



Bella Mente Early Learning Center

Parent Handbook 2023

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Welcome to Bella Mente!

We are excited for your family to have the opportunity to be a part of the Bella Mente Community. Your child is about to embark on a journey of discovery, learning and fun. Part of that process means getting messy. We, at Bella Mente, believe that play and exploration are an essential part of the developmental process so please dress your children in clothes for painting, touching, squishing, climbing and splashing.

On your first day, please make sure to bring:

- All Paperwork included in this handbook filled out in its entirety
- A family picture
- Your child's emergency kit- more info on page 28

Every day your child will need (these items may be kept in your child's cubby):

- A sack lunch (all infant room food must be brought in by the parent)
- Rest time comfort items (blanket, binky, stuffed animal, etc.)
- Three complete change of clothes including a pair of shoes or rain boots
- Diapers/pull-ups (if not potty trained)

Please go through this handbook before signing the agreement form. We are so glad to have you join us in our Bella Mente community!

-Lauren

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Mission Statement

Bella Mente creates challenging learning environments, where children are fully engaged in the “work” of exploring, testing and discovering their world, challenging themselves with the questions that arise in their minds, or those of others.

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in Bella Mente Early Learning Center. My name is Lauren Adams. I have been working with children for over 20 years. In addition to having an 19-year-old daughter and 10 year-old son, I have been a nanny, a substitute preschool teacher, an assistant at an in-home preschool and childcare, and in many different childcare centers. I absolutely love what I do and I know that it shows in the way that I interact with the children that I care for. I enjoy knowing that what we do is shaping children into who they will be as adults. That being said, we focus on teaching independence, confidence, self-worth, love for each other and respect towards people and things.

In order to make our relationship as enjoyable as possible, the following pages contain mutually beneficial requirements, which are necessary to ensure that there are no misunderstandings between parent and provider. The purpose of this handbook is to outline the policies and procedures under which we operate as a licensed child care provider. We give the children in our care opportunities to learn in a family-like setting with mixed age groups, where they can feel safe and loved. In our care, with your help, your child can begin to build a positive self-image. Your child will receive quality personal and individualized care in a warm and loving environment. Your child will have the opportunity to gain practice in large motor skills, small motor skills, language, math, science, art, social interaction, and self-help skills. Your questions and comments are important so we can achieve the very best experiences for your child.

Our Philosophy

The staff at Bella Mente Early Learning Center are committed to providing a high quality program for young children and their families. The program is designed to promote the

development of the total individual by helping each child develop skills in the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive areas. This is accomplished by providing a balanced program that includes both teacher-directed and child-initiated activities, quiet as well as active experiences, and the recognition that learning occurs in both formal and informal settings, especially through play.

We believe strongly that children learn through hands-on experience and play— where they are allowed to "get messy". Children, when provided with a variety of age-appropriate choices, will learn through discovery, inventing and experimenting within an enriched environment. Through play there is no need to produce a specific product and no right or wrong answers. We encourage children to act, sing, dance, joke, and laugh because a child's ability to pretend in play is a way of enlarging his or her view of the world. It is a step toward literacy, and play often reflects the creative inner self.

We believe that children need to be sheltered from the stresses of our adult lives as much as possible. Children need creative environments where fun, laughter and playfulness as well as learning occupy their waking hours. Children should not be rushed through childhood but allowed to have fun and enjoy it. Children should have routines but also opportunities for them to make their own choices to encourage independence and self-control. In dealing with conflicts, I think communication is the key to solving problems. Teaching a child the skills to negotiate, to acknowledge mistakes, and come up with solutions will help them throughout life. It is important to me that my ideas and opinions show in my work, and I will continue to teach your child with the same perspective.

Curriculum Inspired by the Reggio Emilia Philosophy

The Bella Mente curriculum is based on the knowledge that young children learn through active exploration of their environment. This occurs optimally when their physical needs are met and they feel emotionally secure. Instilling in children a sense of security and trust will be of utmost importance. Staff will create classroom learning environments appropriate to the

developmental needs of the various age groups and will provide for the needs of individual children.

History of Reggio Emilia

Immediately after World War II, a town in Northern Italy called Reggio Emilia decided to bring hope to their families. Out of the ruins, they constructed quality preschools for their children. In present times, Reggio Emilia has been broadly recognized for having some of the best preschools in the world. The Reggio Emilia approach to education is committed to the creation of a learning environment that will enhance and facilitate children's construction of his or her own powers of thinking through the combination of all the expressive, communicative and cognitive languages. The Reggio Emilia approach is based upon the following principles:

- **Emergent Curriculum-** an emergent curriculum is one that builds upon the interests of children. Topics for study are captured from the talk of children, through community or family events, as well as the known interests of children (puddles, shadows, dinosaurs, etc.). Collaborative planning is an essential component of the emergent curriculum. Teachers work together to formulate hypotheses about the possible directions of a project, the materials needed, and possible family and/or community support and involvement.
- **Project Work-** Projects, also emergent, are in-depth studies of concepts, ideas, and interests, which arise within the group. Considered as an adventure, projects may last one week or could continue throughout the school year. Throughout a project, teachers help children make decisions about the direction of study, the ways in which the group will research the topic, the representational medium that will demonstrate and showcase the topic and the selection of materials needed to represent the work. Long-term projects enhance lifelong learning.

- **Representational Development-** Consistent with Howard Gardner's notion of schooling for multiple intelligences, the Reggio Emilia approach calls for the integration of the graphic arts as a tool for cognitive, linguistic, and social development. Presentation of concepts and hypotheses in multiple forms of representation— print, art, clay, construction, drama, music, puppetry, and shadow play— are viewed as essentials to children's understanding of experiences.
- **Collaboration-** Collaborative group work, both large and small, is considered valuable and necessary to advance cognitive development. Children are encouraged to dialogue, critique, compare, negotiate, hypothesize, and problem solve through group work. Within the Reggio Emilia approach, multiple perspectives promote both a sense of group membership and the uniqueness of self. There is high emphasis on the collaboration among home, school and community to support the learning of the child.

Teachers as Researchers

The teacher's role within the Reggio Emilia approach is complex. Working as co-teachers, the role of the teacher is first and foremost to be that of learner alongside the children. The teacher is a researcher, a resource and guide as she/he lends expertise to children. Within such a teacher- researcher role, educators carefully listen, observe, and document children's work and the growth of community in their classroom and provoke, co construct, and stimulate thinking, and children's collaboration with peers. Teachers are committed to reflection about their own teaching and learning.

Documentation

Similar to the portfolio approach, documentation of children's work in progress is viewed as an important tool in the learning process for children, teachers, and parents. Pictures of children

engaged in experiences, their words as they discuss what they are doing, feeling, thinking, and the children's interpretation of experiences through the visual media are displayed as a graphic presentation of the dynamics of learning. Documentation is used as assessment and advocacy.

The role of three teachers

Reggio Emilia schools believe that there are three primary teachers for our children. The first teacher is that of the parent, the second teacher is the classroom teacher and the third teacher is the environment.

The role of the parent

The active participation of parents in the life of the school is an essential component of the educational experience. Families are actively involved in meetings, conferences, celebrations and events. Parents become a part of the school by not only receiving feedback from teachers about their child's work but also when decisions about the school and about educational approaches are taken. Partnering with families is essential for consistent, positive experiences both at home and at school. Parents are aware of what is happening in the classroom through posting of daily routines, projection plans and community events. Teachers provide electronic assessments on each child's development and we provide opportunities to learn more about the development of young children through family meetings, articles recommended and the Family Resource Library. This all supports an open environment of communication between the families and the teachers.

The role of the teacher

Teachers play a critical role in preparing your child for a lifetime of learning. All of the full-time teachers are highly experienced educators in the development of young children. Our expectations are high and we demand nothing less than the following from our teaching teams:

- To help children see the connections in learning and experiences.
- To co-explore the learning experience with the children.
- To provoke ideas, to problem solve, and to practice conflict resolution.
- To take ideas from the children and return them for further exploration.
- To organize the classroom and materials to be aesthetically pleasing.
- To organize materials to help children make thoughtful decisions about the media.
- To help children express their knowledge through representational work.
- To document children's progress; journals, photographs, and portfolios.
- To have a dialogue about the projects with parents and other teachers.
- To foster the connection between home, school, and community.

The role of the environment

The environment is designed to provide a variety of sensory experiences in an aesthetically pleasing manner, using both the indoors and outdoors as learning spaces. Classrooms are bright with large windows and doorways to the playground for the younger children. Items found in nature are incorporated into the classroom materials and considered an important part of developing an appreciation for the world around us. Similarly, "loose parts" make up a majority of our materials in the classroom. These materials are open-ended and allow the children to get creative and use their imagination as they incorporate them into their play. Teachers carefully arrange the room and display all materials so that children can make thoughtful decisions when working and exploring. Documentation of children's works, plans, and collections that have been made from outings are displayed at both the children's and adult eye level. Common space is available to all children in the classroom that includes a house area complete with dramatic play clothes, an atelier/art center with lots of clay and other mediums, a communication area containing reading and writing materials, and construction for block building along with manipulative and puzzles. The classrooms provide an enriched environment that nourishes each child's development.

Curriculum Goals

Helping children:

- Develop expressive and receptive oral language.
- To become an independent thinker who is able to make choices and decisions.
- Move from the need for outer authority to the control of his/her own behavior (self-discipline).
- Develop confidence in his/her ability to achieve goals through independent effort as well as teamwork.
- Develop an understanding of feelings and how feelings motivate behavior; help the child gain control over how feelings are expressed and learn acceptable ways of dealing with, and expressing strong feelings.
- Develop the social skills needed to be successful in interpersonal relations, to function successfully in the peer group and to learn from peers.
- Learn to respect, value, and have tolerance for individual, cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity.
- Develop interest and ability to process graphic symbols (such as letters, use of sign language) and associated pictures and language in its written form (early reading and writing).
- Develop intellectual curiosity, skills in observing, problem solving, and learning through his/her efforts (science/math).
- Provide information on, and experience with, the social and physical world that the child needs to function adequately (social studies).
- Develop the aesthetic sensibilities and horizons through artistic, academic, and intellectual experiences, especially art, music and creativity.

General Information

Ages Served

Bella Mente enrolls children from 3 months to 5 years of age— the year before Kindergarten. Additionally, we have an after school program, and summer camp that enrolls school age children Kindergarten to age 10.

Equal Rights

Membership and registration for all programs and classes are open to the total community regardless of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, age, physically challenged or sex.

Special Needs Children

Notify the Director if your child has a condition, which may have the potential for a medical emergency or any behavioral, physical or mental challenge that may lessen the child's potential to fully participate in classroom activities. Teachers, aides and parents may be made aware of any conditions so that they may know how to react if an emergency should arise and be able to interact with your child at an optimal level. Parents may need to provide a full time aide for their child if requested by Bella Mente.

Ratios

These are the programs we offer. Fees are based on the ratio and ages of the child. When your child moves from one room to the next, your rate will be adjusted. Adult to child ratios are as follows

Newcomer	Acclimation	Independence	Adventure	Maven	Memore
1:4	1:7			1:10	1:15

Hours of Operation

Monday through Friday; 7.30am - 5:30 pm.

Billing and Tuition

Tuition is a flat monthly fee. If a holiday falls on a regularly scheduled day, participants pay the same rate for the month.

Tuition for all classes is due on the first day of each month. All monthly tuition payments received five working days after the first day of each month are to include a late fee of \$10.00. There will be an additional \$10.00 fee for each week the tuition is late. A daily rate is used when a child attends any additional days to his/her regular schedule and/or when a child begins the program mid- month. In the event of an emergency shut down outside of our control, we will evaluate each situation and communicate the next steps with respect to billing and tuition.

Evaluation of rates

Childcare tuition is evaluated annually in the fall. Families will be given a one-month notice of any increase.

Payment Procedures

We can receive payment in four forms:

Check: If you prefer to write a check, you can place it in your child's classroom envelope located on the information board.

ACH or Card Via Quickbooks: If you prefer to pay directly from your invoice with ACH or Card, please use the link address below to select your desired payment and the fees associated with it. [Bellamente.org/quickbooks](https://bellamente.org/quickbooks)

BECU: If you are a member with BECU you can Pay with direct BECU transfer by filling out the form at this link: bellamente.org/becu

Substitute Days

If a child does not attend school because of illness, holidays or unexpected closures due to weather, monthly tuition will not be affected.

Attendance Changes

If a family plans to leave Bella Mente, we require a 30-day notice. If we are notified in less than 30 days, families are responsible for fees for the next month or fees that complete the 30 days.

Late Fees

A late pick up fee of \$1.00 per minute after 5:30pm will be assessed. This charge will appear on your next monthly statement.

Unpaid Bills

If a check or payment is returned from the bank for insufficient funds, closed account or other reason so that Bella Mente is unable to collect the funds, the person or family writing the check will be assessed \$15.00 for the returned check.

Holidays

Our yearly closures are written in advance on our [calendar website](#). Please keep track of these to stay on top of days your child will be in school. Reminders will be posted at school a week in advance.

Communication

To provide the best possible care, please feel free to communicate any needs, wants, and/or concerns regarding your child directly to your child's teacher or Lauren if in person. If you are needing to communicate any information outside of in person, please reach out to Lauren directly by text or email. It is only through parent/provider interaction that a goal of quality nurturing care can be achieved. Each classroom has a corresponding Facebook page, please join. We know many of you are not on facebook, but we wanted to share the wonderful opportunities it has to offer. This is a place for us to document the learning in the classroom. We can share those special moments, our posts can be great conversation starters with your children, and it is a place where we hope the families can connect and keep that sense of community. If you are not part of your child's private facebook group and would like to be, please reach out.

Back-up Childcare

Please have back-up childcare in case your child is sick.

Behavior Management & Discipline

Our philosophy is that you use discipline to teach a child. We achieve this through love, consistency, and firmness. The children are explained the rules of their classroom frequently so that they know the guidelines. Once a child understands the rules and disobeys them, hurts others or property, developmentally appropriate guidance techniques will be used. We will use appropriate consequences for their actions. For example, if a child hits another child, the teacher will explain how he/she understands that they are frustrated, and it's okay to be frustrated, but we can't hit. We will show the child the effect that their actions have had on the child that they struck and show them that they have "hurt their friends' bodies and feelings." We will talk about why they did that, what it didn't solve and try to convince them that in the future it is more beneficial to use words rather than actions when problem solving with their peers. They

will then be asked to check in with the other child that they hit and asked not to do it again. We will never use bodily harm in disciplining a child and ask that that type of punishment is not used when you are disciplining your child on the premises. We also will never punish children for toilet accidents or any other accidental spills or breaks.

Child Abuse

We are required by law to report to the local Social Services Office any suspected physical, emotional, sexual or suspected abuse or neglect. We do not condone physical punishment; please refrain from doing so on any part of the Bella Mente property. As stated before, we are mandated reporters and if any staff sees this happening, a CPS file will be reported.

Potty Training

We will be more than happy to help with potty training provided that it is not done before the child is ready. Parents are asked to initiate the training at home (on vacation or a weekend) before starting it at Bella Mente. There are bathrooms throughout the facility and in each classroom where potty training is taking place.

Typically when families reach our Independence classroom, the topic of Potty Training comes up. We are excited to be part of this skill building and want to outline what that looks like in our school setting.

Potty Training at home looks very different than it does at school. Prior to beginning potty training in your home and with us at school, please review our website for more detailed information on potty training: bellamente.org/pottytraining

Contact us

Contact us with any questions at 206-321-6448 or at bellamentearlylearning@gmail.com

Starting at Bella Mente

Enrollment Procedures

The following forms are required by the state of Washington and need to be completed prior to placement:

- Registration form signed by parent or guardian, which includes the date of last physical examination.
- Complete record of immunizations
- Signed consent for child to receive medical treatment, medicine, and to participate in any trip off-premises.
- Signed contract.
- Paid deposit and registration fees. Until this is paid, your spot will not be held and is not guaranteed to remain available.
- Emergency Kit- Please refer to the enrollment form section for a list of supplies you will need for your child's age group to keep in an emergency container at our center.

Notes:

- All forms must be updated at least once a year or sooner according to need.
- The registration/fee must be paid prior to admission. A position will not be held if the above requirements are not met.

Needed supplies

Although most things are supplied by Bella Mente, there are some items we ask that you bring so your child is comfortable during their time here. The items that you are responsible for having for your child are as follows:

Infants/Toddlers:

- Bottles

- Diapers
- Formula, breastmilk, cereal or baby food
- Change of clothing
- Coat
- Sunscreen
- Blanket
- Any comfort items such as bear, binky, etc

Preschoolers:

- Coat
- Sunscreen
- Change of clothing
- Comfort items for nap
- Blanket

Toys from home

Children may bring a toy, blanket, stuffed animal or doll from home. These home items are frequently important to help your child bridge the distance from home to school and can be a comfort if your child feels stress during the day. Some items should NOT come to school. Such as: candy or gum, make-up or nail polish or anything small enough that can be swallowed.

Signing In and Out

When dropping off children and picking them up, it is required that you sign in using your complete signature and note the time. Children are not allowed to sign themselves in or out, even for fun. Only adults authorized on the registration form or who have written permission by

the enrollment parent or guardian are allowed to remove a child from the center.

Please notify Lauren via text or email when your child will be absent on a scheduled day. We ask this of you when children do not come on their scheduled day in case there are unusual circumstances to be addressed. Also, we may be able to adjust our staff, if we know we are not waiting for someone who is not going to arrive.

Saying "Goodbye"

It is always best to warn your child when you are getting ready to leave. You might say, "I'll be leaving when we finish reading this book," and then say goodbye and go as quickly as you can. Some children like to know when they are going to be picked up. Try being precise, "I will be back at 4:30 to pick you up," or "I will pick you up after snack." Children are more comfortable when they know what to expect. Even if a child seems too young to understand, they will hear the reassurance in your voice and soon it will make sense. Parents are very welcome to stay and visit with their child. If you delay leaving or begin to leave and return and leave again, it's hard on your child. It says to your child that you are not too sure things are okay. If you feel guilty leaving your child, that's normal! Talk with Lauren or your child's teacher to help with saying goodbye. It might be necessary for the teacher to hold the child while the parent leaves. All children, given time, develop their own routine around separation and it becomes a natural part of the day.

Parents at Bella Mente

Parents are always welcome to visit their children. We encourage you to spend time visiting or playing before and after work. Take time to come have lunch with your child and get to know their classmates. Spending time at Bella Mente gives all of our children the message that we are interested in them and we value their school experience. We encourage you to volunteer at Bella Mente. This could be taking the opportunity to read to the class or share your occupation with the children. Keep an eye out, we will have a new activity sign up each month.

Meals

We serve a morning and afternoon snack, as well as a snack right before closing. You are responsible for providing lunch for your child.

USDA Food Program Recommended Meal Sizes		
Breakfast	1-3 year old children	3-6 year old children
Milk	1/2 cup	3/4 cup
Juice/Fruit/Vegetable	1/4 cup	1/2 cup
Bread or alternate, or dry cereal or cooked cereal	1/2 slice 1/4 cup 1/4 cup	1/2 slice 1/3 cup 1/4 cup
Lunch	1-3 year old children	3-6 year old children
Milk	1/2 cup	3/4 cup
Meat/Poultry/Fish or cheese cottage cheese, cheese food	1 ounce 1 ounce 2 ounce	1 1/2 ounce 1 1/2 ounce 3 ounce
Juice/Fruit/Vegetable	1/4 cup	1/2 cup
Bread or alternate	1/2 slice	1/2 slice
Snack (2 of following)	1-3 year old children	3-6 year old children
Milk	1/2 cup	1/2 cup
Juice/Fruit/Vegetable	1/2 cup	1/2 cup
Meat or alternate	1/2 ounce	1/2 ounce
Bread or alternate	1 slice	1 slice

Naps and rest periods

Rest periods are provided for all children after their designated lunchtime. Please be aware of your child's lunch and rest time. We appreciate not dropping off or picking up your child during this time. It is disruptive to the whole class. We realize this cannot be avoided at times. Please

contact Lauren in advance, or let your child's teacher know at drop off so they are able to make the transition as quickly and quietly as possible. Non-napping children: Preschool age children may outgrow the need for a nap. We still require that they rest their body during this time so that those children sleeping around them can do so quietly.

Outdoor/Messy play

We play outside most days, rain or shine. Fresh air keeps us all healthier and happier. Please dress your child for the weather and be prepared for any changes that may occur during the day so that your child will be able to play comfortably.

We love to get messy!!! The messier we play, the more fun we have. Please don't send your child in clothing that you want to be kept nice and stain free.

Field Trips

Bella Mente Early Learning students will periodically take field trips. Field trips provide a unique learning experience for students within their own community. We have two types of field trips; Walking field trips and larger scheduled trips.

Walking Fieldtrips will:

- Never exceed 2 hours
- Be age appropriate for each of our classes
- A note will be placed on the door when the class leaves
- Staff will have First Aid Kits and phones for emergencies

This includes but is not limited to:

- The Garden lot next to our playground
- Art Studio
- The walk between classrooms and the playgrounds
- Trash runs to the basement (may use elevator)
- Walks around the neighborhood

Larger Field Trips requiring transportation:

All large field trips will be scheduled in advance. We will provide permission slips that provide all information needed including location and transportation needed.

Pets at Bella Mente

Pets provide a great learning experience and are a comfort to children and adults during long days at the center. In the classroom and throughout the building there are fish, turtles and lizards as well as frogs and axolotls that make Bella Mente their home. To maintain a healthy environment, resident animals have their health needs assessed regularly. Children have the opportunity to learn to feed and water small animals and to treat them gently and with respect. When handling pets, children work with the teaching staff and are taught about safety and hygiene, as well as pet enjoyment.

Birthdays and Special Occasions

We recognize all of the yearly holidays. I take them for what they are and do not add a religious spin to any of them. For example, Christmas is about reindeer and Santa and elves and we will not be talking about the birth of Jesus. We think that religion is for your family to decide and explain and we will keep it that way. We will post our project outlines in each of the classrooms. Feel free to look it over and if you think that anything we are going over is inappropriate or offensive in any way please let me know and we can discuss how to resolve your concerns.

I also really enjoy celebrating children's birthdays. It makes them feel special and gives the other children the opportunity to show appreciation to them. Traditionally, parents will bring treats of some kind to share with classmates on the day closest to their birthday. Let me know in advance if you are able to do so, so that we can have a little party and wish your child a happy birthday. It is fun for everyone and gives us all something to celebrate.

School Age Program

We have an after school program at Bella Mente that serves various schools with SPS. Our school agers follow our same philosophy and take it a step further by working with our school community. Our leadership program provides opportunities for older students to help in the younger rooms. Our younger students admire our big kids and our big kids love to use and teach all the cool skills they are learning.

For summer camp and longer breaks, we often use our 15 passenger van to take impromptu trips to the library, nearby parks, or low tide beaches, etc. There is a van permission trip that we have each family sign that is notice that we will be doing these trips. If you are planning to drop off after 10am or before 3:30pm please let us know in advance.

Health and Safety

Policies and Procedures

Minor injuries are carefully evaluated and typically soap and water along with a band-aid or ice pack is all that is needed. Families sign a Permission Form at the time of enrollment authorizing the use of sunscreen.

Injury and Emergency Medical Care

In case of a serious accident or sudden illness requiring medical attention, the following procedures are followed:

- A phone call is made to 911
- Child's parents (or emergency contacts) are called
- Child and health records are taken to the closest available emergency room, unless specified by the parent to do something different.

It is extremely important, especially in instances of illness or emergency that the emergency contact information is up to date and all information is correct. Please report any changes immediately to keep your emergency contact information current.

For minor injuries like bumps and bruises, we will provide first aid. If the injury is more serious, (i.e. needs stitches, broken arm, or dislocation, etc.) the parent will be notified immediately. Parents will be responsible for all costs involved in emergency medical treatment, including emergency transportation if required.

Illness

Parents are asked to notify Belle Mente if their child is absent for any reason. If a child develops a contagious disease (i.e. RSV, strep throat, ringworm, chicken pox, COVID), parents of all children exposed to the disease will be notified via written notice. A child who has had an illness should not return to school until released by the physician and is able to participate in the program as usual. A child showing symptoms of illness while at school will be isolated until he or she can be taken home. Fevers are general indicators of illness. A child who has a 100.8° Fahrenheit temperature is required to go home. Parents or their designees are expected to pick up the child within one hour of the time they are contacted. If the child is sent home from school ill, a physician's note authorizing the child's return to group care may be requested, depending on circumstances. Children are also expected to be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. This measure is necessary in order to comply with state law and curtail the spread of infection. Bella Mente reserves the right to refuse care due to illness.

Health Regulations require that children should be kept home from school if: their illness prevents them from participating comfortably in activities; the illness requires greater care than teachers can provide; or the illness is known to be contagious. Fever, unusual lethargy, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, and other signs of severe illness are reasons for exclusion. In addition, the

American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children be excluded from child care for the following reasons:

- Diarrhea or vomiting— two or more times in the previous 24 hours
- Infectious mouth sores
- Rash with fever and behavior change
- Pink or red conjunctivitis with white or yellow discharge
- Ringworm
- Infections tuberculosis
- COVID- may return 5 days after day 1 of testing positive, if symptoms are relieving
- Strep throat— return 24 hours after treatment is initiated & when the child is fever free
- Head lice— may return the morning after first treatment
- Scabies— may return after final treatment
- Pertussis— may return after five days of appropriate antibiotic treatment
- Chicken pox— sixth day after onset of rash or when lesions have dried and crusted
- Mumps— may return 9 days after onset of parotid gland swelling
- Hepatitis A virus— may return one week after illness and jaundice have disappeared

THIS IS NOT AN EXHAUSTIVE LIST. Parents are advised to use their best judgment. A child should remain at home if he/she is infectious and until he/she is free of fever for 24 hours after an illness. Certain medications, such as antibiotics, must be given for 24 hours prior to the child's return.

Medication Policy

If a child should require medication while in our care, staff can administer the medication if the following conditions are met:

- The Parent completes a medication form requesting that the full-time Teacher administers the medication. You can print blank copies from the website: <https://www.bellamente.org/forms>
- Children on an antibiotic must receive 24 hours of the medication PRIOR to returning to school
- The first dose of a new prescription must be given at home by the parent before being administered in school
- The medication is in its original container and has a pharmacy label with the child's name, name of the drug, and directions for administration. Ask for an additional labeled bottle from the pharmacy if you plan to leave some of the medicine at the center
- Medications only be administered according to the directions on the label. The medication will be stored in a locked, childproof container and/or in a refrigerator of the kitchen, which is inaccessible to children
- Repeat prescription medicine must not be expired

Bella Mente can only administer over-the-counter medication with a Doctor's note indicating name of medicine, why the medication is needed, when the medication is needed (ex: bee sting), dosage, frequency of dosage, for how long (days) the medicine should be given, child's name and birth date. Over-the-counter medications are subject to the same rules listed above. Please bring in a new, unopened container if our staff is administering over-the-counter medication. Over-the-counter medications will only be given if doing so will not affect the child's day in school. If your child NEEDS medication to make it through the day they should not be at school that day.

We ask that you do **NOT** put medication of any sort in your child's cubby, lunch box or leave it in a diaper bag. This includes sunscreen, diaper cream, Tylenol, Ora-Jel, or ANY type of topical or oral medications/creams. Children have access to their cubbies during the day, and it is VERY

dangerous to have these medications in the classroom. Medicine discovered will be locked in the office until retrieved by an adult at pick-up time.

Allergies

A Provider's Health Care Allergy Intolerance Report and Medication Permission Form shall be filled out and kept on file for children whose registration form indicates severe food allergies. The form must be signed by a health care provider and list foods to avoid, a brief description of how the child reacts to the food and the appropriate care. If the reaction is severe, staff should follow an emergency protocol indicated by the doctor as the following:

- Administer prescribed EpiPen immediately and/or
- Administer other prescribed medications
- Call 911
- Call child's healthcare provider
- Stay with the child at all times

No Smoking Policy

This is a no smoking establishment. It is a Washington state law that no one may smoke on the premises between the hours of 7:30am and 5:30pm.

Emergency Kits

*School agers do not need Emergency Kits**

Here is a list of supplies you will need to put together for your child's age group to keep in an emergency container at our center.

Infant parents need to provide the following:

- 2 large cans of pre-mixed formula
- 12 diapers and 1 pack of travel wipes
- 2 change of warm clothes— preferably larger than they wear now
- Infant Tylenol
- Suggestion: include some containers (not glass) of flip-top foods— please ask staff for suggestions

Toddler/Non-potty trained preschoolers parents need to provide the following:

- 10 diapers and a pack of travel wipes
- 2 changes of clothes
- 3 small cans (no boxes) of 100% juice of your flavor choice
- 6 cereal bars
- Mini flashlight
- Comfort pictures

Pre-school parents need to provide the following:

- 2 changes of warm clothes
- 3 small cans or plastic bottles of 100% juice of your flavor choice
- Mini flashlight
- Comfort pictures

Bring items back in a grocery size paper bag with your child's first and last name on it. We will have a checklist and seal the bags closed. I will sign your name off my list once the bags are sealed and placed in the child's rooms for safe storage. We hope to never need these kits, but it is a necessary item for us to have available at all times.

Thanks for being such a great group of parents! It helps to make our jobs so much easier!