

Parent Handbook



Magical Minds Childcare & Learning Center

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Magical Minds Childcare and Learning Center and its staff are honored to have your child enroll with us. This Handbook contains useful information regarding the daily operation of our center. If additional questions arise, please contact our Director, Heather or Shelby. If at any time, you wish to contact the Department of Human Services, division of licensing, you may do so at (651) 431-6500. Magical Minds receives monthly Health Consultant Services from Health Consultants for Child Care.

Mission Statement

The mission of Magical Minds is to provide child care that offers educational programs for children ages 6 weeks to 5 years old while providing an encouraging, safe, educational environment allowing for growth physically, emotionally, intellectually and socially.

Creed

Because we at Magical Minds take such pride in the vast culture of our community, no child or family will be discriminated against on the bases of race, religion, sex, creed, national origin, or financial status.

Age categories served

Magical Minds is Licensed for 68 children

24 Infants: 6 weeks to 16 months

21 Toddlers: 16 Months to 42 Months

23 Preschool: 43 months – first day of Kindergarten

Hours of Operation

Magical Minds is open Monday through Friday 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Holiday Closures

Magical Minds will be open Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Magical Minds is closed on the following Holidays: New Year's Day, President's Day (Staff Professional Development Day), Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve Day, Christmas Day and the day after Christmas. If the holiday falls on a weekend, Magical Minds will be closed on the adjoining weekday.

Smoke-Free Workplace Policy

Magical Minds prides itself on a high quality safe environment for children. As part of those qualities we are implementing a smoke free workplace. In order to comply with the Minnesota Clean Indoor Air Act (MCIAA) and in the interest of providing a safe and healthy environment for employees, visitors and children, smoking restrictions have been established. Magical Minds is a smoke free property without exception. There will not be any tobacco smoking on the property or within 50 feet of the property lines.

Tuition Payments

The preferred method of payment at Magical Minds is Electronic Funds Transfer through Tuition Express. Full tuition is due when children are absent and when Magical Minds is closed due to a holiday, professional development day or severe weather closure. All clients will be billed on Mondays for the following two weeks. There will be a late fee of \$10.00 per day for each day the payment is late. If payments are more than 5 days overdue, the enrolled child will not be able to participate at Magical Minds until all payments are received. Payments that are returned through Tuition Express will incur a \$25 fee.

Late Pick Up

Late pick up fees will be assessed when a child is picked up after 6:00pm. Families' first occurrence will be billed at \$1 per minute. Any additional occurrences will be \$1.00 per minute for the first 5 minutes and then \$5.00 per minute for each additional minute. This is added to your tuition and paid directly to the staff person required to stay with the child. If the child is not picked up by one half hour after closing and every effort has been made to contact the parents and alternate persons, Magical Minds will be required to call the Stillwater Police Department for assistance.

Diapers

Parents are asked to provide their own diapers. In the event a child needs a diaper and it is not supplied by the parent, there is a charge of \$1 per diaper. Cloth diapers are allowed to be used and will be provided by parents. Diapering wipes will be provided by Magical Minds and each child will have their own labeled container. Magical Minds will use unscented wipes purchased through Sam's Club, Costco or Target. Procedures for diapering are approved by our program's health consultant and are posted in the diaper changing area. Diapering may only be done in designated areas.

Potty Training

Children that are not fully and completely potty trained will remain in the toddler program until they have achieved this developmental milestone to move to the Preschool room. When children are in the process of potty training, our staff will make every effort to duplicate the training process that is being followed at home. The teacher, director and parent will decide when a child is considered fully and completely potty trained which includes when a child no longer needs the use of diapers/pull-ups and can go the restroom a majority of the time unassisted.

Vacation

Families that have been enrolled at Magical Minds for one full year will receive 1 free week of vacation tuition. This week must be taken in a Monday-Friday sequence. Families must notify Magical Minds 2 weeks in advance when taking this vacation time. Please note: the vacation days cannot be used for the three days that we are closed for the Christmas holiday.

Educational Methods for Teaching

Magical Minds uses The FrogStreet Curriculum for our Toddler and Infant programs and Scholastic Big Day for Pre-K in our preschool program. All of our teachers ensure that your child will be given the opportunity to learn and grow using five developmental areas: physical, emotional, cognitive,

social and creative. A lesson plan is posted in each classroom weekly for parents to see what their child will be able to explore on a daily basis. We encourage our parents to take this information home and talk with your child about their day. A daily schedule is in place for the children to form a sense of “routine”, however when given the opportunity to go with a “teachable moment,” our staff will change events to accommodate the needs of the classroom. Magical Minds also understands that not all children develop in the exact same way; we will adapt our curriculum on a daily basis to meet the needs of all children in the classroom.

Behavior Guidance Policies

General Requirements

- A. All children at Magical Minds will be provided with a positive model of acceptable behavior.
- B. The procedures at Magical Minds will be tailored to the child’s developmental level and the child’s age.
- C. Magical Minds staff will redirect the children away from problems toward constructive activity in order to reduce conflict.
- D. Our staff will teach children how to use acceptable alternatives to problem behavior in order to reduce conflict.
- E. The safety of the children and staff will be protected at all times.
- F. Magical Minds staff will provide immediate and directly related consequences for a child’s unacceptable behavior.

Persistent Unacceptable Behavior

- A. Procedures for staff observation and recording the child’s unacceptable behavior
 - 1. Verbal warning/correction.
 - 2. Written Incident/Behavior Report kept in child’s file and parents will be notified.
- B. Procedures for developing a plan to address the behavior documented
 - 1. Conference with parents to discuss tangible Behavior Plan including discussion of previous behavior reports, expectations for future behavior, home and center strategy to encourage and achieve acceptable behavior, measurable goals for success, and professional intervention if necessary.
 - 2. If Behavior Plan does not achieve the required results the child will no longer be invited to participate at Magical Minds.

Prohibited Actions

- A. At Magical Minds, any form of physical punishment such as rough handling, shoving, hair pulling, ear pulling, shaking, slapping, kicking, biting, pinching, hitting, or spanking is strictly prohibited and is grounds for immediate dismissal.
- B. Also prohibited is any subjection of a child to emotional stress, which includes but is not limited to: name calling, shaming, ostracism, making derogatory remarks about the child or their family, or the use of language that threatens, humiliates, or frightens any child.
- C. Separation from the group except within rule requirements.
- D. Punishment for lapses in toilet training.

- E. Withholding food, light, warmth, clothing, or needed medical care as a punishment for unacceptable behavior.
- F. The use of physical restraint other than to physically hold a child where containment is necessary to protect a child or others from harm.
- G. The use of mechanical restraints, such as tying.

Separation from the Group. No Child will be separated from the group unless the following has occurred:

- A. Less intrusive methods of guiding the child's behavior have been tried and were ineffective.
- B. The child's behavior threatens the well-being of the child or other children in the program.
- C. A child who requires separation from the group must:
 1. Remain within an unenclosed part of the classroom where the child can be continuously seen and heard by a program staff person.
 2. The child's return to the group is contingent on the child's stopping or bringing under control the behavior that precipitated the separation.
 3. The child will be returned to the group as soon as the behavior that precipitated the separation abates or stops.
- D. Children between the ages of six weeks and 16 months will not be separated from the group as means of behavior guidance.

Separation Report. All separations from the group must be noted on a daily log that must include the following:

- A. The child's name
- B. The staff person's name
- C. Time
- D. Date
- E. Information indicating what less intrusive methods were used to guide the child's behavior
- F. How the child's behavior continued to threaten the well-being of the child or other children in care.
- G. If a child is separated from the group three or more times in one day, the child's parents shall be notified and the parent notification shall be indicated on the daily log.
- H. If a child is separated five or more times in one week, eight or more times in two weeks, the procedures for Persistent Unacceptable Behavior must be followed.

Nap and Rest Policy

Confinement limitation: A child who has completed a nap or rested quietly for 30 minutes will not be required to remain on a cot or in a crib or bed.

Placement of equipment: Naps and rest will be provided in a quiet area that is physically separated from children who are engaged in an activity that will disrupt a napping or resting child. Cribs, cots, and beds will be placed so there are clear aisles and unimpeded access for both adults and children on at least one side of each piece of napping and resting equipment. Cribs, cots, and beds will be placed directly on the floor and will not be stacked when in use.

Bedding: Separate bedding will be provided for each child in care. Bedding will be washed

weekly and when soiled or wet. Blankets will be washed weekly and when soiled or wet.

Crib standard: A crib will be provided for each infant for which we are licensed to provide care. The equipment will be of safe and sturdy construction that conforms to the Code of Federal Regulations. Also, see Minnesota Statutes, section 245A.146, for additional crib safety standards including routine crib inspection requirements. Magical Minds will place each infant in a crib directly on a firm mattress with a fitted crib sheet that fits tightly on the mattress and overlaps the mattress so it cannot be dislodged by pulling on the corner of the sheet. Magical Minds will not place pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskin, pillow-like stuffed toys, or other soft products in the crib with the infant. (Minnesota Statutes, section 245A.1435)

Infant sleeping position: Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 245A.1435, Magical Minds will place each infant on the infant's back, unless Magical Minds has documentation from the infant's parent directing an alternative sleeping position for the infant.

Nutrition

Magical Minds provides breakfast, lunch and snacks. Breakfast is served at 8:30 a.m. and lunch at 11:45 a.m. All meals will be provided by Lancer Dining and are included in the daily rates. If your child has food restrictions, meals may be provided by parents and must adhere to all USDA requirements. Meals brought from home must be a **PEANUT FREE** "cold lunch" and must not require any preparation or heating by staff and all food must be cut into the appropriate size for consumption. Snack will be provided for all children in attendance and there is no additional charge for this service. Since we are not licensed by the health department as a full-service kitchen, we cannot allow shared food and snacks to be brought in the center. Birthday treats must be in individual portions and commercially prepared. (Bakery cupcakes are fine. Bakery cakes are not. Please feel free to ask if you have any questions about this.)

**Magical Minds prohibits the serving of peanut products, however, we CANNOT, guarantee that peanuts are not in our facility.

Meal Requirements:

Per USDA requirements a meal **must** consist of the following food groups:

- 1 serving fluid Milk (provided by MM)
- 1 serving of protein
- 2 servings of vegetables and or fruit
- 1 serving grain / bread

Outdoor Activities, Winter Clothing & Sunscreen

In accordance with licensing regulations, outdoor play activities will be scheduled daily, weather permitting. Children need to be dressed appropriately to play outside. During the colder months, we enjoy exploring outside and all that the snow has to offer! In the winter temperature guidelines, will be in effect: Children may go outside when the temperature and wind chill combined are over 0°F for the Preschool age children, over 10°F for the Older Toddlers and over

20°F for the Young Toddlers. Please make sure to bring boots, snow pants, mittens (not knit as they get wet) and hats. Because many children have similar clothing, we ask that you PLEASE LABEL ALL OUTDOOR CLOTHING. Sunscreen must be provided by the parent in accordance with our health policies and will be applied by staff before going outside.

Open Door Policy

Magical Minds has an open-door policy and we strongly encourage parents to stop by and visit whenever possible.

Babysitting

Often parents will use Magical Minds staff for “babysitting” services outside of Magical Minds. Magical Minds claims no responsibility for staff or their actions while they are not “on the clock” at Magical Minds. Parents are to use their own judgment and discretion while choosing babysitters. Magical Minds will not share opinions nor do we share information concerning the employee with families that is not for the sole purpose of our staff’s employment at Magical Minds.

Conferences

The physical, emotional, social and intellectual progress of each child will be documented in each child’s record and will be communicated to parents in writing during conferences which will be offered in November and April. All families enrolled will have the opportunity to a conference with their child’s teacher. Open communication is the key to a successful program. You are always welcome and encouraged to talk with the staff regarding your child’s progress.

Field Trips

Magical Minds offers field trips to children ages 31 months and older. Additional fees may be charged to parents to cover the costs. Parents must fill out and sign a permission slip for their child to attend a field trip. Once the permission slip is signed the family will be charged for the field trip even if a child is unable to attend. Transportation for most of the field trips is provided by a licensed bus company.

Health Record

Due to licensing requirements, parents are required to provide current immunization records by their child’s first visit to Magical Minds. It is also the parent’s responsibility to make sure that immunization records are updated as needed. We do not enroll children without a current immunization record and we do not accept an exemption form for any reason. Within 30 days of enrollment, parents must provide a Health Care Summary form signed by a physician. Failure to supply this documentation will be cause for exclusion from Magical Minds. Because it is required that these forms be kept up to date, a new medical examination or an updated immunization record may be necessary. Parents are required to inform Magical Minds when their child has a special medical condition, need or allergy.

Pandemic Planning

Magical Minds will cooperate with state and local government disaster planning agencies working to prepare for or react to emergencies presented by a pandemic outbreak.

Illness

In an effort to protect children from the spread of illness, sick children will be excluded from Magical Minds for a minimum of 24 hours following the last occurrence of fever or symptoms. Children with any infectious or contagious illness or any of the following symptoms are considered a sick child and must be excluded from Magical Minds:

- A reportable illness or condition determined to be contagious until a physician determines otherwise.
- Vomited once after admission on any given day.
- Three or more abnormally loose uncontained stools after admission on any given day.
- Contagious conjunctivitis or pus draining from the eye.
- Bacterial infection such as strep or impetigo and has not completed effective antibiotic therapy.
- Unexplained lethargy.
- Lice, ringworm, or scabies that is contagious to others.
- An auxiliary temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher of undiagnosed origin before fever reducing medication is given.
- An undiagnosed rash or a rash attributed to a contagious illness or condition.
- Significant respiratory distress.
- Unreasonable discomfort in participating in the childcare program activities.
- A need for more care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children.

A parent must inform Magical Minds if any of the above occur. Should a child become ill while at the center, the following steps will be taken:

- The child will be isolated in a comfortable, supervised location.
- A parent or alternative person specified on the enrollment form will be notified. The sick child must be picked up within an hour after notification.
- A child's doctor or emergency personnel will be contacted and treatment sought if deemed necessary.

A contingency plan should be in place before enrollment so parents are prepared should this occur. When an enrolled child develops an infectious or contagious illness, parents must notify Magical Minds. Notices will then be posted to inform parents of the illness, symptoms, incubation period, and treatment.

Injury

In the event a child is injured at Magical Minds, staff will administer First Aid or CPR as necessary. If emergency treatment is indicated, staff will call 9-1-1 and a parent or other authorized adult listed on the emergency form and explain the situation. If a child needs to be transported, they will likely be brought to Lakeview Hospital in Stillwater and it will be at the parent's expense. The Director

will accompany the child and will remain with the child until a parent arrives. The child's health and consent forms will be sent with him/her.

Medications

On occasion medication will be needed. Magical Minds will only administer medication with a parent's written permission. The medication must be in its original container with complete instructions. The label must have directions for dispensing, name of the medication, doctor's name, date of prescription (must be current), and the child's name.

Non-prescription medications such as sunscreen, diaper creams, insect repellent etc. may be administered to a child with a parent's written permission according to manufacturer's directions unless written directions are provided by a physician. If the child is under the age of 2 and the label states "ask a physician" for dosage, parents are required to call their clinic prior to bringing their child to the center and have the clinic fax a note to Magical Minds stating authorization along with the dosage amount.

Inclement Weather

Magical Minds will follow School District 834 with regards to snow day closures. If the school district closes due to cold temperatures, Magical Minds will remain open. The director will post on the web site and change our phone message to reflect this. If Magical Minds must close when in operation due to severe weather, parents or other contacts as indicated on the Emergency Card will be contacted so that all children get picked up. In the event of impassible roads, the center will close. Staff will stay at the center until all children have been picked up. All children will be well cared for until arrangements are made for the children to return home.

Infant Guidelines

Formula Preparation:

Formula bottles need to be prepared at home. Prepare each bottle with the appropriate amount of milk for one feeding. (Once a feeding begins, a bottle is only usable for one hour.)

- Bring bottles to Magical Minds in a labeled insulated container.
- All bottle parts will be labeled with the child's full first and last name.
- Take bottles home at the end of the day. Bottles may have been rinsed, but must be washed and sanitized at home.

Breast Milk Preparation

1. Wash hands, breast, and breast pump. Express Milk.
2. Use a clean bottle or storage bag
3. Fresh breast milk, if kept refrigerated, may be used up to 48 hours.
4. Thaw frozen breast milk in the refrigerator overnight. Fill each bottle with the appropriate amount of milk for one feeding. (Once a feeding begins, a bottle is only usable for one hour.)
5. Label with child's full first and last name and the date.
6. Bring bottles to Magical Minds in a labeled insulated container.
7. Bottles are refrigerated upon arrival at Magical Minds.
8. Please take all bottles home at the end of the day. Bottles will not be rinsed, and will be returned to parents for sanitation.
9. Unused breast milk bottles will be sent home with the parent.

10. Parents are required to bring as many prepared bottles as your child usually drinks within the time period reserved.

Food Preparation

Magical Minds will provide all baby food. If you choose to send your own baby food, please bring it in labeled containers inside an insulated bag. This will be refrigerated upon arrival at Magical Minds.

Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID) and Abusive Head Trauma (AHT)

When placing an infant to sleep, Magical Minds will place the infant on their back, unless we have documentation from the infant's physician directing an alternative sleeping position for the infant. The physician directive must be on a form approved by the commissioner and will remain on file at the center. An infant who rolls onto its stomach after being placed to sleep on its back may be allowed to remain sleeping on its stomach if the infant is at least 6 months of age or Magical Minds has a signed statement from the parent indicating that the infant regularly rolls over at home.

Magical Minds will place all infants in a crib directly on a firm mattress with a fitted sheet that is appropriate to the mattress size that fits tightly on the mattress, and overlaps the underside of the mattress so it cannot be dislodged by pulling on the corner of the sheet with reasonable effort. Magical Minds will not place anything in the crib with the infant except for the infant's pacifier. This applies to infants younger than one year of age.

If an infant falls asleep before being placed in a crib, Magical Mind's staff must move the infant to a crib as soon as practicable, and must keep the infant within sight of staff until the infant is placed in a crib. When an infant falls asleep while being held, staff must consider the supervision needs of other children in care when determining how long to hold the infant before placing the infant in a crib to sleep. The sleeping infant must not be in a position where the airway may be blocked or with anything covering the infant's face.

Placing a swaddled infant down to sleep in a licensed setting is not recommended for an infant of any age and is prohibited for any infant who has begun to roll over independently. However, with the written consent of a parent or guardian according to this paragraph, Magical Minds may place the infant who has not yet begun to roll over on its own down to sleep in a one-piece sleeper equipped with an attached system that fastens securely only across the upper torso, with no constriction of the hips or legs, to create a swaddle. Prior to any use of swaddling for sleep by Magical Minds under this chapter, Magical Minds must obtain informed written consent for the use of swaddling from the parent or guardian of the infant on a form provided by the commissioner and prepared in partnership with the Minnesota Sudden Infant Death Center.

Pets

Parents will be informed of pets in Magical Minds at the time of admission. Some potential pets may include fish, amphibians or reptiles. Parents will be informed and updated on the status of pets through communication on classroom bulletin boards. Magical Minds staff will care for pets following proper sanitation procedures. On occasion, we will be learning about pets and animals. We may have pets visit the center and parents will be notified in advance. Please inform staff if you do not wish for your child to participate in this activity.

IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) Part C

As a child care provider, we continually monitor the development of all children in our care through ongoing observation and recording. We want the best outcomes for all children. Child care providers are considered a primary referral source for early intervention under federal IDEA special education law. We are required to refer a child in our program who has been identified as having developmental concerns or a risk factor that warrants a referral as soon as possible, but in no case more than seven days after the identification. While this is a mandate, we want to keep open communication with parents and caregivers about their child and any concerns we have before a referral is made. We can assist the parent with the referral or partner with them in the referral process.

Magical Minds Child Care Program plan is available for your review. Please see the Director for a copy.

Magical Minds will obtain written parental permission before each occasion of research, experimental procedure, or public relations activity involving a child.