



Cougar Care & Bright Beginnings POLICY HANDBOOK

School Year 2023-2024

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Program Offerings

- **Cougar Care Before School Childcare**
 - The center opens at 6:00am. School aged children 3rd-5th grade are released at 7:25 to walk to the shuttle buses to take them to Mazeppa. Kindergarten – 2nd grade are release at 7:30 to a supervised playground and/or to go eat breakfast in the cafeteria.
- **Cougar Care After School Childcare**
 - After the school day ends children K-5th grade come over to the Cougar Care and Bright Beginnings building. CC staff will pick up the kindergarteners. After school the children are looking to unwind, socialize, and participate in activities that will keep them engaged and excited. Our after-school program is just the place for kids during their out of school time to feel safe and have fun. Cougar Care and Bright Beginnings closes at 6:00pm.
- **Bright Beginnings Childcare**
 - Childcare is available for children who are 33 months – PreK. Children need to be fully potty trained. This program offers varied experiences in socialization and play in a warm, colorful environment, allowing your child to grow and develop at a pace that is just right for them. Our program offers two classrooms for the 33 months – 3 year olds and two classrooms for the 4-5 year olds. If necessary older three year olds may be transitioned to a four year old room or younger four year olds may be placed in the three year old room in order to balance the number of children in each room.
- **CC/BB Non-School Day Childcare**
 - Childcare is available from 6:00am – 6:00pm on certain non-school days during the school year. A complete list of non-school days when childcare is available is listed on the next page.
- **CC/BB Summer Childcare**
 - The summer program starts on Monday, June 6th. The center is open from 6:00am – 6:00pm.
 - The summer childcare program offers fun and engaging theme activities and many exciting field trips! Children also have the opportunity to participate in Community Ed Summer Recreation activities, swimming lessons and the summer reading program offered at the Zumbrota Public Library. The parent or guardian must sign their child up to attend the Community Ed activities and the swimming lessons. Please let us know if you do so.
 - New this year summer contract will be included with the Summer 2023 registration paperwork.

Non-School Days that CC/BB is Open 2023-2024

September 5 & 6 <i>(All day care is available)</i>	December 27 & 28 <i>(All day care is available)</i>	March 28 <i>(All day care is available)</i>
October 18 <i>(Early dismissal – open until 6:00pm)</i>	January 10 <i>(Early dismissal – open until 6:00pm)</i>	April 1 <i>(All day care is available)</i>
October 19 & 20 <i>(All day care is available)</i>	January 15 <i>(All day care is available)</i>	April 10 <i>(Early dismissal – open until 6:00pm)</i>
November 6 <i>(All day care is available)</i>	January 22 <i>(All day care is available)</i>	May 15 <i>(Early dismissal – open until 6:00pm)</i>
November 15 <i>(Early dismissal – open until 6:00pm)</i>	February 7 <i>(Early dismissal – open until 6:00pm)</i>	June 3 <i>(Summer Childcare Begins!)</i>
November 22 <i>(All day care is available)</i>	February 16 <i>(All day care is available)</i>	
December 13 <i>(Early dismissal – open until 6:00pm)</i>	March 13 <i>(Early dismissal – open until 6:00pm)</i>	

Non-School Days that CC/BB is Closed 2023-2024

August 28- September 1	February 19
September 4	March 29
November 23-24	May 27
December 25-26	May 30 - 31
December 29	June 19
January 1	July 4-5

Early Dismissal Days

There will be 8 early dismissal days. These dates will occur on Wednesdays. The following days are the early release days: October 18, November 15, December 13, January 10, February 7, March 13, April 10, and May 15. There will not be afternoon preschool on these days. Childcare will be available for children immediately following school dismissal until 6:00pm. An additional charge of \$11.25 will apply on early dismissal days for school age care.

Enrollment Requirements

Registration forms must be completed and on file prior to the first day a child is scheduled to attend for both summer care and school year care. It is imperative that children's files include current data at all times. If you choose not to re-enroll your child in Bright Beginnings for summer, you may lose your childcare spot for the fall.

The following items must be submitted before a child is considered enrolled. If the desired rooms are at full capacity, families who have fulfilled all enrollment requirements will be given preference over those who have not.

- Cougar Care or Bright Beginnings Registration Form
- Registration Fee (see page 5)
- Copy of current immunizations

- Allergy and or Medication forms (if needed)
- Last page of the Parent Handbook
- Monthly Calendar
- Pre-scheduled meeting with Bright Beginnings lead teacher
- In good standing with billing and payment policy
- In good standing with late pick up policy
- In good standing with behavior and discipline policy

Parents must inform center staff immediately of any changes to address, telephone numbers, employer, emergency contact information, or other important data.

Scheduling Policy

We strive to maintain low staff/child ratios in order to provide children with more individualized care and attention; therefore, it is necessary that families submit an attendance schedule at least two weeks in advance, including approximate times of arrival and departure. You will be charged based on the schedule you submit regardless of reason for absence. Drop in fees will be applied to those days scheduled later than the minimum two-week notice. 24 hour notice needed for drop in care.

Summer scheduling policies are different than during the school year. A discounted summer full-time rate is available when a minimum of 4 days/week, 9 weeks of the summer.

Calendars are due on the 15th of each month for the following month. If your child's calendar is not received by the due date you will be charged a \$10 late fee.

Schedule Changes

A schedule change form is required for all requests for drop-in care and changes made to submitted schedules. These forms are available by the ProCare check in/out clock. Any changes to submitted schedules will be charged a \$3 fee. If a change is made to your schedules less than two weeks in advance, you will be charged the change fee and for the day as originally scheduled. A change in time of pickup or drop off will not be charged the \$3 fee. When submitting a schedule change for drop in care, you will be notified ONLY if we are unable to accommodate your request.

Notification of Absence

Communication is key! The center must be notified in the event that your child will not be attending on a scheduled day. In the event that your child will not be attending as scheduled it is expected that you will call or stop by to let us know. When a child does not show up after school, the staff must spend time on the phone, tracking the child down. This takes away from the rest of the children; therefore, you will be charged a \$5 fee for all unnecessary searches. To report your child's absence please call the center's direct line at 732-4650 or email your child's teacher or the childcare coordinator.

Registration Fees

These fees are due at registration for the fall and summer.

- New Enrollees
 - \$25 – First Child
 - \$15 – Second Child
 - \$0 – Third Child
- Re-Enrollees
 - \$15 – First Child
 - \$15 – Second Child
 - \$0 – Third Child

Bright Beginnings Rates for School Year 2023-2024

- Pre-School Days
 - Scheduled = \$29/child/day
 - Drop In = \$39/child/day
- Non Pre-School Days
 - Scheduled = \$34/child/day
 - Drop In = \$39/child/day
- Calendar Late Fee
 - ***\$10 late fee for calendars received after the 15th of the month for the following month.***

Cougar Care Rates for School Year 2023-2024

- Hourly
 - Morning Scheduled = \$6/morning
 - Morning Drop In = \$8/morning
 - After School Scheduled = \$6/hour
 - After School Drop In = \$8/hour

****A minimum of one hour will be charged for attendance less than 60 minutes. If your child does not attend on a scheduled day you will be charged for the hours you have them scheduled.****

- Contracted
 - Morning Only Contract = \$25/week
 - After School Only Contract = \$45/week
 - Morning and After School Contract = \$65/week
- Non School Days
 - Scheduled Hourly = \$34/child/day
 - Scheduled Contract = \$32/child/day
 - Drop In = \$39/child/day (24 hour notice for a drop in is required)
- Tracking Fee
 - ***\$5 tracking fee if your child doesn't show up and we need to make calls to find them.***
- Calendar Late Fee
 - ***\$10 late fee for calendars received after the 15th of the month for the following month.***

Inclement Weather Policy and Rates

Cougar Care and Bright Beginnings WILL be open when school is cancelled, has a late start, or called early due to inclement weather.

***You must register for this service to receive care on snow days.** Families who register for this service will be billed whether their child attends or not, even if that date is not listed on your child's calendar for that month.

* Registration for Inclement Weather will be sent out in October. A \$10.00 fee will be applied to registrations received after the deadline on the registration form. Registration will be accepted on a space available basis.

*Staffing is set based on pre-registration. Registrations will **NOT** be accepted on an actual snow day, 2-hour late start, or early dismissal days.

If Zumbrota Mazeppa Public Schools announces a 2-hour late start prior to 6:00 am: Cougar Care and Bright Beginnings will operate during the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. All families registered with Cougar Care or Bright Beginnings may use this service. Be sure to send your child(ren) outdoor apparel.

If Zumbrota Mazeppa Public Schools announces a 2-hour late start after 6:00 am: Cougar Care and Bright Beginnings will operate during the hours of 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. All families registered with Cougar Care or Bright Beginnings may use this service. Be sure to send your child(ren) outdoor apparel.

If Zumbrota Mazeppa Public Schools announces a school closing prior to 6:00 am: Cougar Care and Bright Beginnings will operate during the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. All families registered with Cougar Care or Bright Beginnings may use this service. Be sure to send your child(ren) with athletic shoes, outdoor apparel, and a breakfast and lunch.

If Zumbrota Mazeppa Public Schools announces a school closing after 6:00 am: Cougar Care and Bright Beginnings will operate during the hours of 6:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. All families registered with Cougar Care or Bright Beginnings may use this service. Be sure to send your child(ren) with athletic shoes, outdoor apparel, and a breakfast and lunch.

If Zumbrota Mazeppa Public Schools announces an early dismissal due to weather: Cougar Care and Bright Beginnings will operate during the hours of 6:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. All families registered with Cougar Care or Bright Beginnings may use this service.

Please be assured the decision to close or delay opening is made thoughtfully and with the best interest of both children and staff. It is important that parents/guardians develop a backup childcare plan in case CC/BB is canceled or delayed. The safety of children and staff remains the number one priority.

ZM Schools utilizes the Honeywell Instant Alert System which will inform you via email, text message or recorded message on any phone or PDA (based on the profile you have set up online) when a decision has been made to close or delay opening of school due to weather or other conditions. See the explanation of this service and how to subscribe in the next section of this handbook.

Infinite Campus Parent Portal

If you wish to receive phone message alerts about school closing due to inclement weather, electrical outages, etc, you and your child will need to be entered into the Infinite Campus database. Lunch account transactions and balances, grades, attendance, and other vital student information can also be viewed from the parent portal.

Parents of Bright Beginning Children: You can pick up the student enrollment forms and authorization sheet at Bright Beginnings and Cougar Care. When your forms are filled out return this to the childcare coordinator, we can send your information to the ZM District Office to be entered into the Infinite Campus Portal.

Parents of Cougar Care Student in grades K-5: This same information is provided for you through the School Offices when your child is enrolled in the ZM School District.

Billing and Payment Policy

School Year: You will receive a bi-weekly billing statement in your child's file folder every other week. Billing periods begin on a Monday and end on Friday for a two-week period. Fees are due upon receipt of the statement. Payments received later than one week past the statement date will be subject to a late payment fee of \$10. Please contact the program director to make special payment arrangements if need be. Prompt payment is expected and required for our program to function successfully. Please keep accounts in good standing, as a delinquent account is grounds for termination from the program and sent to a collection agency.

Summer: You will receive a weekly billing statement in your child's file folder every week. Billing periods begin on Monday and end on Friday for each week. Advance payments are due on the first day of the week that your child attends for the total number of days your child is scheduled for that week. All late payments will be assessed a \$10 late fee.

Past Due Payments

Payments are due upon receipt of the billing statement. Payments received late will be subject to the late payment fee of \$10. Cougar Care and Bright Beginnings follows the Zumbrota-Mazeppa Public School's process for collecting delinquent fees. After two past due notices have been sent to parents/guardians, all delinquent fees will be turned over to a collection agency. Once an account has been turned over to a collection agency, the parent/guardian will be notified to find alternate care immediately.

Payment Options

You have the option to make childcare payments by check or cash, online, or enroll in the automatic payment method.

- Checks – Make payable to ZM Schools, put checks in the black payment box by the ProCare parent sign in/out station.
- Cash – Make sure you put in an envelope with your child's name on it and put it in the black payment box by the ProCare parent sign in/out station.
- If you want to make online payments yourself, you can set up an account at myprocare.com with the email you provided at registration.
- Automatic Payment - If you want to enroll in the automatic payment method, ask Jordan to send you the link. The link is only good for 24 hours.

Non-Sufficient Funds (NSF) Check

If a check is returned one time due to non-sufficient funds, the parent/guardian will be required to submit all future payments by cash, money order, or cashier's check. The district expects payments of NSF checks within two weeks of the check being returned by the bank. If the NSF check has not been reconciled within that time, the unpaid check will be turned over to a collection agency, and the parent/guardian will be notified to find alternate care immediately.

Dependent Care Reimbursement Forms

Families using employer Dependent Care Reimbursement/Flexible Spending Accounts may submit forms to the childcare coordinator for verification. The forms must be completed except for the authorization signature and should accompany payment. Only the actual amount of childcare paid by the parents/guardians will be verified. Please allow a few days for the forms to be signed and returned. The form will be returned to the child's file folder.

Annual Statement of Childcare Fees

Childcare fees paid may be tax deductible. An annual statement of childcare fees paid for 2022 will be issued by printout and placed in your child's family folder. Parents/guardians need to consult a tax advisor to determine qualification for an education tax credit or deduction.

Late Pick Up Policy

Cougar Care and Bright Beginnings closes promptly at 6:00pm according to the clock at the center. Staff will attempt to be understanding when emergencies arise that may cause parents to be late picking up a child, but it is expected that parents/guardians will call the center's direct number (507-732-4650) as soon as it is known that they will be arriving later than 6:00pm. The family's childcare account will be billed \$1 for every minute past 6:00pm per child. If no phone call has been received at the center, staff will attempt to contact the parents. If unsuccessful, persons listed as authorized emergency contacts will be phoned to come for the child. If no one has arrived to pick up the child by 6:45pm, County Child Protection Services will be called to come and pick up the child. With each late pick-up occurrence, a Late Pick-Up Fee Assessment form will be filled out by the staff and parents will be asked to sign the late fee form. Three late pick-ups in a year may result in termination of childcare services.

Releasing a Child

Children are to be signed in and out each day by the person dropping them off or picking them up, using the ProCare clock. Children will only be released from the center to parents or appointed guardians. Other individuals or emergency contacts authorized to pick up will only be allowed to sign the child out if prior notification has been made to childcare staff by the child's parent or guardian. Authorized pick person must be 16 years of age or older to pick up or drop off. Children will not be allowed to leave school grounds on their own to attend lessons or other activities. In an emergency, a parent/guardian must call to inform the staff that an adult other than an authorized person(s) will pick up the child. The parent/guardian may be asked to describe the person, and the individual picking up the child will need to show picture identification (License). If staff are not comfortable with the situation, they may call the parent/guardian for further clarification. Failure to sign out could result in additional charges being applied to your account.

Snacks and Meals

- Breakfast
 - School day – Breakfast is served on school days. Bright Beginnings kids must be signed up before 7:20 to receive a breakfast from the school. School age kids can walk to breakfast once we release them at 7:30. The child's food service account will be charged the current breakfast rate.
 - Non-School day – You are able to bring a breakfast from home for your child to eat at Cougar Care and Bright Beginnings.
- Lunch
 - School day – Bright Beginnings kids will have the choice to go to hot lunch served at the school or to bring a cold lunch. If you choose the hot lunch, your child's lunch account will be charged the current lunch rate.
 - Non-School day – Children are required to bring their own lunch and drink from home. We are not able to store their lunches in the fridge, so make sure they have a cold pack to keep their food cold. We also are not able to warm up any lunches.
- Snacks
 - A nutritious snack will be provided for an afternoon snack.
 - Parents may bring in snacks for all the children on special occasions. Such snacks must be store bought and cleared with the lead teacher to make sure there are no kids with certain allergies.

Clothing and Other Belongings

Children should wear clothing that is comfortable and appropriate for floor activities, outdoor play and messy experiences. Shoes must be worn at all times (must be closed toe shoes). Please expect that children will play outside during scheduled times except during extreme weather conditions. During the winter months, please be sure to send them with appropriate cold weather clothing and inside shoes. Please be sure that a change of clothes is packed each day.

Children are discouraged from bringing toys, electronics, and money from home. Program staff will NOT be responsible for lost, broken or stolen items. Weapons, toys, or replicas that promote violence in any way (guns, knives, swords, weapon look-a-likes, fireworks, magazines, books, etc.) are not to be brought to childcare. If it is discovered that a child has something of this nature in his/her possession a staff

person will confiscate the item. A parent/guardian will be notified of the situation and the appropriate action will be taken, which may include suspension of childcare services.

Toilet Training

Children enrolled in Cougar Care and Bright Beginnings should be able to attend to their own personal hygiene. Children attending are required to be toilet trained and able to use the bathroom independently before they begin childcare at the center. If your child has an excessive amount of accidents, the staff will communicate with the parents to see if they can come up with a plan for the child to succeed in toileting issues. If the child continues to have accidents regularly, the child will be suspended until they are fully potty-trained. We will hold their spot for the remainder of the year (school/summer). An extra change of clothing should always be packed in child's backpack in case of an accident.

Safety

Safety procedures will be reviewed on an on-going basis. Evacuation and shelter drills will be conducted on a regular basis. All emergency telephone numbers are posted in the center. An emergency radio and flashlight will be available at all times for extreme emergency weather or other emergencies.

The doors to the Cougar Care and Bright Beginnings building will be locked at all times. To enter the building, press the button in the vestibule and a staff member will answer. If no one answers walk around to the side of the building as they maybe outside playing.

Medication and Illness

The administration of medications should be given at home whenever possible, and doctors should be encouraged to schedule medications around the time a child would spend at the center. In order for staff to administer medication, a medication permission form which may be obtained from the childcare coordinator, needs to be completed by the parent or guardian. All medication must be in its original container with a label prepared by a pharmacist or physician. A log of when the medication is given and who administered it will be recorded by center staff. If an over the counter pain reliever is to be given during childcare hours, medication must be in the original container and the container must be sealed.

We ask that if your child is ill, please keep them home. If a child has diarrhea, throws up while at childcare, or has a fever of 100 degrees or higher staff will have the child rest in a quiet area. If a parent cannot be reached, staff will call the alternate phone numbers listed on the enrollment form. The child needs to be picked up within an hour of being notified. The child should not return to school until symptom free for 24 hours (without the use of fever reducing medication). If your child has tested positive for an illness, he/she should stay home until 24 hours after the antibiotic treatment has started.

Please notify childcare staff if your child has the following diseases or conditions. This includes, but is not limited to: Chicken Pox, Head Lice, Fifth's Disease, Influenza, Pinkeye, Whooping Cough, Strep, COVID-19 etc.

Quarantine- COVID-19

Per MDE, if Cougar Care or Bright Beginnings would end up having a participant or staff who is diagnosed with COVID-19, we would reach out to MDH and our local public health agency for further direction and guidance. At this time, per their recommendation, this may mean closing one or multiple classrooms, quarantining staff and students. If your child is quarantined due to a close contact at Cougar Care and Bright Beginnings, you will not be charged childcare fees while your child is in quarantine. If your child is quarantined outside of Cougar Care and Bright Beginnings, you will be charged childcare fees for the days your child is scheduled or be charged per your childcare contract agreement.

Accidents

The childcare program will operate in a manner that minimizes accidents and injuries to children and staff. Should an accident or injury occur, staff will act immediately to administer the following emergency procedures:

- The staff will call for secondary assistance.
- The staff will carry out immediate first aid.
- A staff member will call the parents if necessary and/or fill out an injury report.
- If parents or alternate emergency numbers cannot be reached, the program will have the authority to call 911 for treatment and/or transportation to a medical facility. A staff member will accompany the injured child to the hospital and stay until the parent or guardian arrives.
- In life threatening emergency situations, the staff may need to contact the local emergency unit before calling the parent.

Parent and Staff Communication

During the school year, each classroom will have a monthly newsletter either printed and put in the child's file folder and/or emailed out to the parents. For kids in the Bright Beginnings program, there will be a "Daily Memo" that will be sent home every day that your child is here.

During the summer months, the newsletters will be posted on bulletin boards in the hallways. There is also weekly agendas outside of each classroom door.

Cougar Care and Bright Beginnings also has a Facebook page. You will find important information on this page and daily fun that the kids are having.

It is an expectation that parents read these newsletters and daily memos to be informed of important deadlines, etc. throughout the year.

Policies Regarding Families in Transition

It is the mission of the Cougar Care and Bright Beginnings programs to support families and to promote positive development for children. We recognize that some families are in transition and may be experiencing separation and/or divorce. In order to provide the best possible care for your child, it is important that good relations are maintained with all the significant adults in his/her life. Cougar Care and Bright Beginnings staff are sensitive to the issues of divorce and separation. Please make an appointment to meet privately with the director and the lead teacher(s) to discuss any matters of importance in relation to the divorce/separation and any other issues that may help us in the care of your child. For instance, we need to be very clear in regard to the following:

- What the custody arrangement are.
- Which parent to contact first for general questions and in an emergency.
- Whether duplicated program information should be sent to both parents.
- Who is responsible for childcare payments.
- Which parent will pick up the child on which days.
- Who the other significant adults are in the child's life and their relationship to the child, especially if we are to have contact with them as well.
- It will also be helpful to discuss the child's general feelings as you see it so we may be appropriately responsive to your child when he/she is with us

Also, in an effort to minimize situations which may be uncomfortable for you, your child, and our staff, we ask that parents refrain from talking about custody issues, visitation disputes and problems with, or talking negatively about, the child's other parent in front of the children. Please note, we cannot deny a parent access to their child upon the word of the other parent unless we have a copy of a court order stating that this is the case. If there are concerns of which we need to be aware, please arrange to meet privately with the director or lead teacher. The child's wellbeing is the main priority and we need to be able to maintain good relations with both parents.

Guidance Policy

The program is committed to a discipline policy which will enhance the health and safety of all children and adults in the program. Cougar Care and Bright Beginnings will strive to provide a rich environment for your child, an environment that is safe and supports your child's development. Program staff will strive to implement a positive approach to discipline through learning and positive re-direction.

- Staff is expected to act as positive role models.
- Both the group as a whole and the needs of the students will be taken into consideration.
- Rules will be appropriate for each child's age and stage of development.
- Rules will be consistently implemented.
- The reason for each rule will always be explained and related to the child's wellbeing, and to the rights and safety of others.

Physical fighting will be prohibited. Children will be encouraged to work out their disagreements on their own. "Time Out" and redirection will be used when necessary, as well as loss of privileges. Corporal punishment and emotional abuse of a child are strictly prohibited.

Persistent behavior problems will be documented. Parents, supervisor, and the director will work together in solving the problem. If the behavior problem continues, and disrupts the management/operation of the program, the child may be dismissed from the program.

Right to Refuse Service

Cougar Care and Bright Beginnings reserves the right to refuse service to a child if it is determined that the program cannot meet the needs of the child. In the event that the program determines a child should be dismissed, the parents will be given adequate notice so other childcare arrangements can be made.

Reasons for termination from the program may include, but is not limited to:

- Abusive language and/or threatening behavior toward staff or other children by child or parent.
- Parent(s) arrive for pick-up after 6:00pm more than three times during the year.

- Failure to pay for services, or to contact program coordinator to develop a workable plan for payment within 14 days of receiving a billing statement. Notice of discontinuation of childcare services due to non-payment may be put into effect immediately and without warning. Billing statements and/or past due letters sent would serve as adequate notice.
- It is decided that the program can no longer meet the needs of the child.
- Blatant disregard of childcare policies and procedures.

Parents are encouraged to express dissatisfaction in writing, directly to the childcare director if they are uncomfortable talking directly with the staff person involved or lead teacher. It is not ethical to involve other staff or parents in an individual concern, and it is not ethical to have that concern affect staff relationships. It is also not ethical to involve outside agencies before going to the director with concerns.

Behavior Expectations

1. Respect Authority
2. Respect Rights of Others
3. Respect Property
4. Display Appropriate Social Skills
5. Display Positive and Productive Character

Behavior Consequences (Severe behavior may move to Step 3 or higher**)**

Behavior plans will be made with the Coordinator, Lead Teacher, and Parent/Guardian with the best interest of the child and children attending the center.

Step 1: *Warning*

Student is warned to stop inappropriate behavior.

Step 2: *Time Out*

Length of time may vary according to each situation.

Step 3: *First Behavior Plan (for serious problems/repeat offenses)*

Staff member will write an incident report of what happened. Staff will determine what type of behavior modification needs to take place. Ex: Time out, social stories, behavior chart. Parent will be notified and receive a copy of the incident report.

Step 4: *Second Behavior Plan*

Staff member will write an incident report of what happened. A meeting will be arranged with the parent, guardian, lead teacher, and coordinator to create a behavior plan. Parent will be notified and receive a copy of the incident report and behavior plan.

Step 5: *Third Behavior Plan*

Cougar Care and Bright Beginnings reports the incident to the parents. The student will be suspended from Cougar Care and Bright Beginnings for three days. (Parent will have one day

notice where the child may attend Cougar Care and Bright Beginnings while the parent finds childcare for the following three days). The student may return after the three day suspension.

Step 6: *Suspension from Cougar Care and Bright Beginnings for School Year or Summer*

Parent is called and requested to pick up the student immediately. Student, parent, and childcare coordinator (along with any other staff) work out a plan for return at the beginnings of new program (summer or school year).

Step 7: *Permanent Suspension from Cougar Care and Bright Beginnings*

No warning will be given for inappropriate behavior that causes physical or extreme emotional harm to another child/children or for leaving the designated area without a supervisor or permission to do so.

Parent Involvement and Responsibilities

The Cougar Care and Bright Beginnings programs are enriched by partnership between parents and school staff. Active participation in the following necessary and appreciated:

- Inform center staff immediately of changes to phone numbers, addresses, emergency contact information, health issues, medications, etc.
- Submit schedules and schedule changes promptly.
- Check the parent area for new information and reminders.
- Read newsletters, announcements, permission slips and respond promptly to meet deadlines.
- Call to inform staff if your child will not be attending for the day.
- Sign child in and out using the ProCare clock each day.
- Be prompt in picking up child. Please call if you anticipate arriving after 6:00pm.
- Communicate concerns, suggestions, questions, or compliments to program staff.
- Listen to concerns of staff members regarding your child and cooperatively work towards an agreeable solution to any problems.
- Dress children appropriately for indoor and outdoor activities; boots, mittens, coats, snow pants are a must during cold months.
- Do not allow child to bring toys of a violent nature.
- Inform staff if a child has been exposed to a communicable disease.
- Encourage child to return materials, equipment and supplies to appropriate areas before leaving the center for the day.
- Pay bills promptly.

Children's Responsibilities and Expectations

Cougar Care and Bright Beginnings expect that children will maintain age-appropriate behavior.

For school aged children the expectations are as follows:

- Be responsible for their actions.
- Respect the rules and follow directions.
- Respect the rights of others – keep hands and feet to self.
- Respect program and school property and the property of others. Return toys and materials appropriately before taking out something else.
- Use acceptable language at all times.
- Remain with a staff person at all times.
- Assist in cleanup throughout the day.

For preschool age children:

- Preschool age children should show progress in learning how to meet the expectations listed above.

If it is found that a child's behavior is detrimental to themselves, other children, or staff, the parent or guardian will be expected to take an active role in solving the problem. In some cases, a child may be suspended from the program until a behavior modification plan is developed between staff and parent/guardian. Unsuccessful attempts to modify a child's detrimental behavior could result in termination of childcare services.

Since children are supervised in a group setting, their behavior is not expected to routinely require one-on-one supervision. If it is found that a child would benefit from one-on-one staffing to insure the safety and well-being of their self and others, this option will be evaluated and could possibly be implemented through the involvement of the child's parent or guardian.

Staff Responsibilities and Expectations

The program expects that staff will:

- Treat all children and families with respect.
- Celebrate the individuality and diversity of all children within the program.
- Instill societal values through direct teaching and role modeling.
- Apply program rules consistently and fairly to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children.
- Always be expected to practice professionalism.

Cougar Care and Bright Beginnings staff are here to provide your child a safe, welcoming environment by offering opportunities for building valuable life-long skills and meaningful relationships. We look forward to working with you and helping your child grow!

Contact Information

Cougar Care and Bright Beginnings Childcare Center

Address: 799 Mill Street, Zumbrota, MN 55992

Phone: 507-732-4650

Jordan Pahl – Childcare Coordinator: jordanp@zmsch.k12.mn.us

Stephanie Gosse – Bright Beginnings 4 Year Old Lead Teacher/Assistant to the Coordinator:
stephanieg@zmsch.k12.mn.us

Kim Kell – Bright Beginnings 3 Year Old Lead Teacher: brightbegin@zmsch.k12.mn.us

Madison Pahl – Bright Beginnings Lead Teacher: madisonm@zmsch.k12.mn.us

Parent/Guardian Childcare Contract

I have read and understand the contents of the Cougar Care and Bright Beginnings Parent Handbook. I agree to abide by the policies contained within.

Child's Name: _____

Parents Signature: _____

Date: _____

Cougar Care School Year Fee Option

I agree to pay the weekly fee specified below for childcare services rendered by Cougar Care during the 2023/2024 school year. Specific terms of this agreement are as follows:

- The weekly fee will not apply to the days off during first week of school, MEA, Thanksgiving break, winter break, or the last week of school.
- I understand that a non-school day discounted rate of \$32.00(contract) or \$34.00 (hourly) will apply to a non-school day only if my child is scheduled 2 weeks in advance of that day. If not scheduled 2 weeks in advance the rate will be \$39.00.
- The weekly fee will not be adjusted if my child does not attend on a regularly scheduled day.
- I understand that the weekly fee will apply until the end of the school year or until I terminate the agreement by written notification submitted to the program coordinator 2 weeks before the last day.
- I understand that additional hourly rates may apply on a late start or early release days.

Please check the option of your choice:

- ☐ Contract Morning Care ONLY - \$25.00/week
- ☐ Contract After School Care ONLY - \$45.00/week
- ☐ Contract Morning AND After School Care - \$65.00/week
- ☐ Hourly: Scheduled certain mornings and/or afternoons - \$6.00/hour

Child's Name: _____

Parent's Signature: _____ Date: _____