# Welcome to BUILDING BLOCKS ELC

Building Blocks Early Learning Center will be staffed with well-qualified, professional caregivers and is licensed by the Maryland State Department of Education. (MSDE)

## Non-Discrimination Policy

It is our policy to provide an environment that is free from unlawful discrimination of any type, including discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, age, disability, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

## Reflections

We understand the concerns parents have when leaving their children for the day. Although no one can replace you, we are honored you have given us the opportunity to nurture your child while you are away. We realize that every child is unique. We have established a program which gives us the opportunity to share and nurture each child’s uniqueness.

## Philosophy

Building Blocks ELC believes in making it known that it is never too early to prepare for your

scholar’s future. Through an innovative curriculum through Frog Street and highly qualified

staff, we make it our sole responsibility to groom the leaders of tomorrow. We believe that each

child can overcome any obstacle placed in front of them. Our preschool programs provide

inclusive settings that recognize children’s varied abilities, interests, needs, and learning styles.

We feel that there is great benefit to providing education to both children with special needs and

typical children combined in classes together as peers. The typical students serve as models for

the children with special needs inspiring language and creative play. The typical children are

gaining understanding and acceptance and building wonderful values. Through emotional,

physical, and cognitive development we will provide every resource needed to ensure the success

of each scholar in our care, to help each child discover their own selves. It is our policy to

provide an environment that is free from unlawful discrimination of any type, including but not

limited to discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, age, disability, veteran status, or any

other characteristic protected by law. Each day we make deposits into the memory banks of

children’s lives and we help them develop their personal interests through their individual

primary languages with respect to their cultural backgrounds.

CHILDREN WITH DISABILTIES

We act in compliance with the American with Disabilities Act and other applicable federal, state, or local laws pertaining to the provision of services to children with disabilities. We will make reasonable accommodations for children with disabilities in the most integrated setting appropriate. We will make no assumptions concerning an individual’s abilities or disabilities. BUILDING BLOCKS ELC is partnered with several resource centers in the area that come in to help assist with caring for and educating children with special needs. We are available to discuss the details of this process further, if you have any questions.

As a parent-guardian, the most significant contribution you can make in the care of your child is to have an open sharing communication between our center and your home. To assist you, we have an open door policy and you are welcome to share in your child’s day, whenever possible.

***Please visit or call us often.***

… Director and Staff*,*

*Building Blocks ELC*

# Enrollment and Tuition Guidelines

This agreement defines your legal rights and responsibilities, those of The Journey of Faith Center for Child Development, Inc. and the terms and conditions of your child's enrollment.

## Registration/Tuition Fees

There is a non-refundable one-time Administration fee for a single child or family enrolling 2 or more children that is due on the day the Enrollment Agreement is signed. A tuition payment for the first week is due on or before your child's first day of attendance. Thereafter, tuition can be paid weekly. If you desire to pay bi-weekly or monthly please see the Finance office. Tuition is due on Monday of each week and is late after Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. Payments are to be made by credit card, money order, cash or check payable to ( BUILDING BLOCKS ELC). Payment by credit card is preferred If a payment is not made by Tuesday no later than 6:30 p.m. a late fee will be charged and the Enrollment Agreement may be voided by the Center and your child could be refused further enrollment. If there is a problem with billing or prompt payment, please notify the Center's Director or Bookkeeper to explain the problem and suitable payment arrangements can be made.

## Late Arrival

All children must be dropped off at the center no later than 9:00 a.m. If your child has a doctor’s appointment please notify the front office no later than the day before.

## Late Pick-Up Charge

A late fee of $2.00 every one (1) minute, per child will be charged to any parent who picks up their child(ren) after 6:30 p.m. A parent must call before 6:00 p.m. to inform the center they will be late. We are committed to the care of your children, but staff members have family responsibilities as well.

## Field Trips

The Center's regular program includes field trips and other off-ground activities. Transportation is by bus only. We cannot transport any child in a personal vehicle for any reason. A permission slip will be sent home to parents prior to each trip and they must be signed and returned within the specified time and any required fees paid before your child will be allowed to participate.

Although we encourage participation in all field trips, there will be provisions for childcare at the Center on the day of a field trip if for some reason your child is unable to attend. We always encourage parental participation in all of our field trips. Parents will be responsible for any costs involved in field trips, i.e. admission fees, transportation costs, etc.

## Summer Camp

During the summer months BUILDING BLOCKS ELC will offer a summer program. BUILDING BLOCKS ELC require parents to pay an activity fee to cover the cost of trips and onsite activities. Parents can begin to pay on summer camp as soon as the summer fees are announced each year so that it won’t be a financial hardship. The final payment is due no later than the first week of summer camp. Families that register after camp will pay a prorated camp fee**.**

## Discounts

BUILDING BLOCKS ELC offers the following discounts to our families: Multi-child discount on the lowest paying child(ren), Military, Retired Military and Journey of Faith church members. The discount is 10% off of tuition.

Families that are with us for a year will receive one free week of vacation. In order to use this discount the child cannot be at the center that entire week and we must receive a two week advance notice.

## Absences

A full weekly tuition fee will be charged for your child, even if he/she is absent due to illness, vacation or other cause during the month. Please notify the Center by 9:00 a.m. if your child is sick and will be absent for the day. The Center should be notified at least two weeks in advance if your child will be absent due to vacation.

## Withdrawal from the Center

The Center must receive a written letter of withdrawal which gives us a two week advance notification indicating your child’s last day with the center. There will be no refunds. Any unpaid charges due to the Center (for late pick-up, field trips, etc.) must be paid on the Monday prior to the last day of your child's attendance.

## Termination by the Center

The center may terminate your child's enrollment effective immediately, if any of the following conditions arise:

1. In the judgment of the Center Director, the child's behavior threatens the physical or mental health of themselves, other children or adults in the Center;
2. Weekly tuition and any other outstanding fees are not paid within five business (5) days after payment is due and no explanation has been made to the Center.

The Center may terminate your child's enrollment upon two weeks written notice to you if any of the following conditions arise:

1. For any of the conditions listed above, assuming the Center has not exercised its right to terminate enrollment immediately
2. In the judgment of the Center Director, the Center's program does not meet the developmental or special needs of your child
3. You fail to provide necessary items such as documents, diapers, etc.
4. You fail to abide by any other terms of the Enrollment Agreement.

# Operational Policy

## Days of operation and closing information

BUILDING BLOCKS ELC operational hours are Monday thru Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Staff will come in earlier to prepare the building to receive children; however BUILDING BLOCKS ELC cannot receive children any earlier due to insurance purposes.

**Emergency Closing and Inclement Weather:**

BUILDING BLOCKS ELC follows Charles County Government closings for emergencies and inclement weather. BUILDING BLOCKS ELC reserves the right to make a decision other than that of Charles County Government on a case by case basis. Parents will be notified by  [kidreport/procare,](http://www.schoolsout.com/) email and via text messages in case there is a need to close the childcare center. BUILDING BLOCKS ELC will also change the phone recorded message indicating our closing status by 4:00 a.m..

## Holiday and Center Closings

New Year's Eve

New Year's Day

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Columbus Day

Presidents Day

Good Friday

Memorial Day

Independence Day

Staff Work Day (2 days before school)

Labor Day

Thanksgiving Day

Day after Thanksgiving

Christmas Eve

Christmas Day

## Personal Items

Parent’s please keep in mind that your child is in pre-school and will be painting, gluing, coloring, cutting and playing outside. Please dress your child(ren) in play appropriated clothing and shoes. Please make sure that all personal items are labeled with your child’s name. Although we will try hard not to misplace items but on occasions this may happen and there is a better chance for items to be returned.

Your child must have at least one set of extra clothes. Please see that all of your child’s extra clothes are labeled. BUILDING BLOCKS ELC is not responsible for damaged clothing.

If your child is not toilet-trained, you are responsible for supplying diapers and wipes.

**Lost and found**

Please notify the office soon as possible so that we can assist locating your items.

## Valuable Personal items

BUILDING BLOCKS ELC will not be responsible for any clothing, electronic items, money or items of sentimental value. Please do not allow your child to bring these items to the child care center.

# Education

## Classroom Environment

BUILDING BLOCKS ELC will make every effort to provide your child a clean, safe and well-planned environment. We make a concerted effort to make each classroom child friendly, including child size furniture and equipment. Your child’s learning experiences will include learning toys, games, books and music.

Classroom Curriculum

Our center utilizes the FrogStreet curriculum, from ages six weeks to five-year old’s. FrogStreet is an MSDE approved curriculum.

## Classroom Transitions

We realize that a positive transition between the center and the child is a collaborative effort between you and our staff. We also realize that each child reacts differently to separation from their parents and the staff would like to ensure that this transition become successful as possible.

If this is your child’s first time in a group setting and you feel you need to spend extra time so they can adjust, please feel free to do so. Your child will feel more secure while at school if he or she knows that you value his or her friends, teachers and environment. BUILDING BLOCKS ELC has provided some suggestions for a successful transition:

* Please do not attempt to sneak out without saying goodbye to your child
* Give your child a good-bye kiss and explain that it is time for you to leave and you will return later
* As difficult as it may be, make your good-bye short and sweet, even if your child is crying. The longer the goodbye, the longer the child will cry
* Do not linger around after you have said goodbye, this can confuse your child. It may interfere with them becoming comfortable in the classroom

## Transition to a new classroom

There will be a time that your child will be ready to move on to the next age group and we take many things in consideration so this transition is successful. It includes: availability of space, we can’t move your child until we have an opening and you will need to pay the current rate, social skills, potty trained, etc. We will seek input from their teachers and we will contact parents when we feel your child is ready to move. The decision of transitioning children will be a collaborative effort that includes parents, teachers, and management.

Children are able to transition 2 weeks before their birthdate, as long as they are developmentally ready to move.

## Lesson Plans

Each classroom will post weekly lesson plans that provide you with information on week’s activities and the skills to be developed through the week.

## Program Assessment

BUILDING BLOCKS ELC will continually assess all aspects of our program in a variety of ways, including but not limited to classroom observations, quality assurance checks and teacher input. We encourage parent involvement in the classroom. We also utilize an assessment tool that will guide teachers to customize educational goals to meet the needs of your child.

## Nap and quiet time

Children nap between the hours of 12:00 -2:00 p.m. All children need bedding for their cots each day and parents will take bedding home each Friday to be cleaned for the following week.

Children that aren’t sleepy may sit quietly on their cots. If your child usually needs a stuffed toy, an old blanket or any other comfort item to help relax and perhaps sleep, please send it with him/her. If it is necessary, we can return it with your child each day.

## Staff Training

According to the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) we are mandated to train our staff in child development, curriculum, health, safety and nutrition, special needs, professionalism and communication each year. The center will be closed twice a year in order to be in compliance with the state regulations.

## Television

Television media is limited in the school setting because we focus on interactive learning experiences. When we do utilize television, it is an extension of our curriculum and each program in approved by management.

# Behavior Management

## Positive Guidance Policy

Our policy here at BUILDING BLOCKS ELC will be to provide all of our children with a positive environment and positive reinforcement. It is the goal of our program to help children be happy, cooperative, responsible participants in Building Blocks ELC Program. We use positive, non-threatening teaching techniques that help children become responsible for their own actions and respect the rights and feelings of other people. Our discipline procedures begin with mild reminders, redirections and progress reports to the parent’s. We will ask parent’s to come and pick their child(ren) up from school at any time if they have uncontrollable behaviors.

The following steps will be taken before we will remove a child from the center:

1. A behavior journal will be implemented and used to track when and how often the behaviors are occurring. This will provide a guide as to what routines and situations can be changed or altered to eliminate the unwanted behavior.
2. A verbal conference with the parent/guardian to inform them of their child’s actions and to get suggestions on how to assist with the behavior.
3. Teachers will create and implement a daily Progress report and reward system to encourage desired behavior.
4. If uncontrollable behavior (a child whom cannot be controlled by verbal command) continues we will determine if BUILDING BLOCKS ELC is a right fit for your child.

**Prohibited actions from staff, children and their parents:**

1. “Physical Punishment”; hitting, spanking, slapping, shaking, kicking, grabbing, etc.
2. “Emotional Punishment”: name calling, using language that threatens or frightens the child.
3. Withholding food, personal items.

No child will be separated from the group except in the case of harm to the child from him or herself or others. Guidelines (all separations will be documented and parents notified). Under no circumstance will children be spanked on BUILDING BLOCKS ELC property.

## Family Involvement

### Collaborative Relationship between Families and Staff

The staff here at BUILDING BLOCKS ELC will work with each parent to insure that your child educational experience is successful in each way. Our goal here is to collaborate with you to ensure that your child has the best experience possible while in our care. We have a parent survey that will be provided at the end of each school year, in which will help the center flourish. We welcome your active input and involvement in your child’s program, to ensure their progress.

### Community Resources

While your child is in our care, we can guide you in the direction of valuable community service in order to support the needs of your family. Your needs may vary from behavior challenges, children with special needs or even pastoral care.

### Open Door Policy

BUILDING BLOCKS ELC enjoys when the parent’s stop in to support our program. We would like for you to keep in mind that during the educational day, we like to ensure that there are not interruptions and distractions. We ask that you limit your time to thirty minutes in the classroom, so the staff can stay on task with the agenda for the day. BUILDING BLOCKS ELC has established a progression approach to communicating your concerns that is as follows: Teacher, Director, and Board of Directors.

### Resolution of Disputes

We realize on occasions that parents may have concerns. BUILDING BLOCKS ELC welcomes all concerns so that we can improve and make your experience here a pleasant one. We take all concerns seriously. BUILDING BLOCKS ELC has established a chain of command that is as follows: Teacher, Assistant Director and Director.

### Suspension and Referrals

In the event that your child is suspended from school, you will be responsible for finding alternative daycare. If your child receives a bus referral and is unable to ride the bus to and from school, you will responsible for transporting your child. The staff of BUILDING BLOCKS ELC will not be able to transport your child and he/she will not be able to stay at the center during his/her normal school hours.

### Family Outreach

Throughout the year we have activities in which we encourage parent involvement. The activities include Graduation, Center field day and Fundraisers.

Graduation is for our Pre-kindergarten program, but all classrooms participate. Each class will have a performance in the ceremony. Parents of all classrooms are encouraged to invite family and friends.

Center field day takes place during the summer; all classes participate in field activities.

Fundraisers are conducted through our parent committee whom support the center. There will be at least two a year and the proceeds will go towards improving the center.

# Family Communication

## Newsletters

A Center newsletter will be distributed to each child monthly. The newsletter will include the curriculum for each level, special activities, and articles of special interest to parents. Classroom teachers will send home a monthly newsletter of events specific to your child’s class.

## Family-Teacher Conferences

We like to ensure open communication between parent’s, staff and administration and would like to hear about all your educational needs, input and suggestions. BUILDING BLOCKS ELC asks that you don’t address these concerns during curriculum time or when staffs are working with children. We have set-up conference times throughout the year to discuss these concerns.

**Fall Conference**

A conference is scheduled, in November, to discuss the child's adjustment to the Center.

**Spring Conference**

A conference is scheduled in April to discuss the child's progress.

## Requested Conferences

At any time during the year, you or the teacher may request to schedule a conference to discuss any problems or concerns. We hope to establish a rapport which will aid in the easy exchange of information and ideas to help us meet your child's needs and the needs of your family. We value your input and suggestions.

# Activities

## Outdoor Activities

There will be several occasions when a child will be participating in outdoor activities. According to regulations children need to have outdoor play twice a day if weather is permitting. Temperatures above 30 degrees and under 95 degrees will allow children to play unless there is a health alert. Children that attend school should be able to participate in all daily activities.

## Holidays and birthdays

BUILDING BLOCKS ELC families who would like to celebrate their child’s birthday, we ask that this takes place at our 3:00 p.m. snack time. Please plan in advance with the teachers and please don’t bring any items that may be a choke hazard, such as: foods or candies. BUILDING BLOCKS ELC will celebrate basic holidays, if you feel that your child does not need to participate please inform your teacher or the front office.

## Pictures

During the school year, pictures of the children will be taken in the fall and spring. The photographer will take a group shot of each class as well as several poses of each child.

# Transportation

## School-Year

Transportation will be provided to most local area schools to all enrolled School-Age and PreKindergarten children. Children will be able to ride the bus as long as they are not a risk to other children or the driver. If a child is unable to conduct his/her self in a safe manner then they will lose their privilege to ride the bus and it will become the parent’s responsibility to provide transportation to and from school each day until their suspension has ended. Suspension will be determined by the severity to the incident.

## Field Trips

On occasion throughout the school year and during summer camp children ages 4-12 will be transported on the bus with the parent’s permission. All children going on the field trip must ride with the transportation provided by the center. Parents are not allowed to drop off children at the field trip or pick them up. If it is an emergency and the child must be picked up, then parents must contact the center. Siblings that are not enrolled in the childcare center will not be able ride the bus. Children will not be refrained from attending a trip because they have been punished at home. BUILDING BLOCKS ELC may be able to provide extra supervision for your child if their group is gone for the day. This will depend upon availability in another classroom.

## School Suspension and Bus Referral

In the event that your child is suspended from school, you will be responsible for finding alternative daycare. If your child receives a bus referral and is unable to ride the bus to and from school, you will be responsible for transporting your child. The staff of BUILDING BLOCKS ELC will not be able to transport your child and he/she will not be able to stay at the Center during his/her normal school hours.

# Health and Medical Issues

**IMMUNIZATION DETAILS AND A PHYSICIAN’S REPORT MUST BE PROVIDED BY PARENTS BEFORE THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS.**

All allergies must be listed in the student’s enrollment form. If your child develops any new allergies not listed on the form, please notify the office and the teacher immediately.

## Health Form Requirements

Before any child can attend the Center, the following medical forms must be completed and filed. The Center requires that you update these records as changes occur:

1. Emergency Information Card
2. Health Inventory Card
3. Immunization Certificate

**Becoming ill while in care:**

The Journey of Faith Center for Child Development will provide a child that has developed symptoms of illness a quiet place to rest that is in view of a childcare provider until the child is removed from the facility. The parent or emergency contact person will be notified of the illness by the child's teacher and must pick the child up within two hours.

**Daily Health Check:**

A Daily Health Check will be conducted by each child's teacher upon their arrival. The teacher will be checking for symptoms of illness, communicable diseases, child abuse and maltreatment. Information will be documented in the Daily Logs. All cuts, bruises, and behavior changes (whether or not suspected abuse) must be documented. All teachers will receive training related to recognition of signs and symptoms of illness and child abuse, administration of medication, taking temperatures, and emotional and physical needs of ill children.

## Administering Medication

Whenever possible, we ask that all medication be given to children at home. We understand that this is not always possible. If medicine must be administered while in child care, the following policy applies:

**A parent-guardian must complete a medication form each time a new medication will need to be administered and this form is only good for one year.**

* Prescription and orally administered over-the-counter medication may be administered only upon written permission of the parent and written instructions from a health care provider. It must state that the provider may administer such medication or prescription and specifying the circumstances, if any, along with the dosage and how long it should be administered. (All dosages need to be given by the parent-guardian.)
* Medication must be in the original container labeled with the child's complete name, the medication name, recommended dosage, and time intervals for administration, method of administration, expiration date and, for prescription medication, the prescriber's name and license number.
* Medication must be stored according to the instructions on the label in a place that is inaccessible to children. Medication must be returned to the parent when no longer needed.
* If a child develops symptoms which indicate a need for over-the-counter medication, including topical ointments, while in care, such medications require a medication form and must be completed by health care provider before a staff member can administer medication.
* Staff will document the dosages and time that the medication was given to the child.

## Health Policy

Children who are ill cannot be appropriately cared for in a preschool setting. Parents need to have alternate care available for when this occurs. Examples of health symptoms that require exclusion from the center include (but are not limited to):

* Fever; Oral temperature above 101 degrees / Rectal temperature above 102 degrees / Axillary (under arm) temperature above 100 degrees
* Persistent diarrhea, three or more times in a 24 hour period
* Conjunctivitis, which is an eye infection commonly referred to as "pink eye"
* Undiagnosed rash, except diaper rash
* Vomiting two or more times in previous 24 hour period, or any vomiting accompanied by other signs of illness
* Jaundice (yellow) skin or eyes
* Difficult or rapid breathing
* Symptoms of strep throat or chicken pox
* Head Lice, scabies, or other parasitic infections
* Ringworm (scalp)

Any condition in which the child acts ill and is unable to participate in classroom activities and which compromises the health and safety of others

Safety and Security

**Arriving at School**

It is the parent’s responsibility to ensure that you walk your child to his/her classroom, sign your child(ren) in on the computer and place their personal items in the cubby and acknowledge the caregiver that your child has arrived. To ensure the safety of the child, please don’t drop your child off at the front door and leave.

**Picking up/Releasing your child**

Parents please ensure that your emergency form is updated with the current information. If you need a new form please inform the office. We will not release your child with anyone whom is not on the emergency card and doesn’t have a picture I.D.

Please keep in mind if your designated person will only be receiving your child short-term, you may write a note with a start and ending time. Please ensure that the person receiving your child must be 16 years of age or older. Please feel free to update your form as needed. If there is an emergency to where your child needs to be picked up by someone not listed on the emergency form, then we will need a verbal consent. We need the first and last name of the person and we will be able to release your child.

**Reporting Absence**

If you know that your child will not be attending school, please give the school a courteous call so the teachers aren’t waiting to include your child in their daily activities.

**Fire and Emergency Drill**

According to state regulations BUILDING BLOCKS ELC is required to simulate monthly fire drills to ensure that the children and staff can properly evacuate the building. If you have a child whom is frightened from loud noises please inform the front office so we can plan accordingly.

Parent Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_