



Parent Handbook 2018-2019

Welcome to Bloom!

The Bloom handbook should provide you with everything you may need to know regarding our centre, however, if you have any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to ask. We are just an email or phone call away and are eager to make both your experience at Bloom and your child's an exceptional one. We look forward to working with your child and are excited to have you as part of the Bloom family!

School Supplies

Bloom provides all the necessary learning tools and supplies for your child. However, we ask that you send the following with your child on the first day of classes. Please note these items are to be left at the centre and replaced when needed. Also, please label all items with your child's first and last name.

A backpack or a small bag containing:

- A pair of inside shoes (runners with a Velcro closure are best)
- A complete change of clothes in case of an accident or spill (please place these in a Ziploc freezer bag and label the bag with your child's first and last name)
- A paint shirt or plastic smock

Please note that students must wear shoes at all times inside the centre for their own safety. Please send shoes that are easy for your child to put on and that have not been worn outside and are only for use indoors as this helps to keep our centre clean.

Class Times / Late Policy

Morning classes run from 8:45am-11:45am. For your convenience, drop off time is any time between 8:45 am and 9:00am. Circle time begins at 9:00am and children should arrive and be prepared to join the group by this time. Pick up time is 11:45am. The teacher will have the children dressed and ready for dismissal at this time.

Afternoon classes run from 12:45pm-3:45pm. For your convenience, drop off time is any time between 12:45pm and 1:00pm. Circle time begins at 1:00pm and children should arrive and be prepared to join the group by this time. Pick up time is 3:45pm. The teacher will have the children dressed and ready for dismissal at this time. Please note: the doors are locked after the drop off window until dismissal and therefore if you are late dropping off your child please knock and we will let you in.

At Bloom, we understand that things happen and you may run late in picking up your child on occasion. If you are going to be late, please give the centre a call and let us know you are running late. Bloom's late policy allows for parents to be late up to three times throughout the school year without incurring any late fees. After the third incident, the parent will be charged a \$10.00 late fee. This fee will increase to \$20.00 after the sixth incident. Please note: We allow a 10-minute leeway before you are considered late.

Child Pick Up

Classes end at 11:45am and 3:45pm. Please be prompt in picking up your child at these times as the teacher will have the children dressed and prepared for dismissal. However, the doors will not be unlocked until 11:45 a.m. and 3:45 p.m. so if you do arrive early please wait out of site of the doors so we can complete the class without the children being distracted. It may be stressful for your child if you are not there when they expect you. Please call the centre and notify us in the event you are running late so we can reassure your child that you are on your way. At Bloom your child's safety is our utmost priority, therefore please note that your child will only be released to those people whom you have listed as authorized to pick up your child on the registration form. If staff is not familiar with the person they will be asked to show identification before your child can be released to them. In the case of an emergency if you require someone whom is not listed as authorized with us to pick up your child, please call the centre beforehand and let us know the name of the person who will be picking up your child that day. Please note: Bloom must speak to the child's parent or guardian in order to arrange this. The person will also be asked to show identification at the time of pick-up.

Attendance / Signing In and Out

Please sign your child in on the clipboard located on top of the lockers when you drop your child off. Please also sign your child out upon picking up your child. Please write clearly so your name can be read. Also, please inform grandparents and anyone else picking up or dropping off your child that they should do the same. Also, if your child is going to be absent from school please be sure to call or email the centre prior to the start of class to let us know.

Kindermusik

Kindermusik is a world renowned company whose music and movement curriculum is built on years of research and developed by experts in music, education, and child development. ABC Music & Me by Kindermusik is offered as a component of your child's preschool class and takes place during the preschool class time for half an hour once a week. The ABC Music & Me curriculum has been specifically designed for preschool children and helps to develop important school readiness skills such as pre-literacy, listening, and social skills through music, story time and movement. The learning objectives align perfectly with what we do here at Bloom. And most importantly the children have a blast at the same time! There is no charge for the class time (normally a \$60/month value) other than a small fee to cover the cost of the take home kit your child will receive each month.

Bloom Calendar

The Bloom calendar will provide you with detailed information regarding your child's start date, school days off, holidays and other program start and end dates at Bloom. For convenience and to allow families with older children to spend time together; Bloom's school year calendar, including holidays and TPD days, closely follows the school system's. However, there are some variations. TPD (Teacher Professional Days) are a day off for students; however, the teachers will still be working at the centre. These days are very important to us. They allow our teachers time to work on things that cannot be done during class time when our attention is devoted to the students. Some of these things include preparing progress reports for the students, training and certification, planning and class preparation, and preparing for upcoming special events just to name a few. These days will be held on either a Thursday or a Friday (and one is on a Monday) in order to evenly disperse the time across all class options. Since Kindermusik lessons are typically held on these days they will take place on Tuesdays and Wednesdays for TPD weeks so that the lessons are not missed. Please visit bloomlearning.ca under Parent Info/ Policies and Procedures/ to view the Bloom Calendar or contact us to request a copy.

Snack/Food Policy

Bloom will provide a nutritious snack for children in the junior preschool and preschool programs. We are a nut free environment and therefore foods containing nuts will not be allowed in the centre. Also, please do not send any food with your child. If your child has special dietary concerns, please note this on the registration form and we will make the necessary arrangements. Also, if you wish to provide a special birthday treat or something of that sort for your child's class please ensure it is nut free and contact us ahead of time regarding any other allergies you may need to avoid. We appreciate the kind gesture, but at Bloom we take your child's health and wellbeing very seriously and therefore this policy will be strictly upheld. Also, please do not send your child to school with gum or candy as this can be distracting and they will be asked to discard it.

A morning and afternoon snack will also be provided for children attending the summer programs. Please note children in the summer programs are required to bring a bagged lunch. Bloom is a nut free environment and therefore foods containing nuts will not be allowed in the centre. You will also be notified of any other allergies in your child's group and asked to avoid bringing those foods into the centre as well.

Notice to Withdraw

If you are moving or need to withdraw your child from our preschool programs for any reason, Bloom requires one month's written notice or one month's payment in lieu of notice. If notice is given after the first of the month or part way through the month you will be required to pay in full for the following month. This allows us the necessary time to try and fill your spot. Please note registration fees are non-refundable and are not applied towards the monthly fees. For our tutoring programs the course fee is non-refundable unless notice to withdraw is given at least 30 days prior to the start date. For the summer camps the course fee is non-refundable unless notice to withdraw is given at least three weeks prior to the first day of the camp you wish to cancel.

Show and Tell/Toys from Home

Show and Tell is a component of our circle time for the junior preschool and preschool classes. Please check your monthly calendar for your child's show and tell days. Show and Tell allows your child the opportunity to develop oral speaking skills, build their vocabulary and overcome public speaking fears while bonding with the teachers and other students in the class. You will be notified of the monthly show and tell themes. Please do not send any toys or items from home with your child to preschool unless they are for show and tell and only send appropriate items please (no weapons, projectiles, breakable items, edible items, etc.).

Medication Policy

If your child requires medication and if it is at all possible, please time the medication to be administered outside of school hours. We realize this is not always possible; therefore, Bloom staff will administer medication to your child provided we have obtained prior written authorization from the parent and the medication is in its original container and includes the following:

- The child's first and last names
- The expiry date of the medication
- Specific and clear instructions for how to administer and store the medication

A written record of each dose of medication administered will be kept and medications will be stored in a locked box and out of the reach of children.

Parent Communication

At Bloom, we feel communication between parents and staff is vital to the child's learning and plays an important role in your child's success. The majority of communication will be done via email so please check the email addresses you've provided on the registration form frequently and ensure your email addresses are up to date. Each child will also be provided with a plastic envelope for notes home and children's work. Each month you will receive a calendar in this envelope with important dates and events as well as the snack menu. Please ensure that you check this envelope daily and that it is emptied and returned to preschool each day with your child. You may also place notes for your child's teacher in this envelope as well.

Fees/Payment Information

Bloom Learning Centre uses EFT (Electronic Funds Transfer) rather than requiring several post-dated cheques for preschool fees. We find this is a cheaper and more convenient way to process your monthly payments. All you have to do is include a void cheque with your registration form and we will take care of the rest. Then on the first day of each month your child is enrolled the monthly fee will automatically come out of your account. Please ensure that the funds are available as a \$30 NSF fee will apply. If you change your banking information at any point throughout the year, please notify us as soon as possible so we can update our records. Kindermusik fees will also be debited at the same time.

For tutoring and summer camps post-dated cheques will still be used. Receipts will be issued in January and June for preschool and junior preschool classes and at the end of your program for tutoring and summer programs. Depending on your circumstances, you may be able to claim fees as a childcare expense or under the arts tax credit.

Behaviour Policy

At Bloom, we strive to create a positive learning environment where all children can grow and feel safe. We believe the best way to deal with behaviour issues, especially with very young children, is to communicate with them on their level and make sure they feel they have been heard and are understood. We encourage them to use their words, rather than their actions, to convey their feelings and involve the children in the process of creating classroom rules so they feel empowered and as though they are truly part of the Bloom family. Aggressive behaviour towards staff and other children will not be tolerated.

We also use the “thinking chair” technique. If after a discussion the child continues the unacceptable behaviour they will be given a warning. If the behaviour continues after the warning the child will be asked to go to the thinking chair to think about their behaviour. Essentially this is a time out technique. They will remain on the thinking chair for 1 minute for each year of their age. So, if a child is four years old, they will be asked to stay on the thinking chair for 4 minutes. Once the time is up, a teacher will approach them and discuss why they were sent to the thinking chair and discuss their behaviour and other strategies the child can use in the situation in the future. The child will then return to the group. At Bloom, we feel it is important to work together with parents and keep the lines of communication open regarding any behaviour issues your child may have. We also understand this is a new experience for many children and some may take more time to adjust than others. Don't worry, we are very patient!

Guest Speakers

At Bloom, we are always looking for opportunities to create learning experiences. Guest speakers are a fun and interactive way for children to learn and discover things about the world around them. Due to the time restrictions of the classes, field trips can be difficult to fit in and I find bringing special guests to us works well. We may have guest speakers /guest teachers visit the centre throughout the school year to speak to the children on important topics or lead special activities if it relates to what we are learning or is an emergent curriculum topic that the children have shown interest in. We will be sure to put it on the calendar or let you know if we are having a special visitor in your child's class.

Visitors & Staff

At Bloom, we understand families are busy and many of you have work commitments during school hours therefore you are not required to volunteer or bring snack for the class. Your child's safety is our primary concern and therefore all visitors (and staff) need to submit a criminal record check prior to working at the centre. Staff members are also required to have current First Aid and CPR certification. At Bloom, we only employ the best because we believe your child deserves the best! Our lead teachers are required to have a four-year Bachelor of Education degree and our teaching assistants must possess early childhood education certification or educational assistant training.

Tips for Successful Preschool Transition

- Make sure your child gets plenty of rest the night before preschool
- Start your child's day off with a good breakfast
- Keep your child at home if he or she is sick or over-tired
- Reinforce preschool rules and procedures and let your child see you have confidence in us and we are on the same team
- Inform staff of changes at home that may affect your child's behaviour at preschool
- Make your goodbyes at drop off as brief as possible. If you find your child is struggling with separation anxiety or not wanting to come to school, please let us know so we can help. We can work with your child to help them adjust and provide you with helpful tips to make the transition easier -on both of you!
- Arranging play dates with other preschool students from Bloom may help your child to feel more comfortable if they are having difficulty adjusting
- Have fun! We have so much fun at preschool and if you are excited about this milestone in your child's life they will be excited too!

