



# Family Handbook 2019-2020

Dear Parents, Guardians and Families,

Welcome to Bozeman United Methodist Church and The Gathering Place: A Child Learning Center. Our goal is to provide a welcoming, safe and developmentally appropriate environment for every child.

This handbook is designed to ensure that your family has a rewarding experience with the program. In the handbook we have tried to anticipate many of your questions about the program and outline the program's policies and procedures. We strive to work closely with parents in a partnership that will facilitate the transitions between home and school. Daily communications and a sense of trust between parents and teachers are vital.

Our goal is to provide the highest quality care and education for children and to ensure that parents are valued and respected. We expect you to read this handbook, follow the policies and procedures outlined, provide us with all the necessary information, and be open and honest with us regarding your feedback about the program. We welcome your comments, questions, concerns and suggestions about your child's experience and the program. We understand that nothing is more important than your child's early education and care experiences.

Given the nature of an ever-changing quality early education and care program, this handbook is a "living" document. You will be notified of formal policy changes during the year via a written policy notice through email or a hard copy. In addition, the handbook will be updated as needed.

Our door is always open should you have any suggestions, questions or concerns.

Katie Estes  
Preschool Director  
406-551-7215

## **OUR PHILOSOPHY:**

The Gathering Place will be a child learning center that is play-based and child-centered. In a **play-based program**, children are given the autonomy to choose activities based on their current interests. They can have the freedom to choose what to play with, then we base our curriculum around what they are interested in. We believe that children learn best through play in a safe and nurturing environment. The play-based preschool philosophy is designed to enrich the whole child, including social, emotional, physical, cognitive, and creative development. We also include **emergent learning** which ties into their play through a curriculum that is closely connected to their interests and follows the Montana Early Learning Standards and Head Start Program Performance Standards. It is a term used to describe a flexible pedagogical approach that relies on the children's interests and the circumstances of the day to dictate the learning content. One of our other main priorities is to have open communication with families and their caregivers, to be a team and to build relationships with one another. The Gathering Place: A Child Learning Center is owned and operated by Bozeman United Methodist Church but is a secular preschool, open to all and prohibits discrimination based on race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, or age.

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:**

**Infants (0-12 months):** Our infant program is a room of infants from six weeks old to one year of age. These infants will have a daily schedule based on their needs and a written or digital copy of their Montana infant feeding schedule. These licensed caregivers will feed, diaper change, and play with these children for ten hours a day, five days a week. There will be set curriculum and goals made by the parents to work on with the children while at school and at home.

**Toddlers (12 months-24 months):** Our toddler program is a classroom with children ages one year to two years of age. These children will have a daily schedule based on the developmental needs of these children. The needs for each child are individualized and will be met based on plans created by parents and their caregivers as a team. There will be set meal times practicing family style dining, outdoor play, and centers within their classroom where they will grow as learners hitting different domains (physical, social/emotional, communication, cognitive).

**Two's (24 months-48 months):** Our two's program will be two classrooms filled with children ages two to four years of age with set daily schedules including circle time, group discussions, play, art, outdoor play and more. These children will be working on their specific developmental needs based on the teachers assessments and goals. Our "two's" will be working towards school readiness, practicing writing, science, counting, shapes, alphabet and establishing their basic needs at this age.

**Preschool (4-5 year olds):** Our preschool program will be a compilation of all of our other classes into two rooms with four and five year olds preparing them for Kindergarten. These children will be mastering their basic needs, (feeding themselves, potty training, self regulation) and will be working towards their specific developmental goals created by their teachers and parents based off of the curriculum and Montana Early Learning Standards set in place. We will work hard to ensure that our preschool students have the best space for school readiness and prepare them for what is to come.

## **FAMILY AND SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP**

Parents are welcome to visit their child's classroom. The program's "open door" policy means that parents are encouraged to participate in the program in any way that is comfortable. We believe that families and parents should choose the type and level of involvement that is meaningful for them and their child. For example, family members might enjoy volunteering time to read stories, come to school for lunch, talk to the children about different subjects, help teachers to make educational materials or accompany a child's class on field trips.

**Parents and others who volunteer in a classroom on a regular basis shall be required to complete orientation training and have CPR/First Aid certification for the safety and security of all students.**

All staff members recognize parents as their child's first and most important teacher. Effective partnerships with families include clear, honest, and two-way communication. Staff members are very interested to hear from you about things your child is doing at home and to work together with you to address any concerns you might have. While we know a lot about children, we are aware that you know a lot about your own child. Working together, we can ensure that your child's early learning experiences are successful and fun.

## **PARENT - TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Every year there will be parent - teacher conferences which will be held at The Gathering Place: A Child Learning Center or as home visits. These conferences will include the student, parent/guardian and their teachers. We believe this is a very important time to share different milestones their child has hit or is working towards, celebrations, and working as a team to set new goals. We believe that having a parent - teacher conference every three months ensures (four per year) that the goals previously set are being met or pursued, as well as accountability between families and teachers.

Teachers will be scheduling these conferences with parent's quarterly (fall, winter, spring, summer). Parents/Guardians who wish to conference with a teacher (outside of these regularly scheduled conference periods) should plan to schedule a time that coincides with the teacher's preparation time or at another time that is convenient for both the parent and the teacher.

**Classroom instruction time may not be interrupted for unscheduled parent/teacher conferences.** Parents/Guardians may schedule conferences through the preschool office 406-551-7215 or by email communication with their child's teacher.

Some children may experience difficulty in adjusting to a new environment and in separating from their parents and caregivers. This is considered normal and is planned for in the curriculum and quality care program. For that reason, parents are encouraged to consult with their child's teacher or the program supervisors about their own child's adjustment prior to beginning visits or volunteer activities, and to cooperate with suggestions made regarding visiting or volunteering.

## **ENROLLMENT PROCESS**

Applications for enrollment can be found in-person, at The Gathering Place or online at [www.bozemanumc.org/gatheringplace](http://www.bozemanumc.org/gatheringplace). Applications are to be submitted to the program director Katie Estes- Room 201 or [katie@bozemanumc.org](mailto:katie@bozemanumc.org)

Parents/Guardians will be notified within one week if any additional information is required and if their child has been accepted or put on the waitlist. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to maintain communication with the facility as to the status of their child. At this time, The Gathering Place does not require a deposit for holding spots.

If at anytime you wish to withdraw your child from the program, 30-day's written notice must be given to the Program Director, Katie Estes, as well as, a withdrawal notice/schedule change request form and all tuition/fees paid in full. Tuition must be paid for the one-month notice period, even if the child does not attend school during that month.

## **TUITION**

Tuition is \$900/month and is due the first of each month. Tuition can be paid via cash/check to The Gathering Place and submitted to the program director, Katie Estes. Tuition can also be paid online (added fee) via [www.bozemanumc.breezechms.com/give/online](http://www.bozemanumc.breezechms.com/give/online), with the memo Gathering Place. There will be a \$25 late fee after the five day grace period. This ensures that tuition is received on time and can fund the program. In the case of school holidays and other school-related closures, absences, and more... tuition will not be prorated.

## **VISITS BY SIBLINGS OR OTHER CHILDREN WHO ARE NOT ENROLLED**

Siblings or other family members of children in the program may visit briefly for a parent program or a school meal when accompanied and fully supervised by parents/guardians. Due to liability and child care licensure requirements, children who are not enrolled in the program may not stay for volunteer activities in the classrooms. Only enrolled and registered children may participate in classroom activities. There will be scheduled opportunities for all family members to visit the program throughout the school year.

## **AT HOME ACTIVITIES**

Your child's teacher will send home activities weekly which may assist parents and other family members in working with students to help encourage learning. Reading a short book (or part of a book) or completing a fun activity with your child at some point during the day can be an enjoyable way to connect with your child and their learning at school. These activities are intended to be fun and informative for family members and are not mandatory in any way. Each family's structure and daily schedule may impact family members' participation from time to time. Please speak with your child's teacher or the director if you have questions about any activity, or if you would like additional extension activities.

## **IN-KIND ACTIVITY CALENDAR**

Every month there will be an in-kind activity calendar for your family and child to complete. In-Kind is a non-federal share where each Head Start program is required to match each dollar of federal funds with 20% non-federal share or in-kind. AWARE Early Head Start receives the majority of its in-kind from parent and child care volunteer time as well as parent-child home activities. Since The Gathering Place and AWARE are in a partnership, each classroom even without being early head start, is going to all have an activity calendar tracking volunteering in the classroom, activities and learning opportunities at home, and donations to the classroom and our center.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Your child's teacher will communicate with you in a variety of ways, and it is helpful for you to let the teacher know how best to reach you and communicate with you on a daily basis. Parents will be asked to respond to program evaluation questions periodically to assist the program in ensuring quality. Frequent and timely communication between home and school is essential. Teachers as well as the office staff welcome the opportunity to answer any questions that may arise. Parents/Guardians should read notes and/or newsletters that are sent home from school with students. Each type of communication includes valuable and current information.

Smartcare.com is a program that our school is adopting this year which will be beneficial for parents in having instant communication with their child's teacher, a timeline of activities from the day, food menu, bathroom breaks, and their daily care, all from the tips of your fingertips.

**Parents are reminded that it is very important that address, phone, and other means of contacting parents be kept current by notifying the teacher or preschool office.**

**The Gathering Place Office: 406-551-7215**

## **STAFF INFORMATION**

All staff at The Gathering Place: A Child Learning Center have been fingerprinted and have current criminal background checks. All staff are on the Montana Early Childhood Project practitioner registry and have had experience in early childhood education or a related field. All staff receives professional development annually and are up to date on training for licensing in the state of Montana. All staff are Infant/Child/Adult First Aid and CPR certified, up-to-date on immunizations and have a doctor's health statement.

## **RECORDS**

The Gathering Place maintains all policies, records, and reports that are required by the Department of Health and Human Services/Montana Child Care Licensing. The Gathering Place reviews and updates these materials annually. It is required that The Department of Health and Human Services/Montana Child Care Licensing has access to these materials and the opportunity to copy these materials, whenever children are in care. This includes the following:

- (1) The facility must keep a daily attendance record of the children for whom care is provided.
- (2) The facility must have a master list of the name, address, and phone number of all children in their care and their parents.
- (3) If medications are administered at the facility, the facility must maintain a medication administration log. **(not applicable-our program prohibits the administration of medication)**
- (4) Prior to a child being enrolled or entered into a child care facility, the following information, signed by the parent or guardian, must be on file:
  - (a) written information on each child explaining any special needs of the child, including allergies;
  - (b) a release or authorization of persons allowed to pick up the child;
  - (c) necessary medical forms, including all medication authorization and administration logs, signed and updated immunization records, and the names of emergency contact persons; and
  - (d) an emergency consent form. This form must accompany staff when children are away from the child care site for activities.
- (5) A record of each emergency drill conducted pursuant to ARM 37.95.124 must be on file.
- (6) The facility must maintain incident and injury reports which include the date, time of day, nature of the injury or incident, treatment or remediation, and whether the parent was notified for any injury or incident that occurs in the facility. If an injury requires the use of first aid or medical attention, the facility must provide a copy to the parent and keep a copy signed by the parent in the child's file.
- (7) The information supplied in (4) and (5) must be maintained on forms provided by the department and must be signed by the parent or guardian.

## **CHILD CARE LICENSING REQUIREMENTS**

A copy of the Department of Health and Human Services-Child Care Licensing Requirements can be found in Room 201, via Program Director, Katie Estes. They can also be found at <http://www.mtrules.org/gateway/ChapterHome.asp?Chapter=37%2E95>.

## **MATERIALS BROUGHT FROM HOME**

Students are not required to bring any learning materials for school. Families are asked to keep at least one full change of clothes including shoes for their child at school in case of messy spills or other mishaps. These should be labeled with the child's full name. Coats, jackets, and other items should also be labeled. Families may be asked to save recyclable items such as paper towel tubes, buttons, etc., for school projects. Aside from "comfort objects" toys and other playthings are to stay at home.

## **SOCIAL EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Social and emotional development is fostered in a positive manner through children's participation in learning activities which are designed to be inclusive and developmentally appropriate for the age and maturity level of the children. The development of tolerance for others and a respect for diversity are important skills in our society and contribute to success in later education. Students have multiple opportunities to practice these skills. Students learn

school based routines and competencies which help to ensure readiness for the next level of education in the school setting.

For many children, especially those who have not been in preschool or child care settings previously, the environment may feel noisy or overwhelming at times. For that reason, all classrooms are zoned so that noisier areas, such as the building block center, are separated from quieter areas such as the library/reading nook or the writing and computer center. The emphasis of the social-emotional curriculum is to assist students in learning skills to prepare them for success. Early intervention when there is difficulty means that the emphasis is upon teaching and not upon excluding children when problems arise.

### **HYGIENE PRACTICES:**

Students are assisted in developing self-help skills in toileting, washing hands, and brushing teeth. They may help in serving meals or snacks. Students will be assisted in washing hands frequently to help them develop healthy habits. Students will brush their teeth at least once daily and basic hygiene practices will be observed. Let the teacher know of allergies or intolerances.

Preschool staff will ensure the highest quality of personal care for all students. Parents agree to provide all information for safety and to cooperate with independent toileting skills implementation if their student is not fully independent upon school entrance.

### **WEATHER**

At The Gathering Place we value spending time outside at least once a day. Montana being the state that it is, we understand that the winter weather can be a danger to our health and safety. That being said, once the weather hits 20 degrees and below, our classes (for ages two and up) will not be going outside to play but will use our alternative indoor green space at the lower level of our building. Stricter weather guidelines are followed for children under the age of two. This is a decision based on the Child Care Watch website, age group of our center, and factoring in wind chill. That being said, please provide your child with appropriate winter weather clothing, for these outdoor periods.

Our indoor space is 900 square feet of matted flooring and materials for children climb, run, and play - with materials appropriate to their age. If school closing occurs, there will be notifications based on the Bozeman Public Schools Cancellation Schedule. These communications can be accessed through The Gathering Place office and may be available to specific email, telephone, text messaging or on the Smartcare timeline, as parents prefer. In the early morning hours during inclement weather, local radio stations will broadcast announcements of any school closings. In addition, worsening weather conditions may force the early dismissal of our center. **In the event that the center will be cancelled or dismissed early, The Gathering Place will also contact all parents/guardians with a phone call, text, and/or email. We encourage parents to have a back-up plan in the event that the center closes early; or if leaving work to pick up your child could be a problem.**

## **BEHAVIOR**

Appropriate behavior is fostered by helping children learn to control (regulate) their own behavior and emotions and work out their conflicts. This is different than only relying on adults to manage their behavior. Positive management of students places emphasis on preventing problems by attending to the room arrangement, having age-appropriate expectations, providing interactive activities for play and learning, and active adult monitoring and supervision. Students are taught to use words and to be direct about their needs. Teachers support this by supervising and assisting when words are hard to remember.

If there are very challenging behaviors, parents will be informed and will be included in planning for teaching appropriate behavior at school. Teaching staff shall respond to all challenging behavior, including physical aggression, in a manner that:

- provides safety for all children
- is calm and respectful
- provides the child with skill building for acceptable behavior

Please note that the preschool program philosophy as well as Montana Child Care Licensure standards prohibits any form of physical punishment for preschool students.

## **TRANSITION TO KINDERGARTEN**

Each child in The Gathering Place: A Child Learning Center has a cumulative folder that follows him/her from the time they enter preschool, to when they move on to kindergarten. The cumulative folder includes important information such as copies of student's immunization record, reports/assessments, and any other important information.

Families are provided with information about registering for public school and helping a child to be "ready" for school. The class may visit Kindergarten classrooms in the Bozeman School District. The child's portfolio is given to the family at this transition time, and parents will be assisted in registering for kindergarten.

## **SPECIAL SERVICES**

The Gathering Place: A Child Learning Center is an inclusive early education program, which means that the program serves children with and without disabilities in the context of a developmentally focused education program.

The preschool staff will assist in obtaining screening, assessments, services and providing resources for students and families if needed.

Specialists work closely and collaboratively with classroom staff offering a safe space to work in a room designated for therapy, or in the classroom as well. Families and individuals interested in

knowing more about the services for children with disabilities are encouraged to speak to their child's teacher or the program supervisor.

## **PICK UP/DROP OFF**

Child care licensure requires that a designated adult, parent, or guardian sign each student in and out daily. Unknown adults are required to provide a picture ID and must be listed on the child's approved pick up list. There are no exceptions. Changes to the list must be made in writing and not by the phone. If you have any questions or concerns you can call the preschool director at 406-551-7215.

If you are planning on picking up or dropping off your child, you can park your car in the alley behind the church and enter through the side door with an access code. If you wish to stay longer than 5 minutes, you can park on Olive Street, Willson Street, or in the Children's Museum parking lot. Reminder that our center opens at 7:30am and children are expected to be dropped off between 7:30am-9:00am daily. **Children must be picked up by 5:30pm. There is also a late fee of \$10 for EVERY five minutes that children are late to be picked up. *If children are not picked up, appropriate persons may be notified (parents, emergency contacts, child protective services, etc.)***

## **PARENTS' RIGHTS**

Custodial parents have the right to enter and inspect the childcare center where their children are receiving care without advance notice during normal business hours. Access to the facility can be denied when, in the opinion of center personnel, the parent or guardian is behaving in a way that poses a risk to children or staff within the facility or there is a current court-order in place preventing parent/guardian-child contact. If such need occurs, local authorities will be called at 911 to assist the staff at the center. Child Protective Services (CPS) may also be notified.

## **DAILY SAMPLE SCHEDULE**

The basic schedule for the preschool program follows. The schedule may vary slightly at your child's specific classroom and their teacher. A schedule is posted in each classroom.

### **7:30am – 9:00am**

#### **Arrival and Breakfast**

Children participate in quiet activities and eat breakfast. After children finish breakfast, they can visit learning centers.

### **9:00am – 9:25am**

#### **Circle time & Read-Aloud**

Children come together for the morning routine activities as well as a featured whole-group activity.

**9:25am – 10:00am**

**Learning Centers and Small-Group Activities**

Children choose from learning center activities in the following learning centers:

Social-Emotional	Blocks	Literacy	Math and Cognitive
Science	Dramatic Play	Art	Movement
Social Studies	Sensory	Small Group	And more...

**10:00am – 11:15am**

**Outdoor Play**

Children enjoy structured and unstructured play outdoors or in our indoor playground, weather permitting.

**11:15am – 11:30am**

**Hygiene Practices**

Wash hands, diapering/bathroom break, set table for lunch.

**11:30am-12:00pm**

**Lunch**

Children help set tables, and prepare to eat lunch family-style.

**12:00pm – 2:30pm**

**Nap/Rest time**

Children nap on their cots/cribs and rest. Most children nap or rest quietly. As children wake up, they can select from a variety of quiet activities, such as playing, drawing, writing, and looking at books.

**2:30pm-3:00pm**

**Snack time**

Children have their diaper changed/bathroom break then sit down at the table for snack.

**3:00pm - 4:00pm**

## **Learning Centers and Small-Group Activity**

Children choose from learning center activities in these learning centers: blocks, creative arts, dramatic play, library, math and manipulatives, science and sensory, and writing. This time often includes small-group activities.

**4:00pm - 4:25pm**

### **Whole-Group Time & Read-Aloud**

Children come together for a featured whole-group activity.

**4:25pm - 5:00pm**

### **Play and Hygiene**

Diapering/bathroom breaks and play in our indoor playground downstairs.

**5:00pm - 5:30pm**

### **Get ready to go home**

Children enjoy unstructured play indoors waiting for pick up.

## **REST/NAP TIME**

Students are provided with one hour minimum of rest time daily and are not required to sleep. Students who do not sleep will be provided with quiet activities after a maximum of fifteen minutes. Sleeping mats/cots with sheets and blankets are provided and are individualized by child. Sheets and blankets are washed at least weekly and more often if needed.

**Child care licensure requires a minimum of one hour rest time daily.**

**\*\*Infant schedules are individualized based on feeding/sleeping schedules provided by Parents/Guardians.\*\***

Cribs with a firm mattress and fitted sheet are provided for infants on an individual basis. Child care licensure prohibits the use of blankets in cribs. If parent requests, The Gathering Place can provide the infant with a sleepsack.

## **MEALS**

Meals are prepared on-site by our program cook. Meals follow guidelines from the Department of Health and Human Services-Quality Assurance Division- Child Care Licensing and Child and Adult Care Food Program standards. Daily meals are served “family-style” for children ages 12 months and up and will include breakfast, lunch and snack. Infants will be fed according to their

parent/guardian provided Montana Infant Feeding Schedule. Menus can be found on the parent-information board in each classroom.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Students' regular attendance at school is essential to their social and cultural development and helps prepare them grow in their learning and brain development. Interactions with other students and participation in the instruction within the classroom enrich the learning environment and promote a continuity of instruction which results in higher student achievement in the future. We have a policy that students are required to attend school, 90% of the month which is only missing two days a month unless otherwise scheduled.

*Parent/Student Responsibility:* It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to see that the student is in attendance at school. The parent/guardian is to notify the center's office by telephone when the student is absent.

*School Responsibility:* It is the responsibility of the school to make a reasonable effort to notify the parent when the student is absent from school. If we do not receive a phone call from the parent/guardian regarding their child's absence, the center will call at 9:00am.

## **FIELD TRIPS AND WATER-RELATED ACTIVITIES**

The Gathering Place agrees to obtain written authorization from the parent/guardian before children can participate in routine transportation, field trips, special activities away from the facility, and water-related activities. Transportation will be arranged through a local bus/shuttle service. If within walking distance, buggies or walking buddy will be used.

## **MANDATORY REPORTING**

Childcare teachers and clergy in the state of Montana are **mandated reporters** of suspected child abuse. Teachers must report immediately to the police or CPS if there is any instance when there is reason to suspect the occurrence of physical, sexual, or emotional child abuse and/or child neglect or exploitation. Like all teachers and medical professionals, if The Gathering Place personnel observe injuries or behaviors of concern, they are required to report suspected cases of physical or sexual abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services (CPS) for investigation. This is not a choice or a matter of judgment, for the protection of children, we take this responsibility very seriously.

Child abuse and neglect is a violation of children's human rights and an obstacle to their education and development. The consequences of child abuse and neglect will remain with a child throughout his/her lifetime. Failure to report can result in a gross misdemeanor charge and possible jail time. The Gathering Place will work with CPS and the families, as appropriate to ensure the health and safety of children in the program. When a report is made, The Gathering Place will continue to work with and support the child and family, the report will be treated confidentially.

Part of our policy on mandatory reporting at The Gathering Place, is based off of the school guidelines for Montana state listed below.

When you have information that leads you to suspect that child abuse or neglect may be occurring, call the **MONTANA'S STATEWIDE TOLL-FREE CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE at 1-866-820-KIDS (1-866- 820-5437)**. This Hotline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

If a report does not meet the criteria to warrant an investigation, at the very least, a record of the report will be made and kept. School employee's legal obligation as a Mandated Reporter will be fulfilled, and the investigative process, if required, will have been initiated. If an educator or other school employee fails to make a report, there may be no way for CFSD to know that a child might be in danger.”

<https://dphhs.mt.gov/Portals/85/cfsd/documents/SchoolGuidelinesChildAbuseandNeglect.pdf>

## **OUTDOOR GREEN SPACE**

### *The Space:*

Based on the classroom daily schedule created by the teachers, outdoor play will be split up by age group to go across the street to the Montana Science Center playground at 202 S Willson Avenue Bozeman, MT 59715. This playground is fenced in with organic and natural materials found in the environment to crawl, walk, and climb on.

### *Infant Classrooms:*

Bundle babies in appropriate clothing and blankets, put in buggies and roll them to the outdoor space, crossing the streets Willson and Olive. Days when the teachers want to take the infants on a walk, we walk to the Emerson lawn on Olive Street and back.

### *Toddler Classroom:*

Bundle the students in their appropriate clothing, put in buggies, and roll to the outdoor space, crossing the streets Willson and Olive.

### *Two's Classrooms:*

Bundle the students in their appropriate clothing, put in buggies or walking buddy, and roll to the outdoor space, crossing the streets Willson and Olive. If there is a full class that day, two students who the teachers choose, will walk alongside the buggies holding onto the handle with the designated teacher.

### *Preschool Classroom:*

Bundle the students in their appropriate clothing, put in buggies or walking buddy, and roll to the outdoor space, crossing the streets Willson and Olive. If there is a full class that day, two students who the teachers choose, will walk alongside the buggies holding onto the handle with the designated teacher.

## **INDOOR GREEN SPACE**

### *The Space:*

Based on the classroom daily schedule created by the teachers, indoor play will be split up by age group to go downstairs to the lower level of the Bozeman United Methodist Church building where The Gathering Place is located. There is 900 square feet of a matted play area with structures for the children to climb on, tables to sit and play, a sensory table, rocking horses and a slide. Based on the classroom playing in the space, teachers can remove and add objects/materials that are age appropriate for their classroom.

*Infant Classrooms:*

Putting babies in buggies, teachers can roll the infants to the basement where they can lay out objects that they want their infants to play with. This flooring puzzle piece foam where it is safe for infants and toddlers to play and crawl on.

*Toddler Classroom:*

Holding hands with their peers and teachers, the class will walk down the hallway to the elevator, go to the lower level, walk along the ramp to the far side of the basement where the play area is located. Teachers will bring out materials they wish to have for their class to play with.

*Two's Classrooms:*

Holding hands with their peers and teachers, the class will walk down the hallway to the elevator, go to the lower level, walk along the ramp to the far side of the basement where the play area is located. Teachers will bring out materials they wish to have for their class to play with.

*Preschool Classroom:*

The class will walk down the hallway to the elevator, go to the lower level, walk along the ramp to the far side of the basement where the play area is located. Teachers will bring out materials they wish to have for their class to play with.

**Emergency Disaster Action Plan 2019: The Gathering Place: A Child Learning Center**

Facility Name: Bozeman UMC DBA: The Gathering Place: A Child Learning Center

Facility Address: 121 S. Willson Avenue Bozeman, MT 59715

Facility Phone: 406-551-7215, 406-586-5413

Facility Main Contact: Katie Estes - Preschool Director, Rev. Eric Strader

Emergency Kit Location(s): One located in every classroom and offices (8 total)

Number of Children: 56

**Emergency Contacts:**

Fire/Rescue (911)	Bozeman EMS	Phone: 406-582-3200
Police (911)	Steve Crawford	Phone: 406-582-2031
Fire (911)	Josh Waldo	Phone: 406-582-2351
Hospital	Bozeman HDH	Phone: 406-414-5000
Poison Control	Poison Center	Phone: 1-800-222-1222
Local Emergency	Gallatin County EM	Phone: 406-548-0111
Electric Company	NorthWest Energy	Phone: 888-467-2669
Insurance Provider	Church Mutual	Phone: 888-554-2642

**Staff Responsibilities:**

All natural or human-caused disasters such as a flood, fire, tornado, or responding to an intruder will be the staff's responsibility to gather their students, collect the proper emergency evacuation supplies and follow the procedure in place in case of these emergencies. Each classroom will have phones and a way to contact the director immediately of any emergency.

An alarm will sound in the classroom of an emergency which will then be an immediate response by the Bozeman UMC staff to evacuate with their students. It is the staff's responsibility to take attendance of their classrooms and report to the director.

When evacuated from the building in the neighborhood site, out-of-neighborhood site, or out-of-town site staff will have the responsibility to keep the children safe, calm, and controlled while waiting for further instructions from authorities or the director.

### **Staff Training:**

- All staff will be required to perform 8 fire drills and 2 non-fire drills a year. These include: fire evacuation, non-fire evacuation, lockdown, shelter-in-place, intruder and earthquake.
- All staff will be trained in these procedures prior to start date of class in September 2019 through videos, online training, and in person training learning.

### **Evacuation:**

#### Evacuation Routes/Exits:

- Children are cared for on all three levels of the Bozeman United Methodist Church.
- Exits (all windows and doors are checked regularly to ensure opening):
  - Basement: Two side doors, main entryway by elevator
  - Main level: Alley door, sanctuary double doors, Willson entry door, windows in sanctuary, offices, and classroom
  - Second level: Stairwell access, by elevator, stairwell access near offices, windows in each classroom and in offices, stairwell access on the tower side of the building

#### Evacuating Infants/Toddlers:

- Children will be evacuated together in the infant room using rollaway cribs and by carrying these children. Children will be evacuated together in the toddler room by carrying or walking. Children will be evacuated together in the two's classrooms by walking in a line holding hands. Children will be evacuated together in the preschool classrooms by holding hands and walking in a line. The second level classrooms will walk down the hallway and down the stairwell near the elevators in case of an emergency and will meet the main level classroom outside in their designated spot. The infant room will walk down the ramp into the hall to the alley door and meet outside at their designated spot.
- In case of the need to evacuate through the windows, children will be placed out windows first, using any items available to place them on the ground.

Notification: Once all children are safely evacuated:

- 911 will be called
- Parents will be notified of the evacuation

#### Emergency Kits/Information:

- Emergency kits will be taken when possible.
- Each classroom will have an emergency backpack with a folder with each child's emergency contact information.

#### Evacuation Sites:

- Neighborhood (for fire & indoor weather-permitting space):  
First Baptist Church Lawn  
120 S. Grand Avenue  
Bozeman, MT 59715  
(406) 586-6743
- Out-Of-Neighborhood (indoor weather permitting space - explosion, flooding):  
Emerson Building (lawn)  
111 S. Grand Ave  
Bozeman, MT 59715  
406-587-9797
- Out-Of-Town ( indoor weather permitting space - hurricane, widespread flooding):  
Bozeman Public Library  
626 E. Main Street  
Bozeman, MT 59715  
406-582-2400

Transportation to Evacuation Locations:

- Children will be pushed in cribs, walking or caregivers holding children to the neighborhood evacuation site and weather permitting to the out-of-neighborhood site via shuttle.
- Children will be driven in personal vehicles or in a shuttle service, with car seats, to the out-of-town location.

Shelter-In-Place: In case of the need to stay put due to a tornado or notification from authorities, the following procedures will be followed:

- Location: Children will be taken to an interior room in the basement of the Bozeman United Methodist Church.

Intruder:

- Children on the main level classrooms will close the curtains of their windows, lock doors, and gather into the bathroom until it is clear. Notified by the police, director, or pastor of Bozeman UMC.
- Children in the second level classrooms will close the curtains of their windows, lock doors, and gather into the corners of the room where it is farthest from the windows and doors until it is clear. Notified by the police, director, or paster of Bozeman UMC
- Parents/guardians will be notified by phone and email by the director of the intruder.

Emergency Supplies:

- Emergency kits with food (including formula), toys, and water are stored in the basement.
- A first aid kit stored in the basement.
- A battery-powered radio and NOAA radio is stored with the emergency supplies.
- A cell phone will be brought to the basement.

- Emergency contact sheets are kept with the supplies.
- Supplies for sealing the room are stored in the basement.

Notifications: Parents/guardians will be notified once the immediate threat has passed.

Parent Reunification: In case of the need to evacuate or when parents/guardians are unable to get to children, the following procedures will be followed to reunite children with parents/guardians (or other contact designated by parent/guardian) as soon as it is safe.

Notification:

- Parents/guardians are provided:
  - Information on each evacuation site.
  - Contact information for First Baptist Church, 406-333-1856
- Parent/guardian contact numbers are:
  - Stored in classroom phones, directors phone
  - Attached to emergency backpacks
  - Kept in emergency kits

Release: Children will only be released to contacts listed on the child's form with proper identification.

Child/Parent Information: For each child at our site are identified by their contact and emergency information. There will be copies of each child's information in all emergency kits.

## **HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

### **Illness and Attendance:**

In order to maintain a healthy environment, children must be kept home when having the following symptoms or diseases:

- Fever of 100 degrees or greater within the last 24 hours
- Bacterial infections, until they have been treated with antibiotics for at least 24 hours
- Frequent, hard coughing
- Vomiting or diarrhea within the last 24 hours
- Head lice, until they have been treated and all nits removed
- Generalized rashes, until they have been seen and diagnosed by a healthcare provider as non-contagious
- Chicken pox, until all blisters have dried up and crusted over

Your child may return to school once the above symptoms/diseases subside and/or a healthcare provider advises that your child is healthy enough to return to school. Please do your best to notify, The Gathering Place, when and why your child is not attending school. While we ensure child's health information is protected, the information is necessary for protecting the health and wellness of the young children in our program.

### **Illness or Injury at School:**

In the case of illness or minor injury at school, The Gathering Place, will notify you to pick up your child from school. Your child will be kept comfortable at school, until you or authorized

pick-up persons arrive. On those very rare occasions where a child sustains a more serious injury, several things will happen simultaneously: we will call 911, Parent/Guardian, and staff will administer first aid. Emergency personnel will determine if the child will require emergency transportation. If you are at the scene of the accident, you have the right to refuse emergency transportation for your child.

**Medication:**

Program staff is prohibited from administering medication. If your child is in need of medication, that will need to be given via parent/guardian.

**Immunizations:**

All children must be up-to-date and current on immunizations for their age group. This is determined based on Public Health in the 406: Montana Vaccine Requirements for Child Care Attendance.

## Parental Handbook Agreement

The Gathering Place: A Child Learning Center agrees to provide **full time child care** for (name of child) \_\_\_\_\_ on Monday-Friday, 7:30am-5:30pm starting \_\_\_\_\_ and attendance will be taken daily through a sign in/sign out system.

I understand that there is a late fee of \$10 every 5 minutes that I am late picking up after 5:30pm and/or that appropriate persons may be notified (parents, emergency contacts, child protective services, etc.)

I understand that my child will participate in the following meal plan based off of the Montana Child and Adult Care Food Program. They will receive breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack. <https://dphhs.mt.gov/hcsd/childcare/cacfp>

I understand that my child will not be allowed to enter or leave the facility without being escorted by the parent(s), person authorized by parent, or facility personnel.

I understand the importance of the child care facility's policies and procedures and will abide by these plans.

I acknowledge it is my responsibility to keep the child's records current to reflect any significant changes as they occur; telephone numbers, work location, emergency contacts, child's physician, child's health status, infant feeding plans and immunization records, etc.

The facility agrees to keep me informed of any incidents, including illnesses, injuries, adverse reactions to medications, etc., which include my child at an immediate response.

I agree to send in a written 30 day notice of termination of enrollment at The Gathering Place: Child Learning Center all fees and tuition paid in full.

The Gathering Place: A Child Learning Center agrees to obtain written authorization from me before my child participates in routine transportation, field trips, special activities away from the facility, and water-related activities.

I authorize the child care facility to obtain emergency medical care for my child when I am not available.

I have received a copy and agree to abide by the policies and procedures for The Gathering Place: A Child Learning Center at Bozeman United Methodist Church.

I understand that the facility will advise me of my child's progress and issues relating to my child's care as well as any individual practices concerning my child's special needs. I also understand that my participation is encouraged in facility activities.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent/Guardian)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Facility Administrator/Director)