them in play clothes to start with. If there's a special event after daycare, you can leave an outfit and we will change them before pickup.
- **Footwear:** We do a lot of gross motor play. Sneakers or closed-toe shoes are preferred. Avoid sending your child in flip-flops, crocs without a heel strap, or any shoe that easily comes off. This is for safety on climbing equipment and running.
- **Accessories:** For safety, children should not wear jewelry like necklaces or bracelets at daycare. These can be choking hazards or get caught during play. If your child has pierced ears, stud earrings are okay, but please no dangling earrings. Hair accessories are fine if they stay in place (just be aware we aren't responsible if a bow is lost on the playground).
- **Extra Layers:** In winter, please send a warm coat, and maybe an extra sweatshirt. In summer, we'll apply sunscreen (with your permission) and play in water occasionally, so a swimsuit or change of clothes that can get wet is helpful (see Supplies section for seasonal needs).

We want the children to be comfortable, safe, and able to fully participate in all activities. Proper clothing ensures they can do just that. And remember: messy kid = happy kid (most of the time)! We'll do our best to keep them reasonably clean, but some dirt or paint means they had a great, creative day.

Household Members:

Our daycare is located in our home, and we want you to be aware of who and what your child may encounter here outside of the caregiving staff:

Household Members: In addition to Mrs. Courtney (the owner and lead teacher), you may occasionally see or meet other members of the household or family that drop by:

- **Mr. Eddie** – my spouse. He is often at work during daycare hours, but might be home occasionally. He has passed the required background checks and is familiar with our daycare operations. He is not an active caregiver but may assist in emergencies or help with maintenance tasks. The children know him as a friendly adult in the home.
- **Da’Quan** – my teenage son. He lives at home and may be around after school hours. He also has a background check on file. He might say hello or help his mom with small tasks, but he is not a caregiver. He’s a polite teen who the kids often look up to, but he usually does his own activities separate from the daycare.
- **Other family or visitors:** De’Ja – my adult daughter. She works for the Puyallup School District and has completed the required background clearance. She frequently stops by after work and often plays or interacts with the children. The kids love when she visits and look forward to her time with them. She is not a regular caregiver, but she helps create a warm, family-like atmosphere in our daycare home.

We do not have unannounced or unfamiliar visitors during daycare hours. If a repair person or someone must come by, it is scheduled outside of hours whenever possible. If not, they will never be left unsupervised around the children. Any regular volunteers or helpers will be introduced to you and have appropriate clearances.

All adults in the home are aware of daycare rules and the importance of maintaining a professional, safe environment. We strive to create a home-like atmosphere where your child feels like part of our extended family, while still ensuring all licensing safety standards are met.

If you ever have questions or concerns about our household members, please let us know.

Field Trip/Transportation/Water Activities:

Field Trips: We occasionally take the children on short field trips to enrich their learning experiences. These are typically walking trips in the neighborhood (like a nature walk to the park, a visit to a local library story time, etc.). Any field trip beyond our immediate neighborhood or that requires driving will be announced well in advance with a permission slip for you to sign. You will always have the option to opt out of a field trip for your child – in which case you’d need to arrange alternate care for that time, as we may not have staff staying behind. For routine walks (like going to a nearby playground), we include a general permission in your enrollment packet.

When we do go on outings:

- We maintain proper ratios and often bring an extra helper or ask a parent volunteer to come along if possible to ensure lots of supervision.
- Children will wear identification (like a daycare T-shirt or a wristband with our contact info) and we carry emergency contact information and first aid with us at all times.
- We follow all car seat laws if transporting in vehicles: any child transported by car will be in an appropriate car seat or booster, properly installed. The driver (whether myself or another approved adult) will have a valid driver's license and insurance. No child is ever left unattended in a vehicle, even for a moment.
- We take along any necessary items (diapers, wipes, water, snacks, etc.) to care for the children during the outing.
- You will be informed of the date, time, and destination of each field trip and may be asked to sign a specific permission form for that trip, even if you've signed a general one. This is so you're fully aware and on board each time.

Examples of possible field trips: story time at the library, a nearby zoo or farm in summer, a children's museum or park, etc. We may also do spontaneous short walks (weather permitting) – for example, walking to the end of the street to see a cool construction truck. The spontaneous walks will always be within a few blocks and do not require special permission beyond the initial consent.

Transportation: Regular transportation (like school drop-offs) is not provided as part of our standard service, except possibly walking older kids to the bus stop if arranged. If you need before/after school care including school transportation, talk to us and we'll see if it's feasible based on our schedule and capacity. Typically, we are a home-based program and do not do daily school runs.

If at any time we do transport your child (aside from field trips) – for instance, an emergency where we have to relocate – we will follow the safety guidelines mentioned (car seats, etc.) and inform you as soon as possible.

Water Activities: We treat water activities with extreme caution. Our water play is generally limited to sensory water tables, or sprinklers in the summer. We do not have a swimming pool on the premises. If we ever plan an activity involving a larger body of water (like a trip to a splash pad or lake beach), it will be considered a field trip and all those permissions and precautions apply.

Bathing a Soiled Child

Bathing: We do not routinely bathe children. However, if a child gets unusually dirty (e.g., falls in mud head-to-toe) or has a potty accident that requires more than wipes, we might do a quick rinse-off. Per our policy, you'll sign a general consent for us to bathe your child if absolutely necessary due to a toileting accident or severe mess. This would be done very sensitively: one caregiver will bathe the child in a toddler bathtub or shower while maintaining the child's privacy and comfort, using mild child-friendly soap, while another caregiver is supervising nearby. We will of course inform you if such an incident occurs (and likely we'd call you if it's something we feel you'd prefer to handle yourself). This is rare but we want to cover it just in case (for example, a bad diarrhea accident where the child is very uncomfortable).

In all these activities outside the normal daily routine, safety and communication are key. We want the children to have fun experiences, but we will never compromise their safety to do so. If you ever have concerns about any trip or activity, please voice them.

Food, Meals, Menus:

We provide nutritious meals and snacks for all children in our care. You do not need to send food for your child (with the exception of infant formula or breast milk for infants). In fact, we prefer that outside food not be brought in, to avoid issues with other children (and to manage allergies). Here's how meal time works at Miniature World:

Meal Schedule:

- Breakfast ~ 8:30 – 9:00 a.m. (for those arriving before 9)
- Lunch ~ 11:30 – 12:00 p.m.
- Afternoon Snack ~ 2:30 – 2:45 p.m.

If your child will arrive after 9:00 a.m. and hasn't eaten breakfast, please feed them before arrival, as our breakfast service will have ended. We cannot stop to prepare a late breakfast without disrupting the morning routine.

Nutrition: Our meals and snacks meet USDA Child Care Food Program guidelines. This means they are balanced and include appropriate portions of protein, grains, fruits, vegetables, and dairy. For example, a typical lunch might be: grilled chicken, green beans, whole-grain buttered noodles, applesauce, and milk. We limit sugar and avoid junk food. Snacks are usually healthy too, like fruit and crackers, yogurt, veggies and hummus, etc. We serve whole milk to children under 2 and 1% for over 2, with water available throughout the day. We serve 100% fruit juice occasionally, but only WIC-approved sugar-free juice to children over 2.

Child Preferences: We encourage children to at least try one bite of everything served. If after one bite they say "no more," we don't force it. But we have found repeated exposure helps; children who initially refuse a food may come to like it after seeing peers eat it or trying it several times. We will not prepare separate meals for each child – everyone is served the same menu with minor variations as needed for allergies or dietary restrictions. If a child truly doesn't like something, they are not made to eat it, but no alternative will be offered until the next snack/meal time (we won't let them go hungry – but they might have to wait until snack if they chose to skip lunch, for instance). Often, if a child is hungry enough, they'll decide to eat at least some of what's on their plate.

Second helpings of favorites are usually available (within reason and if other children have eaten as well). We serve “family style” when appropriate, meaning kids can have small portions and ask for more.

Allergies and Dietary Restrictions: If your child has a food allergy, you must inform us and detail the severity. We are experienced with common allergies (milk, nuts, etc.). We can accommodate most allergies by substituting items (like soy milk for a dairy allergy, or sunbutter instead of peanut butter). If your child follows a special diet (vegetarian, etc.), let’s discuss. We can usually accommodate vegetarian diets easily (we would give a meat alternate like beans or cheese). For gluten-free or other less common needs, we may ask you to supplement by bringing some specialty items if our menu can’t cover it, but we handle case-by-case.

Infant Feeding: For infants, parents must supply breast milk or formula and bottles. We will feed on the infant’s demand schedule. As babies start solids, you can provide simple purees and soft foods. We have high chairs and follow proper sanitizing for bottles and feeding utensils. You’ll get a report of what and how much your baby ate each day.

Food From Home: Other than infant food or special dietary necessity, we ask that you do not bring outside food. Please do not send your child with candy, gum, chips, etc. This includes breakfast items in the car or at drop-off; it can cause issues if one child comes in with a donut and others don’t have one. If you want to do a birthday treat, coordinate with us (we have guidelines like store-bought only due to licensing, and we prefer healthy treats or non-food treats). But on a daily basis, leave the snacks to us!

If your child arrives with a cup of something or food, be prepared that we will likely take it and save it for when you pick up (or toss it if perishable). Morning cups of milk or juice often get forgotten and spill, so better to finish them at home or in the car and hand us an empty cup if need be.

Table Manners and Independence: We use meal times as a chance to build self-help skills and manners. Even toddlers can help set the table (we use child-safe dishes) or clean up spills. We encourage “please” and “thank you”. The children sit at a child-sized table together (with an adult nearby). It’s a social time and we talk about what we’re eating, maybe sing a little hand-washing song beforehand, etc. Children wash hands before and after eating. We assist as needed with utensils, but encourage kids to try feeding themselves as appropriate for their age. It may get messy, but it’s how they learn.

Hydration: Water is accessible to children throughout the day. We take water breaks, especially after outdoor play. For infants, we follow guidelines on offering small amounts of water when they start solids, etc.

By providing all the meals and snacks, we ensure each child gets balanced nutrition and no one feels left out or jealous of another’s food. We appreciate you not bringing other foods that can cause those issues. If you ever have concerns about your child’s eating (picky eating, amount eaten, etc.), please discuss with us. We can often reassure you that “they do eat veggies here!” or strategize together.

We are committed to your child’s health and nutrition while in our care. Bon appétit!

Mandatory Abuse & Neglect Reporting:

As childcare providers, we are classified as Mandated Reporters of child abuse and neglect. This means that if we have reasonable cause to suspect that a child in our care has been abused or neglected, we are legally required to report it to the appropriate authorities (such as Child Protective Services). The safety of the children is paramount, and while this is an uncomfortable topic, we want all families to understand our obligations and commitment in this area.

What we watch for: We are trained to recognize signs of possible abuse or neglect. This could include unexplained injuries (bruises, burns, fractures) especially in unusual places or patterns, drastic changes in behavior, signs of fear around certain adults, consistent lack of hygiene or clothing for the weather that suggests neglect, or any disclosure from a child about inappropriate behavior by an adult or older child. We also consider the child's explanations (or lack thereof) and whether they are consistent and plausible.

Our approach: If we notice something concerning, our first step (depending on severity) may be to casually ask the parent about it – for example, “I noticed Jenny has a bruise on her back; did something happen at home?” Often, there is a perfectly innocent explanation (fell off a bike, etc.). We document the explanation. If the explanations are evasive, don't match the injury, or if the pattern continues, we become more concerned.

We will ALWAYS prioritize the child's safety. If we genuinely suspect abuse, we may make a report without informing the parents first if we feel the child could be in danger by our questioning. In less clear situations, we might consult with a pediatrician or nurse hotline (anonymously) or call the CPS helpline for guidance without making a formal report, to see if the situation warrants it.

Reporting: If a report is made, it is usually to CPS or the police department. We would provide them with our observations and any relevant information. It would then be up to the authorities to investigate further. Our identity as the reporter can be kept confidential by law, but often it might be inferred. Please understand, we do not take this duty lightly or use it vindictively. It is only in the interest of protecting a child from harm. We hope to never have to make a report regarding any of our families.

Transparency: We will document any injuries that occur here or that we notice. You will get notes about any significant bump or bruise that happens at daycare (so you know it happened here). Likewise, if your child comes with a bruise, we might note it and ask you – this is to cover all of us and make sure there's no misunderstanding. Please don't take offense; it's standard practice for providers to keep logs of injuries to protect against false accusations as well.

No tolerance for abuse: Obviously, within our daycare, absolutely no form of abuse (physical, sexual, emotional) or neglect is tolerated. All staff/volunteers have background checks, and we maintain appropriate supervision. If you ever have a concern about something your child says or comes home with related to our daycare, bring it to us immediately so we can clarify or investigate. We want to partner with you in trust.

Custody issues: If there are custody arrangements, we must have court documentation of who is allowed to pick up the child. We cannot deny a biological parent access to their child without legal documentation. If a non-custodial parent attempts to pick up against a court order, we will call the primary parent and potentially the police. This also intersects with abuse reporting if a child discusses violence or abuse in the context of custody disputes – we still must report regardless of custody.

Our primary goal is to protect children. By enrolling in our program, you acknowledge that we have this responsibility and you support our commitment to keeping all children safe from harm. We pray we never have to make that tough call, but we will not hesitate if it means protecting a child's well-being.

Termination / Move Notice / Graduation

We hope every family's experience with our daycare is positive. However, certain circumstances may lead to termination of childcare services, either initiated by the parent or by the provider. Here we outline how termination and notice work, as well as considerations for when children "graduate" out of our program (e.g., go off to kindergarten).

Termination by Parent: After the initial trial period (60 days) has passed, if you decide to withdraw your child for any reason, we require two weeks' written notice. This gives us time to fill the spot and helps your child with a smoother transition. If you leave without notice, you will still be charged for those two weeks (as per our contract, your deposit may cover it or you will be billed). We ask that, if possible, you let your child attend those final two weeks for closure and goodbyes, but that is your choice. Please also let us know the reason for leaving, as feedback (we strive to improve, or sometimes it's just that circumstances changed – we understand).

Termination by Provider: We reserve the right to terminate the childcare arrangement under certain conditions, which include but are not limited to:

- **Non-Payment or Late Payment:** If tuition is more than two weeks behind and no payment plan has been worked out, we will have to terminate care. We will attempt to work with you first (we know sometimes financial hardships happen), but if there's no effort or communication, we cannot continue to hold your spot. Lack of follow-through on any agreed payment plan would also result in termination.
- **Chronic Late Pickups / Contract Violations:** Repeated disregard for policies (such as habitual late pickups, or not providing required forms, etc.) despite warnings can lead to termination. We have to consider the strain on our staff and fairness to others. Typically we issue written warnings for violations; if issues continue, we may give notice of termination.
- **Health and Safety Concerns:** If a child's behavior is consistently endangering themselves or others and we have exhausted reasonable interventions, we may terminate care. For example, if a child displays ongoing aggressive behavior (harming other kids) or extreme emotional needs that require one-on-one care beyond what we can provide in a group (despite trying behavior plans, etc.), we might have to recommend a different setting that can better serve the child. We would usually give warnings and try strategies with the parents before taking this step.
- **Developmental Needs:** In some cases, a child may have developmental or special needs that we discover we are not equipped or qualified to meet adequately (especially if it becomes apparent after enrollment). We will work with the family to find resources and perhaps refer to specialists. If, ultimately, we cannot meet the child's needs without compromising care for others (for example, if a child would benefit from an aide or a different environment), we may have to terminate. This is always a last resort and done in consultation with the parents.

- **Parental Behavior:** We also consider the conduct of parents/guardians. If a parent is hostile, threatening, or extremely uncooperative such that it undermines our ability to care for their child or others, we may terminate care. For instance, a parent who refuses to follow health policies, or who is verbally abusive to staff, cannot be tolerated. Another example: if separated/divorced parents' disputes start to play out at daycare or require our involvement in non-productive ways, and it becomes too disruptive, we may ask the family to make other arrangements.

- **Illegal Activity or Extreme Situations:** If any family member or pick-up person engages in illegal activity on our premises or there is a serious safety concern (like a parent selling drugs at pick-up, or an adult coming to pick up with a weapon or inebriated repeatedly), that would result in immediate termination and likely a report to authorities.

Notice of Termination: In most cases (except something immediate like violence), if we decide we must terminate, we will give two weeks' notice in writing. During that two weeks, you are still responsible for payment, whether or not your child attends. We will continue to provide care in those final two weeks as long as it's safe to do so. If the termination is immediate (due to a severe issue), any unused prepaid tuition (beyond the notice period) will not be refunded.

Part-Time Care and Priority: Please note that part-time care occupies a full-time slot. We are happy to accommodate part-time schedules when space allows, but full-time enrollment takes priority. If a new family needs a full-time spot and we are at capacity, we may have to make a difficult decision regarding part-time attendees. In such a case, part-time families will be given the option to upgrade to a full-time schedule (and tuition rate) to maintain their child's placement. If the family is unable or unwilling to switch to full-time, that part-time slot will regrettably be forfeited to make room for the full-time enrollment.

We will provide two weeks' written notice in this situation, and families are responsible for tuition during that notice period whether the child attends or not. We understand this may be disappointing, but we must ensure the sustainability of our small program. We value our part-time families and will implement this only if absolutely necessary. If your family is part-time and another family inquires about full-time, we will approach you to discuss options before any decisions are made.

Readiness for Group Care: We understand that not every child adjusts to a group daycare environment in the same way or on the same timeline. Occasionally, a child may struggle significantly with the group setting despite our best efforts (for example, a child who cries inconsolably for weeks on end, or who cannot adapt to being around other children without extreme stress). In such rare cases, we will have frank discussions with you about whether our program is the right fit for your child at this time. We will try various techniques to help the child adjust (gradual entry, comfort items from home, etc.) and give a reasonable adjustment period. However, if a child remains very unhappy or distressed in care, or requires one-on-one attention constantly to the detriment of the group, we may collectively decide that it's best to pause care until the child is a bit older or seek an environment with a smaller group or different setting. This is never an easy decision, and it will be made with empathy and the child's well-being in mind. If we come to this decision, we will give notice and work with you on transition plans, and of course, welcome the opportunity to try again in the future if circumstances change. The goal is for every child to thrive; if we truly feel a child is not thriving with us, we have to put the child's needs first.

Graduation: On a happier note, we consider it “graduation” when children leave us to move on to kindergarten or a pre-K program! We celebrate those transitions. Usually in late summer we’ll have a little send-off for our older kids who are heading to school. We’ll miss them dearly but are proud of their growth. We request, if possible, that you also give us notice of a planned withdrawal for school or a move as soon as you know, even if it’s months in advance – it helps us plan and also cherish those final months with your child.

To summarize, ending care can happen for a variety of reasons. We aim to handle all terminations professionally, with clear communication, and minimal stress for the child. We appreciate as much notice as possible from you, and we will extend the same courtesy whenever we can. Our hope is that most children stay with us until they naturally age out or move – becoming forever part of the “Miniature World” family!

13. Staff, Helpers, Volunteers

Our team is small but mighty! Below is an introduction to the people who will be caring for your children, as well as any regular helpers or volunteers. We are proud of our qualifications and our dedication to providing quality care.

Mrs. Courtney – Owner & Lead Teacher (Toddler/Preschool)

Hey! That’s me – Courtney Marshall-Prescod. I wear many hats: owner, administrator, and lead teacher especially for our toddlers and preschoolers. I am also a mother of five and an Army veteran. Caring for children is my passion and calling. I have completed the following relevant trainings and certifications:

- Cleared Background Check (Washington State and FBI fingerprint)
- Safe Sleep Training (infant safe sleep practices)
- HIV/AIDS & Bloodborne Pathogens Certification (training on handling blood or bodily fluids safely)
- Adult, Infant & Child CPR Certification (current)
- First Aid Certification (current)
- TB Test (negative and on file, as required)
- Washington State Food Worker Card (so I can safely prepare/serve food)
- USDA Food Program Training (nutrition training)
- STARS (State Training and Registry System) Early Childhood Education ongoing training classes annually – I exceed the required training hours each year to keep learning new techniques and information about child development.

Experience-wise, I have been running this daycare for 2 years (plus my experience raising my own children). My approach is a blend of structure and loving nurture. I believe strongly in continued learning, so I frequently attend workshops or online classes to stay up-to-date on best practices.

Mrs. Darya – Infant Lead Teacher

Darya Hamidou is our wonderful caregiver specializing with the babies (though she loves all ages). She is my eldest child, a mother of two, and has a background working in the medical field, which gives her an extra gentle touch and attentiveness to health and safety. Her qualifications include:

- Cleared Background Check
- Safe Sleep Training
- HIV/AIDS & Bloodborne Pathogens Certification
- Adult, Infant & Child CPR (current)
- First Aid (current)
- TB Test (clear)
- Washington State Food Worker Card
- Ongoing ECE Training – she is working towards more formal child development credentials and takes regular training classes.

Darya has been with Miniature World for 1 year. She is incredibly patient and nurturing. You'll often see her singing or cuddling the little ones. Parents often comment on how their infants light up when they see Mrs. Darya each morning – she provides that warm, secure base they need.

Training & Professionalism: Everyone working or volunteering at Miniature World is trained to maintain professionalism, confidentiality, and abide by our policies. We all are mandated reporters as mentioned. We hold regular brief meetings to ensure we are on the same page about any changes or specific child needs. We each carry ourselves as role models for your children – using kind language, demonstrating good manners, and following the rules (you won't see us doing something we tell the kids not to, like we all sit while eating, etc.).

We are excited to have you get to know all of us. Trust is key – you are entrusting us with your precious child, and we take that seriously. If you ever have questions about any staff member or volunteer, or who is with your child at any given time, please ask! We want you to always feel comfortable. You will see our faces every day at drop-off and pick-up, and we aim to build a strong connection with each family.

14. Closings/Holidays/Vacations

Consistency in care is important, but there will be times when the daycare is closed. We want to provide clear guidelines on which days we are closed, and how we handle unexpected closures (including inclement weather or emergencies).

Scheduled Holidays: We generally observe the major federal holidays. A specific list of holidays we are closed will be provided each year in January (and usually included in your contract). Typically, we close for: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Presidents Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Indigenous Peoples Day, Thanksgiving Day (and the day after), and Christmas Day. We may also close early on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve depending on parent needs. We will remind you as holidays approach.

If a holiday falls on a Saturday, we will close that Friday; if it falls on Sunday, we will close that Monday. For example, if Christmas Day is Sunday, we will be closed Monday. Regular tuition is still due for weeks including holidays – there is no discount for those weeks.

Provider Vacation: We will take up to 10 paid vacation days per year, typically not all at once (maybe a week in summer and a few long weekends or around holidays). We will give at least 3 weeks' notice (usually much more) for any planned vacation closures. These days are also paid (per our contract). We often try to align our vacation with low attendance times or community school breaks to minimize inconvenience. We encourage you to have a backup care plan for these instances (perhaps trading playdates with another parent, or relatives, etc.). We acknowledge it can be difficult to find alternate care, so we do try to keep our vacations limited and well-communicated.

Provider Sick/Personal Days: We allot up to 10 paid personal/sick days per year for ourselves. This could be used if the provider is ill, needs to attend a training, personal appointments, etc. We use these sparingly; if it's something like a short appointment, we try to schedule it outside daycare hours or have our assistant cover. But if we are too ill to operate (and no sub is available), we might close for the day on short notice. We will always attempt to notify you as early as possible (the night before or very early morning) if we must close due to illness or emergency. Again, payment is still required for these occasional days, as outlined in the contract. We urge you to have a backup plan for such unexpected closures as well.

Emergency/Weather Closures: Despite our best efforts to be open every scheduled day, occasionally unforeseen events force closure. Examples include severe weather (snowstorms, etc.), power outages, natural disasters, or urgent family emergencies. We generally follow the Tacoma School District's decisions for snow days or weather-related closures – if public schools are closed for snow/ice, we will likely close as well, for everyone's safety. If schools are on delay, we may open on a delay. We will send out a Brightwheel alert or text by 6:00 a.m. on such days to confirm our status. If a storm hits during the day and schools decide to send kids home early, we might call for early pickups as well.

For other emergencies (e.g., a neighborhood evacuation due to a gas leak, etc.), we will contact you immediately to pick up, or if we must evacuate, we'll move the children to safety and then call you with information (see Emergency Procedures).

Please note: No tuition refunds or credits are given for emergency or weather closures.

No tuition refunds or credits will be given for days the daycare must close due to situations beyond our control (weather, power outage, provider illness/emergency), as these are infrequent and we still have ongoing operational costs. We urge all families to have a backup care plan for such emergencies (understandably, this might be a family member, friend, or alternate provider you can call on short notice). We will do our utmost to minimize these occurrences and to communicate clearly when they happen.

We appreciate your understanding regarding closures. Taking occasional breaks and ensuring safety during inclement weather ultimately help us provide the best care when we are open.

15. Supplies

To ensure your child is comfortable and prepared at daycare, parents are responsible for providing certain supplies. Please label all items with your child's name to avoid mix-ups. Here's what your child will need:

- **Diapers or Training Pants:** If your child is in diapers or pull-ups, supply an adequate amount each week (we will let you know when running low). Don't forget wipes and any diaper cream you use (with a medication form for the cream). For those in potty training, please still provide pull-ups for nap time or in case of accidents.
- **Bottles and Milk:** For infants on formula or breast milk, bring filled, labeled bottles each day (or a supply of frozen milk). Bottles should have caps and be labeled. If using formula powder, you can bring a can for us to mix as needed (with instructions). We have a fridge for storage.
- **Food for Infants:** If your baby is on purees or baby cereal that we don't provide, bring those labeled. (Once they eat table food, we've got it covered.)
- **Two Changes of Clothing:** As noted in the clothing section, please provide at least two full sets of season-appropriate clothes (shirt, pants, underwear, socks) to be kept in their cubby or bag. Update these as the weather changes and as your child grows into new sizes.
- **Seasonal Gear:**
 - **For summer:** sun hat, sunscreen (permission form needed; you can provide a preferred brand or we use a daycare-provided broad-spectrum kids' sunscreen), a swimsuit or swim diaper for water play days, and water-safe shoes (or an extra pair of old shoes that can get wet).
 - **For winter:** warm coat, snow pants/boots if snow is forecasted, hat, gloves/mittens (waterproof ones if possible for outdoor play).
 - **Rainy season:** raincoat and rain boots. We do splish-splash in puddles now and then!
- **Bedding:** We will provide a crib or nap mat and sheets for nap. However, if your child has a special small blanket or lovey they sleep with, you may bring it. It will be used at nap and then kept in their cubby. (We wash our bedding weekly.)
- **Comfort Items:** If your child uses a pacifier, you can bring two labeled pacifiers (in case one gets lost). If they have a special stuffed animal or lovey, you may also bring it for nap time comfort. We'll ensure it's available at nap and put away afterward (to avoid other kids wanting it).
- **Medications:** Any emergency medications like EpiPens, inhalers, etc., should be provided with a doctor's action plan. These will be stored securely but accessibly. Discuss any such needs with us so we can be prepared.

Hand all meds to a staff member to store properly. Also avoid packing small toys or choking hazards in bags that other little ones might get into.

We maintain a Lost and Found for stray clothing items or accessories. If something goes missing, check with us; we might have it set aside.

By keeping your child well-supplied, you help us ensure their needs are met each day. We will communicate if you're missing something or if a supply runs low. Thank you for your cooperation in keeping cubbies stocked and items labeled!

16. Acknowledgement Form

I/We, _____ and
_____ have read and understand all Policies
and Guidelines of Miniature World In Home Daycare.

I/We agree to abide by all policies stated in the Parent Handbook. I/We understand that I/we
will be notified in writing of any changes in these policies. Any complaints, concerns, or
grievances against Miniature World In Home Daycare will be made in writing and will be
followed up in a timely manner.

I/We also understand that any breach of policies may be grounds to terminate childcare. A
two-week notice will be given in such circumstance unless the infraction is severe enough to
warrant termination without notice.

Parent Signature: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Today's Date: _____