



Inclusive Childcare

Family Policy Handbook

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About Us

KidSpace is the dream-turned-reality of a special educator who has a passion for meeting children where they are developmentally and providing them with a safe place to learn and grow. Our center opened in 2024 and has space for 38 children from six weeks through 12 years of age. KidSpace staff are knowledgeable about childcare, love working with children, and are all members of the Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network. We are First Aid and CPR certified and participate regularly in professional development opportunities. KidSpace is licensed with the State of Maine as a childcare center. Children of a variety of developmental levels and with a variety of needs are welcomed and celebrated at KidSpace!

Mission

The mission of KidSpace Inclusive Childcare is *to support working parents of children with and without special needs, to advocate for their children, and to provide quality, safe, and enriching childcare.*

Philosophy

It is the philosophy of KidSpace Inclusive Childcare that typically developing children and children with disabilities learn from each other and benefit from spending time together. The main goal of KidSpace is to provide a safe place for a wide range of children, from typical infants through developmentally delayed elementary school students, to play and learn while their parents or guardians are at work.

Parent communication is a high priority for KidSpace. Parents/guardians are kept well-informed, of both the details of their child's day and of the ongoing patterns of learning and growth. Thorough and open communication includes written, verbal, and electronic messages. Parent/guardian support and education is part of the mission at KidSpace, and we can guide families through the special education referral and evaluation process and support them as they advocate for their child's individual needs. Therapists providing services to children are welcome at KidSpace with open arms.

At KidSpace, we believe that children learn best through hands-on, exploratory play. Children are provided with a variety of props for dramatic play, and a variety of materials for art and sensory play. Music and movement types of play enhance cognitive and motor development. Gross motor play is critical for core development; As children use our playground equipment to climb, twist, crawl, swing, jump, and hang, they are learning about where their body is in space and how to use it to accomplish new tasks. KidSpace staff also know strategies and games for children to get their motor needs met when we are stuck indoors due to bad weather.

KidSpace strives to be a comfortable, cozy, and pleasant place for your child to learn and grow. Our environment is sensitive to a variety of sensory needs, designed with lighting, colors, fabrics, and music that are likely to soothe your child. As children grow and learn, they experience a wide range of emotions. The role of KidSpace staff is to provide children with the tools they need to safely navigate those emotions. Though some children at KidSpace may present with behavioral difficulties, safety for all children is of utmost importance to KidSpace staff.

The staff at KidSpace have a passion for caring for children and engaging in good, messy fun. Messy sensory play is at the core of how we explore at KidSpace. Staff participate in regular professional development in order to hone their skills, and KidSpace participates in Rising Stars for ME, Maine's Quality Rating System for childcares.

Enrollment

Enrollment is a process that includes parents/guardians meeting with the Director, completing registration paperwork, setting up automated payment for required fees, and discussing the answers to questions. The Director will assist all parents with completing registration paperwork as needed. A **\$50.00 non-refundable registration fee** is due at the time of enrollment. All fees are to be paid electronically; tuition will be automatically deducted from a bank account via ACH. Parents are required to provide the name, address, and phone number of an emergency contact person for their child at the time of enrollment. DHHS requires that KidSpace maintain copies of immunization records; Parents may submit immunization records themselves or

sign a release of information for KidSpace to obtain those records from the pediatrician’s office within 30 days of enrollment. Parents are encouraged to bring their children along with them while they meet with the Director to complete the enrollment process.

Tuition & Fees

Tuition, the weekly cost for childcare at KidSpace, is to be paid in advance, on a weekly basis. Tuition for the upcoming week is due by 5:30 PM on Friday. The first week’s tuition must be paid in full before a child may begin attending. All parents/guardians must enroll in a form of electronic funds withdrawal to pay for childcare services at KidSpace. Children whose tuition is not paid up to date are not allowed to attend care – there are no exceptions to this policy. Weekly tuition does not vary based on absences, illness, holidays, or vacations. Tuition is charged according to a child’s age or grade, as listed in the chart below. Rate changes as your child ages go into effect the Monday after their birthday, or are applicable the week of your child’s birthday if it falls on a Monday.

School Weeks vs. Vacation Weeks

For school aged children, when school is in session, weeks in which the school is open for two or more days will be considered a “school week” for tuition purposes. Weeks in which school is open for zero, one, or one-and-a-half days are considered a “vacation week” for tuition purposes.

Ages of Children	Full-Time Weekly Fee	Part-Time Rates
Infant (6 weeks – 12 months)	\$285	\$65/day
“Waddler” 12 months – 30 months	\$275	
(Older) Toddler 30 months and up	\$265	
Preschool 3 years – kindergarten entry	\$255	\$55/day
School-aged (Kindergarten and older) Before & After Care/“School Week”	\$145	\$45/day
	Vacation Weeks	

In addition to parent payment, KidSpace accepts payments from DHHS through the Child Care Affordability Program (CCAP) and through ASPIRE/FedCap.

Registration Fee

A one-time non-refundable \$50 fee is due at the time of registration. This fee secures your child’s spot at KidSpace. All fees are to be paid electronically.

Late Fees

Late fees will be assessed when parents pick their children up past 5:30 PM. A \$15 late fee will be charged when parents arrive between 5:30 and 5:35 PM. After 5:35 PM, an additional \$5 per minute is charged (ex. 5:36 PM = \$20, 5:37 PM = \$25). These fees are charged per family, not per child. The time in Procure serves as the official time for determining lateness. Parents are encouraged to call KidSpace staff to notify them if they know they are going to be late. All fees may be paid electronically or in cash. Children with outstanding unpaid fees are not allowed to attend care. If a child is picked up late more than three times in a two-week period, KidSpace may terminate the contract for care.

Insufficient Funds

Any fees incurred by KidSpace as a result of insufficient funds or other banking fees are the responsibility of the parent. All fees must be paid electronically. Children with outstanding unpaid fees are not allowed to attend care. Parents/guardians should be mindful to keep money in their account to cover automatic weekly withdrawals.

Nonpayment of Tuition

Children are not allowed to attend care at KidSpace if their parents have not paid their tuition for the week. Parents who do not pay their weekly tuition and do not communicate their reason for absence with the director may be forfeiting their child's spot at KidSpace.

Hours of Operation

KidSpace is open from 7:00 AM to 5:30 PM, Monday through Friday, with the following exceptions:

- ❖ New Year's Day
- ❖ Memorial Day
- ❖ Independence Day
- ❖ Labor Day
- ❖ Thanksgiving & the day after
- ❖ Christmas Day

Closures may fall on weekdays if actual holidays fall on the weekend. Reminders about closures will be sent to parents via electronic communication, as well as posted in a common area of the childcare. The weekly cost of childcare does not change when KidSpace is closed for a holiday or inclement weather.

Learning Environment

Learning happens when children's basic physiological needs (e.g. food, rest, shelter, safety) are met. KidSpace offers a quality learning environment that is sensitive to the sensory and social-emotional needs of the children in the center. Much of the philosophy of KidSpace centers around establishing strong connections and positive relationships with the children in our care. We strive to be a safe place for them to express their emotions and learn strategies to regulate their growing bodies.

Inclusion & Special Needs

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that childcare providers not discriminate against persons with disabilities on the basis of their disability. At KidSpace Inclusive Childcare, we believe that it is important to accept and learn about all children, regardless of their abilities. Please let us know of any special needs you or your child may have at the time of enrollment so that we can properly plan to accommodate them.

At KidSpace, we also pride ourselves in our willingness to make informal "accommodations" for children and staff alike. This helps everyone to be comfortable, allowing them to be their best selves. Examples of these accommodations could include standing instead of sitting for tabletop activities, using noise-reducing headphones, or not correcting a child's behavior as s/he walks down the hallway backward. Accommodations and modifications for children with disabilities are made on an individualized basis.

Support services for children with disabilities (e.g. therapists and behavioral health professionals) are allowed on site at KidSpace and are subject to the same protocol as staff members, volunteers, and other guests. Children with and without disabilities may be excluded from the program if their presence "poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others."

Developmental Concerns

Parents who have concerns for the development of the child should consult with their pediatrician. The Director of KidSpace is willing and able to help families with referrals to Child Development Services for evaluations if a disability is suspected. Families may also call 211 for more information.

Daily Schedule

Children attending KidSpace will participate in a variety of daily activities, including circle (group) time, music and movement, art, and outdoor play. Breakfast, lunch, snack, and rest time are also part of the daily schedule. Children must be dropped off by 8:15 AM if they are going to participate in breakfast time at KidSpace.

Exact schedules will vary by the day according to weather, curriculum activities, and child moods and preferences. Here is a basic daily schedule as a guide:

Sample Daily KidSpace Schedule

	Infants	Preschool
7:00 AM	Floor Time	Free Play
8:00 AM	Breakfast	Breakfast
9:00 AM	Books & Music	Circle Time Music & Movement
10:00 AM	Nap	Outside Play
11:00 AM	Outside	Centers Art Project
12:00 PM	Lunch	Lunch
1:00 PM	Nap	Rest Time
2:00 PM	↓	↓
3:00 PM	Outside	Snack
4:00 PM	Art Project/Sensory Exploration/Snack	Outside Play
5:00 PM	Free Play	Free Play

Infants are fed according to their individual feeding schedules; Staff get to know each infant and respond to their individual cues for hunger and fullness. All infants are changed when they are soiled, or at least every two hours. During nap time all infants will be placed on their back with no pillows, blankets, or other objects in the crib with them, per State licensing guidelines.

Preschool children have two main opportunities for gross motor play daily. Ideally, this is outdoor play/playground time. In cold or rainy weather, the children can access gross motor toys indoors. Art projects or sensory experiences with a variety of materials will be offered frequently and in conjunction with child interests or the curriculum. Preschool children will be offered breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack each day.

Curriculum

KidSpace is first and foremost a play-based childcare center. We operate on the principle that children learn best from each other and through exploratory play. The role of adults is to provide a variety of enriching materials and to supervise for safety purposes. In addition, KidSpace uses the State of Maine’s Preschool Curriculum as the research-based curriculum for structured activities and periodic assessments. This chosen curriculum provides plans for differentiated instruction and assessment for kids of all ages in our center. Activities/subjects include circle time, art, music, dramatic play, science, math, and literacy.

Assessment & Progress Monitoring

Part of educating children is tracking their growth. Educators watch children play and interact with their peers and their surroundings, and take notes on relevant behaviors and circumstances. It is also important to track children's development in order to ensure they are meeting developmental milestones. Assessment and progress monitoring at KidSpace will be done both formally and informally. Children requiring more formal assessment will be referred to their pediatrician and/or Child Development Services. All results of assessment and progress monitoring are communicated openly with parents. Parents are encouraged to check out Help Me Grow Maine. Help Me Grow (HMG) Maine is a free information line linking families and professionals to information about child development, pregnancy, and community resources for children all over Maine up to the age of eight years old. Call today by dialing 211 option 5 to speak to a Family Support Specialist who will listen, link you to services, and provide ongoing support when needed.

Absences

Please call, email, or text KidSpace at your earliest convenience to notify staff if your child is going to be absent. It is especially important that families who receive childcare subsidy notify KidSpace of the reason for their child's absence. KidSpace follows DHHS guidelines with regard to absences. Repeated unexcused absences may be cause for termination, especially if there is a wait list. Excused absences include federal/state holidays; parental vacation days; inclement weather defined by a snow day when local schools are closed; illness of the child or other immediate family member; appointments; transportation issues that affect the parent's ability to transport the child to care; family visitations; family emergencies.

Sign In/Sign Out

It is the responsibility of the adult dropping children off to ensure that they are signed in at KidSpace. Having children signed in is vital for safety and recordkeeping purposes. Parents will receive unique door codes and Procure codes and are to keep them secure. Parents are also responsible for signing kids out of Procure at pick-up.

Illnesses

All children will be observed each day, at arrival and throughout the day, for signs of illness such as fever, diarrhea, vomiting, or skin rashes. If a child becomes ill during the day, the parent/guardian will be called to arrange for pick-up. The child will be made comfortable until they can arrive and as deemed necessary secluded from other children. We ask that a parent/guardian have a prompt response to pick up their child. For the protection of all children and staff at KidSpace, a child may not attend if he/she has any of the following symptoms:

- Diarrhea: Children will be sent home if diarrhea occurs:
 - 3 or more times in the day for infants
 - 2 or more times in the day for toddlers and preschool children
 Children may return to childcare when diarrhea has not occurred in the previous 8 hours. On the day that the child returns, if diarrhea occurs once, the child will be sent home.
- Vomiting: A child will be sent home if he/she vomits. The child may return to childcare the next day if he/she has not vomited in the previous 8 hours.
- An unexplained rash
- Discharge from eyes or ears
- Open lesions
- Fevers (100° in armpit, 101° orally): Because a fever may indicate other health concerns, a child must be fever-free, **without the use a fever-reducing medicine for 24 hours** before returning to childcare. Upon return, the child must be able to participate in all classroom activities including outdoor play.

- Contagious Disease: If the child has developed a contagious disease, he/she should stay home, and the parent or guardian should report it to the KidSpace Director. Conditions that are considered highly contagious are:
 - strep throat
 - pin worms
 - mumps
 - measles
 - chicken pox
 - conjunctivitis
 - scarlet fever
 - viral infections, such as meningitis.

The child must be symptom free for a 24-hour period before returning to the center. The child must also be fever free for 24 hours **without the aid of fever-reducing medications**.

KidSpace has Pediatric Associates of Lewiston as a Healthcare Consultant. Their address is 33 Mollison Way, Lewiston, ME 04240. Their phone number is (207) 784-5782. They are available as a consult to questions regarding illness and communicable diseases.

There are some illnesses which warrant informing all parents that there's an infection present in the childcare center. In that case, the Director will notify parents via ProCare and physical signage on the appropriate classroom(s). If the facility becomes aware of a notifiable condition, they will also follow Maine's Rules for the Licensing of Child Care Facilities on reporting.

Preventing Communicable Diseases

Hand Washing

Handwashing must be done with soap and running water at least in the following circumstances:

- Immediately before and after eating snacks and meals (adults and children)
- After each diaper change or toileting
- Before and after handling food
- Before and after administering medication

Bodily Fluids

Employees must take measures to prevent exposure to blood and other potentially infectious fluids. Use of disposable gloves is encouraged. When touching blood, body fluids, secretions, mucus membranes, or non-intact skin, employees must:

- Wash their hands after contact, even if gloves are worn.
- Ensure safe waste management by immediately discarding contaminated single-use items.
- Immediately clean and disinfect surfaces and reusable equipment.

Cleaning, Sanitizing & Disinfecting

All staff are responsible for maintaining the cleanliness of the building. Cleaning products will be provided and are to be kept out of reach of children. Surfaces should be sanitized after mealtimes and during nap (as time allows).

KidSpace will report diseases and conditions to the Maine CDC as required by their regulations.

Meals & Snacks

Meals and snacks are provided to all children at KidSpace as part of the center's participation in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The CACFP is a federal program that provides reimbursements for

nutritious meals and snacks to eligible children and adults. All children who attend KidSpace will receive the same nutritious meals and snacks, regardless of their family’s income.

Outside food is not permitted as meal or snack replacements. Food brought in for celebrations will be supplementary to what is offered through the food program. Children will receive breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack each day at KidSpace. We recognize that many children are picky eaters; A variety of food is served in order to increase the likelihood that a child will consume at least one component of each meal or snack. Food is never a battle between staff and children at KidSpace; it is the job of the adult to offer the food, and the job of the child to eat it (or not!).

Breakfast is served between 8:00 – 8:30 AM. Children who arrive after 8:30 AM must eat breakfast before they come to KidSpace.

Food & Nutrition Program – USDA Non-Discrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: [How to File a Complaint](#), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

1. mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
2. fax: (202) 690-7442; or
3. email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Food & Nutrition Program – State of Maine Non-Discrimination Statement

The Maine Human Rights Act prohibits discrimination because of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, physical or mental disability, genetic information, religion, ancestry or national origin.

Complaints of discrimination must be filed at the office of the Maine Human Rights Commission, 51 State House Station, Augusta, Maine 04333-0051. If you wish to file a discrimination complaint electronically, visit the Human Rights Commission website at <https://www.maine.gov/mhrc/file/instructions> and complete an intake questionnaire. Maine is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Breastfeeding

Mothers are welcome to breastfeed and/or express milk in the infant room at any time during daycare hours. Resources are available if parents would like them. All breast milk that is in the fridge/freezer must be labeled with your child’s first and last name and the date it was expressed.

Parent Communication

KidSpace staff and parents touch base daily at pick-up and drop-off to discuss a variety of topics. It is helpful at this time if parents tell staff of any factors which may be affecting their child’s mood or behavior. Staff are always available to answer questions and address concerns, secondary to ensuring the needs of all the children in care are being met. If parents have concerns that cannot or should not be addressed in a public setting, a private meeting with the Director will take place.

KidSpace will send electronic communication to all parents as the primary method of distributing center-wide information. ***Please be sure to update the Director with any changes to your email address.*** Flyers will also be posted in common areas of the building. A dedicated Parent Board will also have pertinent local resources and/or developmental information.

The KidSpace business phone is also available for parents to text throughout the day. Responses from the KidSpace business phone cannot be guaranteed outside of business hours.

Teacher-to-Child Ratios

The word “ratio” describes how many adults are required to work with each group of children at KidSpace. Teacher-to-student ratios, with some exceptions for mixed-age groups, are as follows:

Ages of Children	Maximum # of Children per Adult
6 weeks – 12 months (“Infants”)	4
12 months – 30 months (“Waddlers”)	5
30 months – 48 months (“Toddlers”)	7
36 months – up to kindergarten (“Preschool”)	10

Toys/Objects from Home

Toys from home are welcome at KidSpace as long as they are safe for all children. If the toy can fit through a toilet paper roll, then it is too small for childcare. Children are expected to share toys they bring from home. If the toy becomes a disruption, it will be placed in the Director’s office until pickup time. KidSpace is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged toys from home. Electronics or screens of any kind are not allowed at KidSpace.

Wait List

KidSpace offers a limited number of slots to children based on age and in accordance with Maine’s Rules for the Licensing of Childcare Facilities. If space is not available when a family wishes to register, they will be placed on a wait list. Preference may be given to those families seeking to enroll their child full-time and children who currently have a sibling at KidSpace.

Toilet (Potty) Training

KidSpace staff will assist with toilet training as children show signs of readiness and on an individual basis. **This will be done at the request of parents and with their cooperation only.** Potty training may include a reward system or a toileting schedule. Parents are responsible for supplying KidSpace staff with sufficient changes of clothing, as children who are potty training are expected to have frequent toileting accidents.

KidSpace launders a variety of items for a variety of reasons. Clothing from toileting accidents may be sent home or may be washed at KidSpace, depending on the severity of the mess. Clothing with vomit, blood, or feces will always be sent home in a plastic bag for parents to wash.

Clothing

Children should arrive at KidSpace dressed and ready to play for the day. Clothing should be appropriate for the weather. Parents are responsible for providing spare clothing to keep at KidSpace should their child have an accident. Additional clothing must be sent when children are potty training. All extra clothing, shoes, etc. that is sent to KidSpace should be clearly marked with the child or family name. Children are welcome to store winter gear at KidSpace during the snowy months.

Supplies Needed

Below is a list of supplies that parents are asked to provide for their child during their time at KidSpace:

- Blanket for rest time (pillow and/or stuffed animal are optional)
- Cup for water
- Diapers/wipes/creams as necessary
- Spare change(s) of clothing
- Sunscreen/bug spray, bathing suit (seasonal)

Bedding will be sent home on Fridays to be laundered. Childcare staff is responsible for information parents when items need to be replenished.

Sunscreen

Sunscreen is important to protect young children's skin during frequent outdoor play. Parents are responsible for supplying sunscreen for KidSpace staff to apply to their child's skin. Parents who do not wish for sunscreen to be applied to their child must state this in writing for their child's file. Parents may also provide KidSpace with an insect repellent if they choose.

Nap/Rest Time

Rest time for preschool children is required by State licensing guidelines to take place for at least one hour per day. Preschool children must participate in rest time, which takes place right after lunch, but they are not required to sleep. Each child will be provided with his or her own mat for rest time. Parents provide a blanket for their child, and the child may bring a pillow or stuffed animal from home. Children who do not sleep during rest time will be provided with quiet activities that they can do while on their mat after they have rested their bodies.

Infants will sleep according to their own individual schedules. Infants will sleep alone in a crib, on their backs, with no pillows, blankets, or toys in the crib. Infants will not be permitted to nap in car seats, swings, bouncers, etc. as they are not conducive to safe sleeping positions and put children at higher risk for positional asphyxia.

Immunization Records

KidSpace is required to maintain immunization records for both preschool and school age children who are enrolled here. Parents may be asked to sign a release for their child's pediatrician's office as part of the enrollment process. KidSpace may ask parents to sign updated releases periodically, as immunization records are required to be updated annually. In the event of a disease outbreak, children not vaccinated must be excluded from the program until the outbreak no longer exists, or until the child receives the necessary immunization.

Weapons

Firearms, hunting knives, bows and arrows, and other weapons are prohibited on the premises.

Screen Time

KidSpace is all about safe and fun learning through meaningful play, and frequent or regular use of screens detracts from that philosophy. Children are not permitted to use tablets, cell phones, or other electronic devices at KidSpace. These devices, if brought to KidSpace, must be kept in a child's backpack or in the Director's office.

Note on assistive technology: Devices used as communication aides are not toys or entertainment and are not considered “screen time.”

Incident Reports

There are two types of incident reports that will be kept in your child’s file at KidSpace:

Injuries

When a child receives an injury during their time at KidSpace, staff documents this injury on a form, and it is kept in the child’s file. Parents/guardians must review and sign the written report at pick up, and they may request a copy. A photo of this report will be sent to the parent electronically.

Challenging Behaviors

Child behavior that is concerning to adults and/or unsafe may be documented in order to help with analyzing patterns surrounding the concerning behavior. Written reports will be completed in cases where a child hits, kicks, bites, spits, swears, elopes, bullies, destroys property, or otherwise defies the expectations of KidSpace staff, despite attempts at redirection. Parents will be given the opportunity to review the written report at pick up, and they may request a copy. A photo of this report will be sent to the parent/guardian electronically.

Confidentiality

Information about children currently in the care of, or formerly in the care of, KidSpace must be kept confidential and shall only be disclosed upon written authorization of a child’s legal guardian, except as otherwise specified by law. Employees may not discuss children or families at KidSpace with other children or families at KidSpace, or anyone else, without legitimate educational interest. KidSpace will cooperate with child protective investigations as required by law.

When children are in foster care, kinship care, or otherwise involved with Child Protective Services, lots of other factors may need to be considered. It is important to have releases for all agencies that work with the children in our care. The same is true of children who receive special education and related services.

Medical Emergencies

In the event of an injury at KidSpace, basic First Aid will be performed. For a medical emergency that requires outside attention, KidSpace staff will call 911 and then call the child’s parent(s). If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, staff will call the emergency contact. If medical attention should be required, KidSpace staff will attempt to honor the hospital preference noted in the registration packet.

Medications

Prescription and over-the-counter medication must be provided directly to the KidSpace Director by a child’s parent/guardian. Please do not leave medication in the child’s cubby or travel bag.

Parents/guardians must also provide KidSpace with signed consent for administration of medication.

Medications must be in the original container and have all prescription information; Often the pharmacy will provide an extra labeled bottle for daycare.

Nonprescription Medications

KidSpace staff may not administer any nonprescription medications to a child without written, signed, and dated parental permission naming the medication and dosage. KidSpace must have a doctor’s note prescribing nonprescription medicine to give over-the-counter medicine. The note must include the exact medication and dosage for the child’s age/weight. These notes must be updated for infants and toddlers at each doctor’s visit to make sure that the correct dosage is prescribed.

Storage and Record-Keeping

Medications will be kept locked and out of reach of children. All staff listed as medication administrators must have first aid and CPR certificates. Documentation of age-appropriate first aid and CPR certificates will be kept on site. KidSpace staff will record the administration of all medications, including the

amount, time, date, and signature of the administrator of the medication. Prescription and non-prescription medication, ointments, etc. must come with original packaging and instructions.

Emergency Preparedness

KidSpace has an **Emergency Preparedness Plan with procedures** for how to respond to a variety of emergency situations, including bomb threats, missing children, and loss of water in the building. KidSpace staff members must review the emergency preparedness plan a least annually and update as needed.

Child Care Facilities must retain the updated copy of the plan for evacuation and provide details of the emergency relocation procedures to each Parent or Legal Guardian of the Child at the time of the Child's enrollment with the Child Care Facility and whenever the plan is updated.

Required Drills

Regular practice of emergency drills is essential and promotes calm, competent use of the plans in an emergency. As it is the responsibility of KidSpace staff to ensure the safety of all children in our care, the following emergency preparedness procedures are in place:

- Once per month, the Director will initiate a Fire Drill, to include all children in care, all staff, and any other person who may be on the premises at the time. All drills will be conducted as if there were a real emergency taking place.
- Twice per year, the Director will initiate an Emergency Evacuation Drill, to include all children in care, all staff, and any other person who may be on the premises at the time. All drills will be conducted as if there were a real emergency taking place.
- At least once a year, the Director shall request that a representative of local Emergency or Disaster Planning Services observe a drill and seek their input for possible improvements to the facility's procedures, including the education of all children in care on what to do in different crisis situations. Such input shall be considered during the annual review/revision of these policies.
- Following every Emergency Evacuation Drill, the Director shall complete an entry regarding the drill on the Emergency Evacuation Drills Log. Any problems or errors occurring during each drill will be noted, addressed, and corrected immediately.
- Evacuation routes are posted in each classroom, the kitchen, and the bathrooms.
- Our on-site meeting place is at the far end of the parking lot, by the dumpster. Our off-site meeting place is Hannaford on Sabbattus St. in Lewiston.
- A copy of the Emergency Evacuation Drills Log will be maintained in the Director's office and is available for inspection upon request.

Inclement Weather

In case of severe weather conditions, extended power outage, or other emergency requiring closure of the facility, someone from KidSpace will contact the parent/guardians.

Storm Closings

In the event of severe winter weather, prolonged power outage, or other reason for emergency closure, KidSpace will notify all parents by text and email. Snow day closure decisions will be made separate from the school department and are at the discretion of the KidSpace Director. Closings, delays, and other important information can also be found on the KidSpace Facebook page.

Outings & Field Trips

KidSpace will obtain signed informed consent from parents or guardians before any off-site venture.

Transportation

KidSpace staff will not transport children to or from the childcare, except in emergency situations. Parents must give written permission for their children to ride on commercial transportation. KidSpace is willing to store car seats and booster seats during the day so that children may be transported safely by various caregivers.

Multiculturalism

The diversity at KidSpace extends beyond the developmental needs of our children. In order to truly represent and serve the Lewiston community, children from a variety of family backgrounds, such as those in foster care and those who are new to Maine, are welcome at KidSpace. Children from the New Mainer community are welcome with open arms, and dietary restrictions related to religious practices will be honored.

Celebrations

At KidSpace, we acknowledge the diversity in our community, and strive to include all the different beliefs of our children, families, staff, and community in our holiday celebrations and education. Art, stories, foods, and music from a variety of holidays will be shared with the children at every opportunity. Parents and staff are encouraged to share their individual family traditions.

Parents who wish to bring treats to celebrate their child's birthday must coordinate this with the Director in advance. Baked treats (such as cupcakes) must be store bought and in the original packaging with allergen/ingredient information.

Release of Children

Children will be released only to their parents and approved "pick up people" listed in the child's registration packet. Parents may also notify the KidSpace Director of an alternative pick-up person on short notice in writing. All pick-up people must be willing/able to provide photo identification to KidSpace staff upon request. This may even be true of biological parents before staff are familiar with them. If consent and/or proper ID are not received, the child will not be released, and the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) will be responsible for any additional late pick-up fees that are incurred as a result.

Court Orders for Non-Custodial parent(s)/legal guardian(s)

Without a copy of the court order, KidSpace cannot refuse to allow a parent/legal guardian to pick up their child. If KidSpace has a court order and a non-custodial parent/legal guardian tries to pick up the child, KidSpace will immediately call the custodial parent/legal guardian. If the non-custodial parent/legal guardian leaves with the child, KidSpace will immediately call the police and report the situation. KidSpace staff will not place children at risk in a confrontation with the non-custodial parent/legal guardian.

Foster Families and State Agencies

When children are in foster care, KidSpace needs to know all approved pick-up people/agencies. It is essential that this information be updated as quickly as it changes.

Water Play

Children will not participate in swimming or wading activities while at KidSpace. Water play with hoses, water tables, and sprinklers will be common in the hot months. Children will not engage in water play when there is a threat of severe weather/thunderstorms outside. Staff participate in and closely monitor all water play. Parents are asked to provide bathing suits, towels, and sunscreen for water play.

Photos & Videos

Children at KidSpace may be photographed or videorecorded during play for the purpose of communicating/sharing experiences with parents. Photos of children may also be used within their classroom or throughout the center. Use of photographs or videos beyond that purpose requires signed consent from a parent or guardian. The consent form is included in each child's registration packet.

If parents have signed consent for their child to be photographed and videorecorded at KidSpace, photos or videos may appear on Facebook or other promotional materials.

English Language Learners

At KidSpace, we accept learners from all ethnic backgrounds. The primary language we communicate in is English. If you communicate more comfortably in another language, please let us know. We will make every effort to make our materials and communications acceptable to you in your home language. Parents who are not fluent in English are welcome to bring a friend with them to serve as an interpreter at any time.

Pest Prevention and Management

Though fleas, lice, and bedbugs are part of normal daily life, KidSpace takes steps to prevent them from infesting the childcare.

Proactive Prevention

Parents and staff are to visually inspect belongings for signs of insects. KidSpace will educate staff and families on what each bug looks like and what signs they leave behind. KidSpace will post signage in common/cubby areas where bugs are most likely to be found. KidSpace staff will regularly clean all storage areas.

Response to Introduction of Parasite

If KidSpace staff finds a parasite that is concerning to them, they are to Isolate the bug, not destroy it, and put the insect on tape or in a plastic bag in the freezer. The Director is responsible for getting the insect identified by a professional. If it is in bedding or on a child's clothing, tie the item in a plastic bag and provide the child with other clothing or fresh bedding. Staff are to check surrounding areas for other signs of infestation.

Response to Infestation

Do not use pesticides! Clean and organize the area. Throw away extraneous papers and fabric. Use dryers or a steam cleaner to kill bugs. Vacuum all corners, floors, and rug edges. Wash tables, chairs, and mats. Temporarily remove area rugs for professional cleaning. The Director will contact professionals for identification and treatment. The director will inform parents and the state licensor about an infestation.

Child Abuse & Reporting

As childcare professionals, all staff at KidSpace are mandated reporters of abuse and neglect. If, in our professional capacity we have reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering from serious physical or emotional injury or neglect, regardless of where it may have occurred, we will make a report to Child Protective Services. As open communication with parents is of the utmost importance to KidSpace staff, parents will be informed that a child protective report is being made (and why), as long as doing so will not put the child at risk.

Mandated Reporting Procedures

When an employee suspects that a child is being abused or neglected, they must follow the outlined procedure:

- Employees must report suspicions to management, the Director, and the Owner.
- Documentation is made of suspected abuse/neglect on a mandated reporter worksheet.
- If there is no question about the situation, it is reported to the DHHS Child Protective Hotline at 1-800-452-1999 by the employee suspecting the abuse. Management will assist as needed. Should the staff person and management disagree on the need to call, the report shall still always be made.
- If there is any question about whether the abuse/neglect is reportable, the owner or designee will consult their state licensing worker for advice about what procedure to follow.

- Parents/guardians are notified immediately by the owner or designee if deemed appropriate by the DHHS Representative.
- (the child care) will follow any of the mandated guidelines and procedures laid out by DHHS and the required mandated reporter training.

Below is a list of behaviors by parents and/or caregivers that should be reported to DHHS. Keep in mind this is not an exhaustive list. We encourage anyone with concerns to make a report:

- Physically harming a child (beyond spanking in a reasonable manner)
- Sexually abusing a child
- Exposing a child to substance use, domestic violence, or other unsafe conditions
- Failing to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing, or medical care
- Exposing a child to unsafe or unsanitary living conditions
- Threatening to harm a child
- Chronically calling a child names or putting them down

When an employee is suspected or accused of abuse/neglect of a child at our daycare, the plan of action is as follows:

- Documentation of the accusation is made.
- The employee is notified of the accusation and asked to give a written account of the situation in question.
- Our DHHS licensing worker is notified of the situation.
- The parent/guardian of the child/children involved will be notified.
- The childcare will follow the procedure outlined by DHHS for this type of situation.
- The employee may be placed on either paid or unpaid leave pending the outcome of the investigation.
- If the allegations are found to be valid, disciplinary action will be taken. These actions may include but are not limited to suspension or termination depending on the severity of the offense.
- All appropriate measures will be taken to prevent potential allegations by having all staff pass the Maine Roads to Quality Health and Safety Class, by learning, understanding, and practicing positive child guidance methods as outlined in our Facility Handbook, and by having the constant support of peers and management alike.

Allegations Against KidSpace Staff

KidSpace staff are trained in child development and supported when challenging behaviors arise, lessening the likelihood that an abuse or neglect will occur. In the event that a staff member of KidSpace is accused of child abuse or neglect, KidSpace will follow all applicable laws regarding that person's continued employment during the investigation period. In the interest of maintaining trust and transparency, KidSpace will be as upfront with parents as possible while respecting the privacy rights of the individuals involved.

Child Behavior Guidance and Management

When a child is having a difficult time following directions or treating others or equipment with respect, developmentally appropriate guidance techniques are used, such as:

- *Positive Reinforcement*: Praising what a child is doing right. For example, “I love how you’re being so gentle with the baby doll.” This will increase the likelihood that all children will engage in the desired behavior.
- *Redirection*: Suggesting something different for the child to do or play with.
- *“If... Then” Statements*: Explaining to a child both the positive and negative outcomes of their behavior with short, clear statements such as “If you give Billy one of the cars, then you can both play!” or “If you pinch your friends, then you will be all done in the sensory table.”
- *Take A Break*: Removing either the child or the toy from the situation for a short period of time so emotions can calm down. An adult may be present for coregulation during this time, so the child is not alone in the big feelings that caused the need for a break.
- *Labeling Emotions*: Talking to children about what they are feeling, its connection to their behavior, and how that affects the people around them.

Behaviors which are unsafe or unkind and which are not changed with positive redirection may be documented on incident report forms and discussed with parents at pickup time.

Rights for Children in Child Care Facilities

- Right to freedom from abuse and neglect. *Children shall be free from mental, verbal, physical and/or sexual abuse, neglect and exploitation.*
- Right to confidentiality. *Children’s records and information kept by the Child Care Facility are confidential.*
- Right to freedom from harmful actions or practices. *Each child has the right to freedom from harmful actions or practices that are detrimental to the child’s welfare, and to practices that are potentially harmful to the child.*
- Right to a safe and healthy environment. *Each child has a right to an environment that meets the health and safety standards in these rules.*
- Right to be free from discrimination. *A child shall be provided childcare services without regard to race, age, national origin, religion, disability, sex or family composition.*
- Right to consideration and respect. *Children shall be treated with dignity, consideration and respect in full recognition of their individuality. This includes the use of developmentally appropriate practices by the Child Care Facility.*
- Right to be informed of services provided by the Child Care Facility. *A child’s legal guardian shall be fully informed of items or services which are included in the rate they pay for childcare services.*
- Right to information regarding the Child Care Facility’s deficiencies. *A child’s legal guardian has the right to be fully informed of findings of the most recent licensing review conducted by the department.*
- Right to a service plan. *Each child has the right to expect the licensee to assist him/her in implementing any reasonable plan of service developed with community or state agencies.*
- Right to a variety of appropriate activities, materials and equipment. *Each child has a right to a variety of activities, materials, and equipment that meets the child’s interests and capabilities.*
- Mandatory report of rights violations. *Any person or professional who provides health care, social services or mental health services or who administers a Child Care Facility or program who reasonably believes that the rules pertaining to children’s rights, and the conduct of childcare have been violated, must report this information to the Division of Licensing and Regulatory Services.*

- Reasonable modifications and accommodations. *The Child Care Facility must make reasonable modifications to their policies and practices to include children, parents and guardians with disabilities, unless to do so would be a fundamental alteration of their program.*

Termination of Care

Parents/guardians who wish for their child to no longer attend KidSpace must submit a written note to the director stating when the child's last day of care will be. A two-week notice is required, and those two weeks are required to be paid in full, regardless of whether your child is present. If a two-week notice is not given, you are still financially obligated for the two weeks of childcare tuition.

KidSpace may terminate care of a child if they pose a danger to others and intervention strategies have not been successful in changing that behavior. Terminating care is a last resort, typically only taken after having worked with a family on solutions. There are behaviors (such as choking) which jeopardize the safety of others so severely that they will lead to immediate termination of care. The decision to terminate care of a child at KidSpace is made only by the Director. In the event that care is terminated, no refunds will be given.

Updating Policies

As policies in this handbook are updated, added, or changed, they will be posted in the parent area at KidSpace and emailed to all families. ***Please be sure to update the Director with any changes to your email address.*** An up-to-date copy of the Family Policy Handbook may be found in the "Files" tab on the KidSpace Facebook page, and an electronic copy may be requested via the Director at any time.

Parent Feedback

We'd like to hear your ideas on how we can continue to help your child achieve their fullest potential. All emails to the Director will be considered and discussed. Concerns with the operations of KidSpace that cannot be solved at the building level may be reported to: Children's Licensing and Investigation Services, Office of Child and Family Services, Maine Department of Health and Human Services, 41 Anthony Avenue, Augusta, ME 04333-0011 or by calling (207) 287-9300 or (207) 287-5060.