



Family Handbook

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Home School Connection

Program Communication

Here at Imagine That we understand the importance of connecting everyday learning to your family. Family is critical to your child's development. We strive to create a deep, caring bond with each child and each family member.

Daily Communication

Information is provided for families daily to give you a sense of your child's day and keep you informed about their experiences. Educators are available to review your child's day with them at pick up daily in person.

Home – School Connection

When the Directors of your school or your child's Educators have information to share with you, they will hand notices directly to you at pick up. The leadership team will also email families with any organizational updates or notices they have. Please be sure you have an updated email on file at all times with Imagine That.

Facebook/Twitter/Blog

Social media has become the new way to spread information to a large group of people. For information on the larger Imagine That organization, families are invited to read our Facebook, Twitter and website. Please keep on the look out for information on this program on these social media outlets as well. We love sharing all the great things your children are accomplishing and learning.

Information Boards

Bulletin Boards are located throughout the school and classrooms to communicate news, upcoming events, health alerts, center visitors, and more. Please be sure to stop at these boards and take a peek at what is happening around our center community.

Family Engagement

We provide many opportunities for families to get involved with the school. We have bi-annual events from family cookouts to yearly holiday celebrations. We invite you all to get involved at any level possible.

Family Events

Your child's center schedules fun, annual events such as family breakfasts, cook-outs, art fairs, holiday celebrations, and more. Please watch for these upcoming events at your child's center. Engaging in these activities is important as it gives your family the opportunity to hear the language Educators use with the children to support active learning and appropriate development of social skills.

Family Visits

Imagine That has an open-door policy, enabling you to visit your child's school at anytime. We

encourage you to come and observe in your child's classroom. However, if your child is experiencing separation anxiety, having family members come and go during the day may be more disruptive than beneficial. If we notice that your child is experiencing this problem, we may ask that you not spend time in the classroom until your child has successfully passed through this phase. We look forward to working together during this transitional time in your family's life.

Field Trips

There may be occasional opportunities for your child to take educational field trips. You will be notified at least two weeks in advance of the trip and asked to sign a permission slip for your child. You will also be notified of any additional fees before the trip. We encourage family members to chaperone field trips, this is a great way to get to know other families and share an educational experience with your child. **Please note: any person who chaperones a field trip must undergo a Background Record Check (BRC) prior to the field trip. A Background Record Check includes a Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) check, as well as a DCF (formerly DSS) Background check. If an adverse finding is revealed through the BRC, you may not be allowed to chaperone until proper discretionary procedures are followed.* In addition to field trips, special activities (i.e. an animal show, a gym program) will be brought to the school to supplement the curriculum. You will be notified in advance and be made aware of any additional fees.

Educator/Family Relationships

Imagine That is aware that our Educators often live in the same community as the families we serve. Often times, our Educators may have personal relationships with our families in addition to their professional connections at Imagine That. All Imagine That staff are committed to the confidentiality of our families and children. Educators and Administrators are not to discuss family or child information of any kind with anyone other than their Imagine That colleagues or Administrators. A strong Educator/Family relationship at Imagine That provides the supportive environment in which your child and family will thrive.

Attendance Policy

Each program will keep track of each child's daily attendance in the program. Each child will be signed in from the moment they arrive in the classroom and then will be signed out when a parent/guardian picks them up at the end of the day. Any family that is part of the state subsidized agency (CCCB or CCC) has been given the Attendance Notification Letter (below) by the agency.

All families of Imagine That including subsidized childcare please be aware of the Imagine That attendance policy that allows for children's absence due to illness, emergencies, and a maximum of two weeks' vacation per year (explained absences). All other absences are considered unexplained. Excessive absence (10 or more absences for any reason in a 30 day period or three consecutive unexplained absences at any time) will result in reassessment of your need for childcare in Imagine That. In order to ensure sure you do not lose your child's slot in the program, please notify the Imagine That Administrator immediately if your child will be absent for the day. If you are looking to disenroll your child from the program, please note that we require a 2-week notice.

Attendance Notification Letter

THE DEPARTMENT OF EARLY EDUCATION AND CARE SUBSIDIZED CHILD CARE ATTENDANCE NOTIFICATION AGREEMENT

In order to meet the needs of families and children for access to quality child cares it is necessary to make the best possible use of childcare resources. Childcare providers are required to make every effort to insure that each childcare slot is filled at all times. Whenever a child leaves care, the provider must move quickly to make that slot available to another child who is waiting for care. Subsidized childcare policy allows for children's absence due to illness, emergencies, and a maximum of two weeks' vacation per year (explained absences). All other absences are considered unexplained. Excessive absence (11 or more absences for any reason in a 30 day period or three consecutive unexplained absences at any time) will result in reassessment of your need for subsidized childcare. In order to be sure that you do not lose your child care slot if your child is absent, and to make sure that your child's slot does not remain empty if you remove your child from care, we ask you to do three things:

- Notify the childcare agency at least 2 weeks in advance if you plan to remove your child from care;
- Notify the childcare agency immediately to explain any absence of your child; and
- Notify the childcare agency immediately if you receive an Advance Notice of Termination and you have withdrawn your child from childcare services.

If excessive absence results in a determination that you no longer need childcare or that childcare services are being misused, you will be sent an Advance Notice of Termination. Your childcare services will end on the proposed end date on the Notice (or on the voucher or authorized end date, whichever is sooner), unless you contact the childcare agency before that date to explain your child's absence, or to request a Review of the termination decision.

Program Approach

Educator Training and Development

Our innovation in early education starts with our educators and our commitment to continuing their professional development and training. Imagine That comprehensive Professional Development Model provides tiers of training for entry-level staff through degreed professionals. Annually, each of our educators receives over 50 hours of professional development. This is 25 hours over the state requirements.

Preschoolers: 2.9 years to 4.9 years

As a preschooler, your child is capable of increasingly complex tasks, learning, and thinking. Imagine That preschool classrooms will prepare your child to enter Kindergarten ready to learn and ready to succeed. Our proven, nationally award winning curriculum includes theme-based units that incorporate language, pre-reading, pre-writing, math, science, social studies, creative arts, motor skills, and social development in hands-on, developmentally appropriate activities. Intentional, research-based themed curriculum is individualized for 3's, 4's and Pre-K's specific learning goals. Teachers plan daily, customized small-group "Teaching Table" activities so even in mixed age groupings, children can learn at their developmental and age-appropriate pace. All activities are linked to the Massachusetts Preschool Learning Experiences.

Kindergarten: 4.9 years to 6 years

Whether you are looking for a full day kindergarten program, a pre-kindergarten experience for your older preschooler, or a unique, after school nurturing learning environment that will care for your child's unique learning styles and needs, Imagine That programs can assist. Your child is ready to apply all of the literacy and learning preparation achieved in infants-preschool and begin reading and writing in earnest! Our proven curriculum, linked to research, includes theme-based units and incorporates language, pre-reading, math, science, social studies, creative arts, motor skills, and hands on activities.

School Age: 5 years to 13 years

We realize that Before and After School Care is a home away from home for your child. And because it is, we are committed to creating a welcoming place where your child can connect to the community, access homework support and receive healthy breakfasts and snacks. Our goal: to empower and engage through creative expression opportunities, field trips and community service projects and leadership development.

Value-Centered Classrooms

At Imagine That, we believe that not only should all of our staff work continuously to become highly effective people, but also the children in our schools should have the opportunity to develop the critical socio emotional skills of self-control, self-direction, initiative, and problem-solving that will eventually enable them to be highly effective adults. Therefore, we strive to build a Value-Centered Climate not only in our organization but also in our early education and after school classrooms. Our approach to classroom atmosphere is based on our Leadership Philosophy supported by HighScope approach with children and 7 Habits of Highly Effective People with Adults. At Imagine That, we believe that not only should all of our staff work continuously to become highly effective people, but also the children in our schools should have the opportunity to develop the critical socio-emotional skills of self-control, self-direction, initiative, and problem-solving that will eventually enable them to be highly effective adults. Therefore, we strive to build a Principle-Centered Climate in our

classrooms and organization. On the spectrum of contrasting climates for children, the Principle-Centered Climate is neither highly authoritative nor excessively permissive. Control is shared between adults and children in a balance that we achieve through constant commitment, practice and communication.

Anti-Bias Philosophy

In addition to our Value-Centered Classrooms, our programs emphasize a social anti bias philosophy. Our goal is to empower children, so they can determine what is fair, feel loved, show love for others, feel respected, show respect for others, question injustice, and stand up for themselves and others. We believe that everyone deserves love and respect and that it is wrong to make assumptions about individuals based on their size, age, socioeconomic status, ethnic background, religious background, family structure, gender, or academic ability. Imagine That celebrates differences and celebrates sameness. We believe that all feelings should be valued and that there is an appropriate way to express them. We practice the use of taking responsibility for our feelings with our children as well as in our organization between adults. We want to build character that empowers each individual to engage in relationships that support their well-being. Imagine That does not discriminate against individuals on the basis of race, cultural heritage, national origin, marital status, religion, political beliefs, disability, sexual orientation, color, sex, gender identity, age, veteran status, or ancestry. In order to promote each child's uniqueness, we must appreciate and celebrate each family. Therefore, Imagine That is a non-political, nonreligious organization.

We do acknowledge and discuss each child's unique family celebrations and host various celebrations throughout the year based upon what the children and their families celebrate. We invite each of our families to share their unique traditions by participating in the experience in their child's classroom. For example, a family may celebrate a specific holiday in their family with special traditional foods or observations. We invite families to bring this food in and share among their child's class while sharing stories, pictures, books, and songs that help the children embrace the significance of this tradition. In this way, the experience is meaningful and connected to a family, an experience instead of a generalized set of standards and beliefs about the holiday. We encourage Educators to celebrate the differences in our children's families, while supporting multicultural, multi-religious, multi-political sensitivity.

Outdoor Play

Daily outdoor play is very important for young children, and is included in our program. Per the Department of Early Education and Care regulations, children will receive 60 minutes of physical activity daily. This is usually divided in 30-minute intervals – 30 minutes in the morning and 30 minutes in the afternoon. The children will spend some time outside every day unless the temperature is outside state guidelines or it is raining. It is our philosophy and policy that if a child is well enough to attend the program, he/she is well enough to play outdoors. If children are properly dressed, weather conditions should not pose a health risk. Please provide appropriate clothing, allowing for weather extremes.

Assessments

At Imagine That, we believe in using scientific based assessments to help us better meet the needs of your child. With this in mind, Imagine That educators are able to continually assess your child's development and provide individualized instruction in the classroom to better set and meet the learning goals for your child. See your school administrator to learn what assessments are being utilized.

Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ)

Approved as a high quality screener by the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Neurology, and the Child Neurology Society and First Signs, professionals rely on ASQ for the best developmental and social-emotional screening for children from one month to 5 ½ years.

ASQ looks at strengths and trouble spots, educates parents about developmental milestones, and incorporates parents' expert knowledge about their children. Families are given the questionnaire to complete twice a year. Educators also complete the appropriate ASQ and score each form and both educator and family members review the questionnaire to review how the child is doing and how they can work together to support the development of that child.

Family-Educator Conferences

Following each assessment period, families are invited to a private conference with their child's educator to discuss the results of assessment findings and their child's overall progress. This is a valuable time for families and Educators to review and plan for each child's growth plan.

Individual families may request additional conferences. Educators will make themselves available at a mutually convenient time.

QRIS Standards

The Massachusetts QRIS Standards were developed for all programs and educators serving children and youth across the Commonwealth. The Massachusetts' Licensing Regulations serve as a solid foundation, for a set of well-developed QRIS Standards, which are based on child development, early education and after school program quality research. To address the unique characteristics of quality found in different types of programs, the QRIS Standards have been customized for Center Based / School Based programs, Family Child Care, and After School Programs / Out of School Time programs.

The Massachusetts QRIS Standards outline key indicators of quality and are presented in five primary categories. Three of the categories encompass sub-categories.

- 1) Curriculum and Learning
- 2) Safe, Healthy Indoor and Outdoor Environments
- 3) Workforce Development and Professional Qualifications
- 4) Family and Community Engagement
- 5) Leadership, Administration and Management

The QRIS Standards are presently expressed in terms of Levels, which correspond to a QRIS rating. The levels are organized in a series of blocks that outline the indicators for quality within each category. Thus, programs must demonstrate that they can meet all of the criteria in all of the categories in Level 1 to obtain a Level 1 rating, before they can qualify for Level 2 rating, and so on up the levels. Currently there are four QRIS levels. Imagine That is consistently working on achieving the QRIS Standards so we can offer the highest quality program to you and your little ones.

Safety and Wellbeing

Educator Hiring and Screening

At Imagine That, we hire educators who are experts in making the learning process fun for your child. All candidates are phone screened and then have an interview with the administration of Imagine That. Our interviews last approximately three hours and include time with the director, lead teacher and time interacting in the classroom they will potentially work in. We require all applicants to come prepared for their interview with an age appropriate activity and written lesson plan. After careful consideration with reference checks and a cleared BRC, the new Educator will attend a Welcome Session before their first day.

New Hire Orientation

To ensure all new employees are set up for success at Imagine That, all staff participates in the new hire orientation process when hired.

This process includes:

- Spending time in the classroom working in prior to being hired
- Attending the Imagine That New Hire Orientation
- Classroom Observations and Family Meet and Greet
- A 2-week check in meeting with Regional Director
- A 30-day check in meeting with Regional Director

During the New Hire Orientation, all new staff learns not only details about their specific job duties and requirements but they also learn about Imagine That. The Imagine That culture is unique, and it is extremely important that all new staff understand who and what Imagine That is and the vision of the organization. This orientation allows the new hires an opportunity to review state regulations along with an opportunity to ask the leadership of Imagine That questions they may have. It is important that the leadership of Imagine That has all new hires understand their growth opportunities within the organization.

Training and Development

It is our strong belief that staff who are committed to their own personal and professional growth and development will ensure both their personal success and the continued success of Imagine That. We are dedicated to providing our staff with the resources, training, support, and career opportunities that will transform their commitment into the growth, development, and success that will make them feel energized at work. As professionals, we expect staff to make arrangements to attend trainings, making a sincere commitment to improve their skills. Some training sessions are held during work hours, while others require attendance outside work hours.

Quality Checklist

Imagine That strives to support all staff to ensure they are providing the highest quality program to the children they serve. Each school leader completes a quality checklist on their staff. These quality checklists are completed on a monthly/every other month basis.

This checklist reviews not only regulatory requirements but also reviews adult child interactions. The school lead then reviews this with the staff member to discuss areas of strength and areas of growth. These quality checklists are in place of the EEC required bi-monthly staff observations. These quality checklists are reviewed with the educator and next steps/goals are created together. These are documented on the form and both the observer and educator sign and date the forms. A

copy of the quality checklist is kept in the staff file onsite at the school.

Diaper Policy

1. Select surface used only for diaper changing. Place disposable covering on surface.
2. Always wear disposable gloves.
3. Lay child on changing surface. Never leave child unattended. Keep one hand on child at ALL times.
4. Remove soiled diaper and fold carefully. Place soiled bowel movement diaper in plastic bag, and place in sanitary diaper pail.
5. Wipe child's diaper area front to back using disposable wet wipes. Repeat with fresh wipes if necessary.
6. Put on dry diaper and clothing. Place spoiled clothing in double plastic bag to be sent home.
7. Wash child's hands with soap & water. Assist child back to group.
8. Remove disposable covering and wash diapering surface with bleach and water solution.
9. Remove disposable gloves, wash hands, and record child's diapering on notes and chart.
10. Remove contents of diaper pail when full. Replace liner each day.

Toilet Training

Toilet training will begin when appropriate for child's age and stage of development. Parents will be consulted on the methods used at home. Feedback will be provided on each child's daily note. Children will be offered frequent opportunities for toileting, particularly after meals and before rest time.

Objectives of successful toilet training:

1. Keep the child comfortable
2. Give the child a sense of pride and accomplishment

Procedures for Toilet Training:

1. When parents and staff agree to begin toilet training, the child will be taken to the toilet frequently.
2. The child is allowed to sit as long as he/she is willing. At any sign of distress the process is stopped.
3. The child is never punished or embarrassed for accidents.
4. If the child has soiled or wet clothing, normal diapering procedures are used.
5. Children's hands will be washed with soap and running water.
6. Caregiver will wash hands thoroughly
7. Bathroom floor, sink and toilets must be cleaned and sanitized daily.

Toilet Training Tips:

- The child must assume responsibility for using the toilet
- Elastic wadded pants are a must
- This is a skill that must be learned like other developmental tasks, and staff and parents must allow for individual difference.
- Training should be a positive; children should not be made to feel guilty about accidents.
- Accidents are a natural consequence when training.
- Night dryness seldom occurs before the ages of three (often after).
- A little potty-chair gives the child independence.
- Wearing underpants makes the child feel older.

- Use accurate names for elimination.
- Examine your attitudes; avoid using “good”, “bad”. Try using other phrases like “ I like the way you used the potty!”
- Stay away from commands (avoid power struggles).
- Don’t place undue attention on toileting; even positive reinforcement can be too much pressure.
- Keep communication open with teacher and parents.
- Introduce the potty-chair at around 15 months.
- Parents need to be consistent: don’t regress once you start; stick to it or go back to diapers (not back and forth) and try again another time.

Wellness Policy

Imagine That Wellness Policy has been created in collaboration with our Health Care Consultant and Massachusetts DEEC Regulations.

Imagine That understands that it is challenging for a parent/guardian to leave or miss work. Therefore, it is suggested that alternative arrangements be made for occasions when your children must remain at home or picked up due to illness. Exclusion from Imagine That is sometimes necessary to reduce the transmission of illness. Mild illnesses are common among young children and infections are often spread before the onset of any symptoms. In these cases, we try to keep the children comfortable throughout the day, but will find it necessary to exclude them from Imagine That for the following reasons:

- Illness that prevents the child from participating comfortably in program activities.
- Illness that results in greater need for care than our educators can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children.
- Fever (101 under the arm) accompanied by unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficult breathing, or other signs of serious illness.
- Diarrhea, stools with blood or mucus, and/or uncontrolled, unformed stools that cannot be contained in a diaper/underwear or toilet.
- Vomiting – 2 or more times during the previous 24 hours or once at the school.
- Mouth sore associated with drooling.
- Rash or fever or behavioral changes, unless a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease.
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye with eye discharge) until on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Impetigo until 24 hours after treatment.
- Strep throat until 24 hours after treatment.
- Head lice until after treatment and all nits are removed.
- Chickenpox, until all lesions have dried and crusted.

We ask that for your child’s comfort and to reduce the risk of infection, children are to be picked up within 1.5 hours of notification. Children who have been excluded may return when:

- They are free of fever, vomiting and diarrhea for a full 24 hours.
- They have been treated with an antibiotic for a full 24 hours.
- They are able to participate comfortably in all usual program activities, including outdoor time.
- They are free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling (not related to teething) unless: -
The child’s health-care provider signs a note stating that the child’s condition is not contagious, and:
 - The involved areas can be covered by a bandage without seepage or drainage through the bandage.

If your child is excluded from the program because of a communicable disease, a doctor's note stating that the child is no longer contagious and may return is required.

Adhering to Imagine That Wellness Policy is the best way families and schools can partner together to ensure we create a healthy environment for all.

Infection Control

All children under 4 years old attending Imagine That are required to have a recent physical and must have up-to-date immunizations, including HIB and lead screening. All of this information must be on signed and dated by a physician. Health Forms must be updated annually for all children.

All Imagine That educators are trained with regard to proper hygiene practices. Imagine That sanitizes down all tables before and after eating with a bleach and water and a soap and water solution. Imagine That educators also strongly encourage hand washing with the children.

Hand Washing Policy

Imagine That recognizes the importance of hand washing as the first line of defense against infectious disease. Why, how, and how often you wash are all more important than what you wash with. In order to promote a healthy and safe environment for children and staff, we recommend the following:

- Use running water that drains out, not stopped-up water.
- Avoid common containers of water, to reduce spreading of germs.
- Use liquid soap, not bar soap.
- Use friction (rub hands together).
- Clean under fingernails.

All children and staff are required to wash hands at least the following times

- before and after meal times
- before and after sensory play
- after toileting
- after coming into contact with bodily fluids or discharges (including sneezes, coughing):
and
- after handling caged animals or their equipment

In addition, educators must wash their hands at least when

- before and after administering medication
- after performing cleaning tasks, handling trash or using cleaning products
- before and after meal times with the children

Medication Administration

Prescription or non-prescription medication will be administered to a child only with the family's authorization and written order of a physician that indicates the medication is for the specific child. The official prescription label on the container may be counted as the physician's written order. The original label must carry the following basic information:

- The name of the child who will be receiving the medication.*
- The name of the child's doctor.*
- The name of the medicine.
- The issue date of the medicine.*
- The dosage.

- How often to give the dosage.
- The route of the administration (i.e. Oral).
- Storage requirements (i.e. refrigerator). **Prescription medication only*

Non-prescription medication will be given only with written consent of the child's physician. The school will accept a signed statement from the physician listing the medication(s), the dosage and criteria for its administration. This statement will be valid for one year from the date that it was signed. Along with the written consent of the physician, the school will also need written parental authorization. The parent must fill out the Authorization for Medication form, which allows the school to administer the nonprescription medication in accordance with the written order of the physician. The parent statement will be valid for one week from the date it was signed and will need to be reauthorized weekly as needed.

For non-prescription medicines, the following must be adhered to:

- The family must provide all non-prescription medication, including but not limited to Tylenol. No medication may be administered to a child if the family does not provide it.
- An attempt must be made to notify the family before administering medication.
- The child's name must be labeled on the medication.
- Directions for safe use must be in writing on the container along with a list of active ingredients.

Staff will not administer:

- Any first dose of medication. This must be given by the parent/guardian at home in case of an allergic reaction.
- Any prescription medication that is not in the pharmacies bottle with the prescription label.
- Any medication which the family's instructions (If the family request the medication to be given by a different method,(I.E. fluid medication be put in a bottle or a tablet crushed into food, a doctor's note would have to be provided stating that the alternative method of administering the medication has been authorized.) The child would need to be directly supervised until all the medication is consumed, to ensure the medication was not accidentally consumed by another child.
- Any over the counter medication without a doctor's note or allow parents to add medication to bottles or sippy cups.

All Medication:

- The first dose must be administered by the parent at home in case of an allergic reaction.
- All medications must be provided to the Educator or Director by the parent.
- Medication is kept in the Director's office or in a lock box located in the refrigerator in the kitchen. Medications that may be needed immediately are kept secure and out of reach of children in the classroom, or carried outside when the child is outside.
- The Lead Educator in the classroom will be responsible for the administration of medication. In his/her absence, the Director will be responsible.
- All Staff administering medication will be trained via the DEEC Medication Authorization Training and must demonstrate competency in medication administration. Staff who have not taken this training will not administer medication.
- All administered medications (excluding topical ointments and sprays applied to normal skin) will be logged on the EEC Medical Consent Form and the School will maintain a written record. The form must be completed, signed and dated by the family member. The

form will include the child’s name, the time and date of each administration, the dosage, and the name of the staff person that administered the medication.

- Any unused medication is returned to the family. Upon completion of the medication, the consent form is kept in the child’s file.

Medication Chart

Regulation Number and Type of Medication	Written Parental Consent Required	Health Care Practitioner Authorization Required	Logging Required
7.11(2)(1)1 All Prescription	Yes	Yes. Must be in original container with original label containing the name of the child affixed.	Yes, including name of child, dosage, date, time, & staff signature. Missed doses must also be noted along with the reason(s) why the dose was missed.
7.11(2)(1)2 Oral Non-Prescription	Yes, renewed weekly with dosage, times, days and purpose	No in FCC Yes in Large and Small Group Must be in original container with original label containing the name of the child affixed	Yes, including name of child, dosage, date, time, & staff signature. Missed doses must also be noted along with the reason(s) why the dose was missed.
7.11(2)(1)3 Unanticipated Non-Prescription for Mild Symptoms (e.g., acetaminophen, ibuprofen, antihistamines)	Yes, renewed annually	No in FCC Yes in Large and Small Group Must be in original container with original label containing the name of the child affixed	Yes, including name of child, dosage, date, time, & staff signature
7.11(2)(1)4 Topical, non-Prescription (when applied to open wounds or broken skin)	Yes, renewed annually	No in FCC Yes in Large and Small Group Must be in original container with original label containing the name of the child affixed	Yes, including name of child, dosage, date, time, & staff signature.
7.11(2)(1)5 Topical, non-Prescription (not applied to open wounds or broken skin)	Yes, renewed annually	No. Items not applied to open wounds or broken skin may be supplied by program with notification to parents of such, or parents may send in preferred brands of such items for their own child(ren)’s use.	No for items not applied to open wounds or broken skin.

Individual Health Care Plans

An Individual Health Care Plan must be maintained for each child with a chronic medical condition, which has been diagnosed by a licensed health care practitioner. The plan must describe the chronic condition, its symptoms, any medical treatment that may be necessary while the child is in care, the potential side effects of that treatment and the potential consequences to the child's health if the treatment is not administered.

Injury Prevention

Educators for each age group are responsible for daily safety inspections of their assigned area and equipment. Defective equipment will be removed or repaired as soon as possible to prevent injury. Playground safety is a major concern. Parents/ guardians should be aware of the potential strangulation hazards of drawstrings on clothing. Please check your child's clothing carefully and remove all drawstrings. Footwear, such as sneakers, appropriate for active, outdoor playing, climbing, running and jumping is strongly recommended. Bibs will not be left on infants when they are placed in cribs. In the event that your child does sustain a minor injury, you will receive an Injury Report outlining the incident and course of action taken by the educator. You will be contacted immediately if the injury is to your child's head, produces any type of swelling or needs medical attention.

In the event of a serious medical emergency, the child will be taken to the hospital immediately by ambulance, accompanied by an Imagine That educator, while the school's Directors or educators contact you or a designated emergency contact.

Health Care Consultant

The Department of Early Education and Care regulations requires the licensee will designate a Massachusetts licensed physician or registered nurse to assist and support in the programs Health Care policy. This policy includes a plan for monitoring the programs Safety and Well Being Policies.

Administration may require a doctor's note to ensure a child's inclusion or exclusion into the program as needed. The Health Consultant is available for questions and support as needed; however the child's physician is the only one able to diagnose a child with a disease or illness.

The Department of Early Education and Care regulations require the following immunizations at specific ages: Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis (Whooping Cough), poliomyelitis, Measels, Mumps, Rubella (MMR), Hepatitis B, Varicella, and Tuberculin test. Regulations also require an annual Lead Screening test for children ages 9 months to 4 years. Failure to comply with the above stated regulations would result in disenrollment from the program until documentation of immunization documentation is provided.

All families are required to follow the programs Safety and Well Being Policies that are noted in the Family Handbook. The Health Consultant will review and provide feedback to the programs Safety and Well Being Policies as needed. See Family Handbook for specifics on Safety and Well Being Policies.

Child Guidance

One of the most important areas in which we put our philosophies into practice is in the area of discipline. At Imagine That, children are never hit, slapped, spanked, withheld food or withheld bathroom privileges - even at the family's request. Children are not ridiculed, teased, humiliated, threatened, or embarrassed. When discipline is used, it is positive and consistent. The age and individual needs of the child are considered. Our goal with discipline is to develop a child's sense of self-discipline and self-mastery rather than the process for punishment. We encourage your child to learn from challenges and develop a sense of resiliency with the desire to grow. We also encourage the method of encouragement versus praise. Research shows that when you praise a child, for intelligence or talent, he or she sees failure as something undermining it and becomes so afraid of making mistakes that motivation is stunted. But if you put the emphasis on the process or the effort the child is putting in, the child learns to be resilient in the face of setbacks and is more open to seeking challenges.

Positive Discipline includes:

- Acknowledging the child's feelings and redirecting
- Conflict resolution
- Approach calmly
- Acknowledge feelings
- Gather information
- Restate the problem
- Ask for ideas and solutions and choose one together
- Give follow-up support
- Teaching by example
- Logical consequences
- Building self-concept by separating actions from self
- Respecting the child's boundaries and needs
- Preparing for challenges in advance

Learning to express emotions verbally and honestly is a normal part of childhood. At Imagine That, Educators encourage children to "use their words" to express their feelings. In many cases, the Educator will provide the child with words to use (ex: "I don't like it when you hit me. It hurts"). Overall, behavior guidance maximizes growth and development, protects the group and individuals within, sets reasonable and positive expectations, offers choices, provides opportunity to verbalize feelings, and encourages self-control through understanding. When appropriate, children participate in their own behavior plans and creation of classroom rules.

Biting

Biting is a normal stage of development that is common among infants and toddlers – and sometimes even preschoolers. It is something that almost all children will try at least once. When it happens, it is scary, frustrating and stressful for everyone involved. It is a natural phenomenon and not something to blame on children, families or educators. Brief episodes of biting do not mean that a child is having a social or emotional problem. It also does not mean that the family is to blame. It does mean that your child is going through a stage in his/her development. As with all developmental stages, biting will end.

Biting may occur for any of the following reasons:

- Oral exploration
- Teething
- Hunger

- Fatigue
- Lack of awareness that biting hurts
- Frustration, anxiety
- Inability to express feelings or needs verbally
- Mimicking behavior
- Inexperienced peer interactions
- A way of showing affection
- Exploring cause-and-effect
- Exploring holding on and letting go
- Impulsiveness and lack of self-control
- Excitement and over stimulation

When biting happens, our response will be to care for and help the child who was bitten and to help the biter to learn a more appropriate behavior. Our focus will not be on punishment for biting, but on effective techniques that address the specific reason for biting. The child will not understand delayed punishment at home. An injury report will be written for the child who was bitten. The child’s educator will notify the family of the biter. We will work together with the families of the biter and the bitten child to keep them informed and to develop strategies for change. We will make every effort to modify the behavior quickly. The name of the child who has bitten will remain confidential.

Children Developing Unacceptable Behavior Challenges

It is the ultimate goal of all Imagine That staff to support children and families. All children and families deserve love and respect. Some children and families will require more of our attention and support. Imagine That is committed to working with families and children to the best of our ability. This commitment requires us to have a high degree of tolerance with children who exhibit behavior challenges. Such behavior includes, but is not limited to, kicking, running out of the room, throwing or damaging school property, hitting, spitting, biting, and disrespectful language or actions. While some early education centers will terminate a child after the first incident of unacceptable behavior, Imagine That believes that behaviors can change and will take every possible step to help a child self-regulate. While we do occasionally ask a family to seek a more appropriate environment for their child, we will make every effort to find a solution that enables the child to stay. Every situation is different, and we address behavior challenges on a case-by-case basis.

Behavior Plans

Behavior plans are written to help support the families and the educators when a child is continually presenting challenging behaviors in the classroom. Behavior plans are written after

- 1.) Teachers had a conversation/meeting with the child’s family discussing the unsafe behavior.
- 2.) The family and teachers have agreed the next step is a behavior plan to support the child and classroom.
- 3.) Teachers have gathered at least two weeks of documentation, describing the unsafe behaviors in a classroom.

Once the teacher and the Director create the behavior plan, it is presented to the parent at a formal meeting. A behavior plan will have expectations that will need support and follow through by the educators, parents, specialists, and Directors. An example of an expectation that would be in a behavior plan is that parents may need to contact their pediatrician to seek a referral for additional services (i.e., speech, OT, etc.). Educators and parents will keep an open line of communication

daily about child's behavior. Behavior plans are reviewed bi-weekly to review progress or make modifications.

Emergency Procedures

If at any time staff members question the children's safety inside the building; they must evacuate the children immediately. The evacuation plan is posted near each classroom's exit. Drills are conducted every month, with date and time recorded in the school's log. Each classroom keeps a sign in/ sign out sheet, which records the time of arrival and departure for each child. In case of evacuation, the educator will use the sign in/sign out sheet in order to conduct an accurate attendance count. It is the responsibility of the Director on site to check for stragglers. In the event of a temporary evacuation, the Director on site will consult with Imagine That management and local officials in person or by cell phone to determine whether it is safe for the children to re-enter the facility. In the event that the school must be closed, the school directors will contact each family and inform the emergency contact that the child will need to be picked up. Natural Disasters such as tornado, earthquake, hurricane, flood, snow storm, or other events that affects the power, heat, or water to a degree that Imagine That cannot offer complete or comparable programming, families will be notified of the schools' closing, or alternate plan. Please see your schools director for their particular onsite emergency procedure.

Reporting Abuse and Neglect

All staff members are mandated reporters according to Massachusetts General Law C119, Section 51A. This means that if a staff member has a reasonable suspicion of abuse or neglect of a child, he/she must file a report with the Department of Children and Families (DCF).

The following procedure will be followed:

- 1) If abuse or neglect of a child is suspected or observed by an employee, that employee must immediately bring the information to the director at the school immediately.
- 2) Once the employee has given all relevant information and documentation to the director, the director will immediately contact the Regional Director and inform them of the situation.
- 3) The Regional Director will make a determination if a 51A needs to be filed as a mandated reporter
- 4) The Regional Director will report back to the site director and employee informing them of any action taken.
- 5) The Regional Director will confirm with the site director and employee to ensure they are satisfied with the action taken.
 - a. If the employee is not satisfied with the action taken, the employee and/or site director will make the Regional Director aware immediately and that they are not satisfied and the director and employee will request support from Executive Management.
 - b. At this time someone from Executive Management will review all documentation and determine the best next steps.
 - c. The Executive Management will meet with the Regional Director, site director and employee to discuss the best solution. If both parties can not agree on a proper solution they will look to either another Executive Management Team Member and/or contact the EEC licensor for guidance.
- 6) If a 51A is filed, the Regional Director will work with Executive Management to calling this in
- 7) The Regional Director will also make the Principal/DOO of the school aware of the situation as well as conduct our EEC licensor so they are made aware

IMAJINE THAT will cooperate fully with any investigation and will maintain confidentiality concerning any report of abuse or neglect. Our foremost concern is always the protection of the child.

**All staff members are required to take the Mandated 51A online training yearly*

<http://middlesexcac.org/51A-reporter-training>

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect

It is the school's commitment to protect all children in care from abuse and neglect. Any report of suspected abuse or neglect of a child while the child is in the schools care will be immediately reported to the Department of Children and Families and the Department of Early Education and Care. A meeting will be held with the staff member in question to inform him/ her of the filed report. The staff member in question will immediately be placed on an unpaid leave of absence from the School pending the outcome of the DCF and EEC investigations. The Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Department of Early Education and Care determine the length and time of the investigation.

Organizational Policies

Enrollment Process

In order to enroll, you will need to contact the Regional directly. You can also fill out the enrollment packet right online at the Imagine That website. Once the Regional receives the enrollment packet, he/she will reach out directly to the parent. We encourage you to bring your child so that he/she can visit the classroom and observe and participate with the group. A visit to the program helps you and your child feel comfortable with the school and enthusiastic about your first day at Imagine That. During the registration process, you must complete forms required by the state of Massachusetts, including a registration form and any medical forms if necessary. An updated physical and immunization record is required for your child prior to enrollment, if they are under 4 years old. All forms in your child's file must be updated each year at your annual registration meeting. Please remember to provide your child's school with additional updates as needed (i.e., change of emergency contact information). Furthermore, Imagine That does not require children to be toilet trained as an eligibility requirement. In order to ensure appropriate staffing at all times of the day, you will need to provide your child's school with the specific hours of care needed for your child. Prior to your child's start date, please feel free to schedule visits to help familiarize you and your child with the school. This is a great way to help your child feel comfortable and enthusiastic about your first day at Imagine That.

Tuition/Fees

Imagine That will collect a Registration Fee at the time of your child's enrollment. This payment reserves your child's enrollment in the program. Re-registration fees and new enrollment paperwork are due one year from the date your child was enrolled and must be renewed annually thereafter. These fees are nonrefundable. Because the annual tuition is pro-rated, we do not reduce the tuition charge in weeks that include closures, even though you will need to arrange alternate care on those days. The same policy applies if you must miss a scheduled day for any reason. We cannot provide make-up days and we do not reduce the tuition charge if your child is

absent.

Imagine That After School and Before School programs follow the specific school calendar. Please see the Regional Director for your specific school tuition rate and holiday closures. Families are still responsible to pay for holidays, but they are not charged for school vacation weeks.

If a child is absent for two weeks, without notice to a director and without payment, the child may be dropped from the enrollment list and the vacancy may be filled. If the family wishes to return, they must wait for an available day and time slot and must pay their outstanding balance first. Please understand that if you are two weeks behind on your tuition you may be terminated from the program until payment is collected and/or payment plan agreed upon. Please also note you are responsible to re-registering your child for every school year and summer, it is not assumed they will be returning.

Late Fee Policy

It is important that children be picked up at their scheduled time of departure. If a child is left in the school after closing time, we will keep the child in the classroom while a teacher tries to call the numbers listed on the authorized pick up form after trying to reach parent/guardians. A late fee of \$1.00 a minute will be charged for every minute a child is picked up after closing time. If we cannot get a hold of a parent/guardian, or anyone from the authorized pick up list, after an hour of trying, then the local police department and the Department of Social Services will be called. If you are running behind, please be proactive and call the program to let them know in advance.

Schedule Changes

In order to provide appropriate supervision for children and to appropriately schedule educators, families are asked to follow the schedule they set for their child. Schedule changes should be made at least 2 weeks in advance, in writing, to the school Director. If you have an emergency and need to change your schedule, please do not hesitate to contact your school director.

Absences

Please be sure to call your Imagine That Director or Imagine That administration letting them know that your little one will be absent. Please do not rely on the public school to inform Imagine That. If we do not hear from you, we will be concerned about your child and will contact you or emergency contacts if you are unable to be reached. If your child is absent due to a contagious illness, please let your school directors know so that they can alert other families in the school.

Annual Schedule

Imagine That follows the Public and/or Charter School Year calendar. We are closed all days that they are closed otherwise, Imagine That is open.

Meals and Snacks

Imagine That believes that meals and snacks are critical to a child's health and development. Snacks, breakfast, and lunch along with milk, juice and water are provided to children enrolled in the Before School, After School and Vacation and Summer Programs. The menu for these classrooms follows the USDA guidelines for food groups and portion sizes for the children and all food is provided by Boston Food Services.

Nap and Rest

We are required by state regulations to give every child the opportunity to rest for a period of no less than 45 minutes per day. Naptime is generally 1 to 2 hours long. Children who do not sleep will be given a quiet activity, such as coloring or reading, while other children sleep. A restful naptime gives all children the boost of energy necessary for a successful afternoon. During naptime, we give each child his or her own mat or cot. Each child is required to bring a sheet and blanket. Naptime is offered only during the full day programming that Imagine That provides.

Inclement Weather

We realize that our families depend on us to be open on a consistent basis. Therefore, we work very hard to remain open every day, regardless of weather conditions. Our closings are tied to local schools, so if there is an announcement of local schools being delayed or closing that means that Imagine That will do the same. We do expect the cooperation of our families on snow days. It is especially important that families leave work early enough to pick up their children by 6:00pm. This is so that educators can leave the school in time to begin their commute. The late fee is \$1.00 for every minute on snow days. When a major storm hits, our educators may be unable to attend work, causing us to combine classrooms for the day. If we are forced to close early due to extreme conditions, we will contact all families at the earliest possible time. If we must close for the entire day, we will contact all families at the numbers provided on their enrollment packet, so please be sure to let us know if you change your number.

Children's Arrival and Departure

To ensure that each child is safe and supervised at all times and to foster daily communication between families and educators, a parent or guardian must pick up their child daily. Imagine That does not provide transportation home. Children will only be released to a parent/legal guardian or to persons whose names are listed on the authorized pick up list. Families should advise the school directors in advance, in writing, if a person not listed on the original form is to pick up their child. For the safety of each child, official photo identification will be required of all authorized persons picking up children. Imagine That cannot legally deny access to a parent/guardian unless copies of legal documents have been provided to the school's directors.

In the event that your child has not been picked up by closing time, we will take the following steps (in order):

- 1) Attempt to reach you at the contact numbers you have provided.
- 2) Call the persons listed on the Emergency Contact and Authorization form as persons to contact in the event that we cannot reach you.
- 3) Call the authorities.

As Mandated Reporters, all Imagine That staff are required to question any family member or authorized pick-up person who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or another substance that could impair that person's ability to drive or otherwise safely care for a child. In the best interest of the child, we will attempt to arrive at an alternative transportation solution, such as calling another person or calling a cab. If the pickup person refuses these options, we are required to inform the proper authorities.

Children's Belongings

Our classrooms are filled with toys and activities for the development and enjoyment of your

child. We ask that families leave their child’s personal toys at home. It is a natural desire for a child to bring personal items, to bring a “part of home” to school, we encourage that children bring items as a favorite blanket or soft item for rest time. Imagine That utilizes the cubbies the classrooms have, but we cannot assume responsibility for items brought from home. Please label all items clearly. A lost and found box is available in the school. Articles not claimed may be donated or discarded. By regulation, the state requires that all children always have an extra change of clothes within the school. Please label all clothing clearly with your child’s first and last name. If your items are not labeled, Imagine That educators may label the items for you.

Non-Violent Toys

Imagine That supports a loving, peaceful, nonviolent environment. We do not allow toys or books that could be interpreted as violent on school premises. This includes any toy that appears to be a gun, knife, or any other weapon, as well as war related items or images. Imagine That requests that all families leave the personal toys of children at home. Our educators will ask families to remove such items from the school.

Mixed-Age Groupings

Imagine That may provide mixed-age groups, acknowledging that children develop at different rates, especially when they are very young. Mixed age groups enable children to learn from others who are at more advanced stages, as well as to be supportive of and sympathetic to children in less advanced stages, much like in a family setting. Our philosophy of building self-mastery in a noncompetitive atmosphere supports a mixed-age approach, which creates a warm, nurturing, stimulating environment in which children are aware of individual differences among their peers.

Birthdays and Holidays

In recognition of each child as a special individual, we invite your family to share their unique cultural birthday and holiday traditions with your child’s class. We do invite and encourage families to share their holiday traditions with their child’s class, provided that the celebration will not make children or educators uncomfortable. Please check with your child’s classroom’s primary educator and a school director before bringing food or any other item in to celebrate your child’s birthday and/or holiday. This will prevent disappointment or any other problem. (For example, balloons are dangerous to infants and toddlers and are not permitted in the school.) The educators will do their best to meet your needs as we support our commitment to celebrating special events in the life of your child.

Babysitting Policy

Some parents may wish to engage an Imagine That employee for the purpose of babysitting outside of the school. Educators may decide to do so at their own discretion, but we assume no responsibility for any individual who cares for a child outside the school program. As part of the enrollment process, you will be asked to sign a Babysitting Authorization Form indicating that you understand that Imagine That is not responsible for the care of your child while he/she is not in attendance at the school, nor are we responsible for the actions of any staff member during the employee’s non-work hours. Babysitting should not interfere with the employee’s work schedule.

Transition to New Classroom

It is the goal of Imagine That to ensure that all children are transitioned into a new classroom in a systematic way. Imagine That also understands that these times of transitioning periods for

parents as well. When your child is ready to transition to a new classroom, you will receive a call from the program director and/or letter outlining the transition process one week prior to the start of your child's transition. Also included in the transition letter is information about your child's new classroom. The program director will notify and review the transition packet with both classrooms' teaching team so the staff are prepared to answer any questions you may have.

Please be aware that the transition process may vary from child to child, depending on their individual needs. Some children need shorter transitions while others might need a longer period of time to become accustomed to the new classroom.

Transition Between Activities

Transitions can be difficult for everyone. Transitions are completed in a safe, timely, predictable and unhurried manner. To help minimize the stress and behavioral situations that can occur during transition times, it is important that you minimize the time it takes for transition times. Activities are planned and organized in advance to avoid children waiting. It is also important that you also provide the children with the awareness that a transition is going to happen soon. For example, giving the children a 10-minute, then a 5-minute and then a 2-minute warning to clean up and move on to the next part of the day. Transitions between activities must be smooth and flexible. Children must not always be expected to move as a group from one activity to another. Visual, verbal and auditory cues must be used to support children's transitions. Giving children this time allows them to mentally prepare that one activity is about to end and another will be starting soon.

Confidentiality

Imagine That's confidentiality policy and those of our licensors are intended to demonstrate the utmost respect for every child and family we serve. We place a high value on the confidentiality of each child. Consequently, we will not reveal the identity of a child who has engaged in an aggressive act against another, even at the request of the family whose child has been the target of that aggressive incident. We understand the concerns of families in this situation. However, knowledge of the identity of the aggressor is not significant to families' understanding of the incident or of actions taken by school staff to ensure the well being of the child who has been hurt. Knowledge of the aggressor's identity can stigmatize the aggressive child. The inter-family conflicts that could result from sharing the aggressive child's identity may hinder a speedy and natural resolution. The policy of maintaining confidentiality in such cases is consistent with what we know to be the standard for excellence in early childhood education. It is Imagine That's policy that any information regarding a child, a child's family, or other matters discussed with school management or staff will be held in the strictest confidence.

Records and Data Privacy

The information in your child's file is considered privileged and confidential. No one who is not directly related to the care of your child, school management, or part of the Department of Early Education and Care, will not have access to the record without your written permission. As a parent/guardian, you may have access to your child's record. You have the right to add information, comments, or other relevant material to your child's record at any time.

Tuition Billing Process

Each parent/guardian has the option to pay their tuition by debit card or credit card. Cash and checks are not accepted in our programs. Copies of any credit card and/or debit card information

will be kept in the child's file that will be located in a locked filing cabinet to help prevent any fraud. A ledger is kept on each parent to keep track of when they pay their tuition and total amount they pay. Each family that is part of CCCB will be tracked in the ledger by code to ensure that the family is only billed once. A voucher binder per state agency will be kept in the corporate office as well to help keep track of each child and what agency they receive funding from. This way all families can be double-checked that they are being billed to the accurate agency.

Imagine That collects tuition on a weekly or monthly basis. If you are paying weekly, than tuition is pulled every Friday for the following week care. This means you are paying one week in advance. If you choice the monthly option you are billed the last Friday of each month for the upcoming month. You are welcome change billing payment options with at least one-week advance notice of the switch.

If a family cannot pay or needs to be put on a payment plan, they are required to speak to the program director ASAP. If a parent is funded through a state agency and their voucher has expired and/or they are no longer eligible, it is the parent/guardians responsibility to pay the program the private rate for any care provided after the end date of the voucher. If the parent/guardian neglects to pay this that their child is no longer allowed in the program until parent/guardian agrees to pay tuition rate. The program director is also required to inform the state agency they are a part of as well.

Late or Non-Payment Policy

Parents are required to pay tuition either weekly or monthly. If a parent/guardian is late on their tuition payment, a letter is given to them the following day to remind them of payment. This letter reminds the parent the balance that is due for payment and also gives them an option to call the director of the program to set up a payment plan if necessary. After 2 weeks of a family being late with tuition, the program director will speak to the family about the possibility of care being terminated from the program if a payment plan cannot be agreed upon and paid.

Provider Waitlist

If a parent requests to be part of our program and there is currently no space available, the parent has the option to be part of the internal waitlist. Any parent that requests to be on this waitlist will pay a \$50 fee. If a family is part of any state funded internal waitlist already than they are not required to pay this \$50 fee. The family will still have the opportunity to be part of the internal waitlist for our program. Once a slot is available, the program will contact the family on the waitlist based upon age and where they are on the list.

Grievance Procedure

Imagine That values every child, every family, and every employee. We feel that the most positive emotional environment exists when families and staff work together as partners. In the event that you are displeased with something about our service, please raise your concern directly and respectfully to your school director, who can address your concern. Our administrators are trained to welcome feedback and will make their best effort to deal with your concerns in a fair, reasonable, and timely manner. If, after speaking with the director, the response is not meeting your needs and you believe there is a concern that is in conflict with Imagine That's philosophies, or you allege that there is a violation of state or federal laws and regulations, please follow Imagine That's Grievance Procedure below. Even if you believe that Imagine That has violated a state or federal law or regulation, provided that the health or safety of a person is not at immediate risk, we ask that you follow the Grievance Procedure before taking other action. You

may not be aware of the exact details or circumstances of the situation, and we would like to have an opportunity to address your concern directly and quickly.

- 1) Submit a written grievance to the director at your school. Please include the name and address of the person filing the complaint, a description of the complaint or the alleged action prohibited by laws and regulations, and the date on which the concern allegedly occurred. This written grievance should be filed no more than 30 days after you become aware of the concern or the action alleged to be prohibited.
- 2) An Imagine That Senior Administrator will investigate the complaint. The investigation will be informal but thorough, affording all parties and their representatives, if any, an opportunity to submit information relevant to the complaint.
- 3) The Senior Administrator of Imagine That will issue a written decision. The decision will determine the validity of the complaint and will be returned to the complainant no later than 30 days after the date on the written grievance. Where necessary, the written decision will include a corrective action plan.
- 4) The Imagine That Administrative Team will maintain files and records. Written grievances, information gathered, and written decisions will be filed at the Imagine That program office. The Imagine That Administrative Team may assist persons in the preparation and filing of written grievances. The Imagine That Administrative Team may also participate in the investigation of complaints, and may notify the Imagine That Executive Director of the resolution of complaints.

Referral Services

Our goal is to work with families to meet the unique needs of each individual child. Imagine That Administrators often make referrals to community resources, in response to individual child needs for assistance with social behavior, mental health, educational development, and medical services (including dental and vision). A referral most often begins with a concern voiced by a parent, educator, or an administrator. Educators and families should bring these concerns to the school's director. While the process for referrals varies on a case-by-case basis, the director will typically review the child's record and schedule a time for an administrator to observe the child. When the observation(s) is complete, the director will then arrange a meeting with the child's family to discuss the observations and create a Positive Guidance Plan. If the Early Education Director and parent wishes to make a referral, the parent will sign a "Consent for Referral" form. If a referral is made, the director will follow up with the family on a periodic basis. Imagine That remains committed to working with children who are experiencing educational delays, difficult social behaviors, illnesses and other disabilities. However, there may be cases in which Imagine That determines that a child's presence would pose a direct threat to the health and safety of others. In compliance with Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act and pursuant to the Code of Massachusetts Regulations, 102 CMR 7.10, an individualized assessment will be made of each child to determine whether Imagine That can meet the particular needs of the child. If Imagine That determines that any necessary accommodations required to serve the child would cause an undue burden to the program, Imagine That shall notify the parent(s) in writing that the child's enrollment is suspended or terminated Pursuant to 102 CMR 7.05 (8). If the child's enrollment is suspended or terminated, Imagine That shall set forth in writing the reasons for the suspension or termination and inform the parent(s) of other available services. Additionally, Imagine That shall prepare the child for termination from the program.

Procedure for Communicating Concerns, Observing and Recording a Child's Behavior

- 1) In response to a concern voiced by a parent, staff member, or other authorized party; the director will review the child's record and schedule a time for the Early Education

- Director to observe the child.
- 2) The lead teacher in the classroom should record the child's behaviors on a narrative form. The observer will record facts in the briefest and clearest possible language.
 - 3) If the administrator is not the director, then the administrator should review the observation narrative form with the director and discuss next steps prior to contacting the family.
 - 4) After reviewing the observations with and receiving approval from the Early Education Director, the lead teacher will arrange a meeting with the child's family to discuss the observations and co-create a Positive Guidance Plan.
 - 5) During the meeting, the Early Education Director must obtain written parent/guardian consent on the Consent for Referral Form.
 - 6) The Early Education Director will give the family copies of:
 - a) Positive Guidance Plan
 - b) Consent for Referral Form
 - 7) The Early Education Director will give the parent/ guardian(s) the current Regional Resources list (Attachment specific to each school, which includes the current list of the referral resources in the community, including early intervention program) and will assist the family in making and following up on the referral – for example, providing phone numbers and contact information, participating in any observations, and responding to requests from specialists. Upon completion of the referral, the director will complete a referral follow-up form to assist families in implementation of referral plan, decide on any accommodations to be made to serve child's needs, obtain a signed copy from a parent/guardian, and give the parent/guardian a copy. If necessary, the Early Education Director will schedule a follow-up meeting to discuss results and update the Positive Guidance Plan in person.
 - 8) All information must be filed in the child's main file. If services are determined to be unnecessary, or if the child is determined to be ineligible for services, the Early Education Director must review the need for referral every three months.

Change in Schedule /Disenrolling

We require two weeks written notice for a change in your child's schedule. This includes dropping a day in your child's schedule and/or to voluntarily terminate your child's enrollment. This policy is by no means intended to be punitive, but is necessary to ensure program continuity, especially for educators, whose hours may be affected by terminations. While it is our desire to embrace everyone, Imagine That reserves the right to refuse service to anyone. We will terminate families for non-payment at our discretion. Families whose payments are delinquent will receive notice by telephone or in writing and will be terminated if they do not bring their account current. Upon termination for non-payment, families will lose their priority placement and will move to the end of the wait list and we will ask families to leave when we believe that their behavior is unacceptable within the Imagine That community.

Termination and Suspension

It is the ultimate goal of all Imagine That employees to support children and families. All children and families deserve love and respect. Some children and families will require more of our attention and support, which neither increases nor diminishes their value. Imagine That is committed to working with families and children to the best of our ability. This commitment requires us to have a high degree of tolerance with children who exhibit developing unacceptable behavior challenges. Such behavior includes, but is not limited to, kicking, throwing or damaging school property, hitting,

spitting, biting, and disrespectful language or actions. Behavior plans are written to help support the families and the educators when a child is continually presenting challenging behaviors in the classroom. Behavior plans are written after teachers have gathered at least two weeks of documentation, describing negative, unsafe behaviors in a classroom. A behavior plan will include

- An opportunity to meet with parents to discuss options other than suspension or termination;
- Offering referrals to parents for evaluation, diagnostic or therapeutic services;
- Pursuing options for supportive services to the program, including consultation and educator training;
- Developing a plan for behavioral intervention at home and in the program.

This plan will have expectations that will need support and follow through by the educators, parents, specialists, and directors. An example of an expectation that would be in a behavior plan is that parents may need to contact their pediatrician to seek a referral for additional services (i.e., speech, OT, etc.). Educators and parents will keep an open line of communication daily about child's behavior. Behavior plans are reviewed monthly to review progress or make modifications.

Imagine That will occasionally terminate families for children's behavior problems when they are persistent, behavioral plan was not successful or when they are threatening or harmful to other children, other families, or Imagine That staff. It is our desire to work with challenges rather than reject them, but every behavioral situation is different and complex, so these issues are handled on a case-by-case basis. When possible, Imagine That administrators will assist families in finding alternate care. If termination is set as a possible outcome in a child's Behavioral Plan, the child will be transitioned from the program as gently as possible and prepared for program exit. Imagine That will occasionally terminate families at our discretion for adults or disenrolled children's unacceptable behavior. We must consider the safety and happiness of all of our stakeholders.

If a program chooses to suspend or terminate a child for any reason the program will provide written documentation to the parents of the specific reasons for the proposed suspension or termination of the child, and the circumstances under which the child may return, if any.

Families Supported by State Agency

All families that are part of a state agency are required to inform the program director of any changes that may occur in the family, such as but not limited to, service needs, income and household size. Once this information is shared with the program director, it is the director's responsibility to ensure that the parent also shares this information with their state agency worker immediately. If there is a change that results a change in an increase in the parent fee, reduction to part time eligibility, or ineligibility for subsidized care, the parent/guardian is now responsible for repaying funds to the CCR&R and/or the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

It is the families' responsibility to ensure that they are aware when their voucher is expiring to ensure the program receives a new voucher in time. The program director will also send home a reminder letter, as the state agency also mails a letter as a reminder as well. It is the families responsibility to ensure the new voucher is given in time to prevent losing the voucher and slot in the program.

Licensing Authority

The Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) is the license that IMAJINE THAT holds. You can reach EEC at www.eec.state.ma.us or by phone:

- DEEC Northeast Office (978) 681-9684
- DEEC Metro Boston Office (617) 472-2881
- DEEC Southeast and Cape (508) 828-5025

Your Imagine That School

Imagine That currently runs inside both Public and Charter Schools in Boston, Lynn and Lawrence. Each location differentiates on pick up location and times the program runs. Please be sure to speak with your child’s teacher/director for further information. All Imagine That schools follow all guidelines and policies noted in handbook. Any site-specific information on your child’s school will be given to each parent during the time of enrollment. Every parent has the opportunity to contact the director at any time for any concerns, and/or suggestions on the program by emailing afterschool@imajinethat.com.

Parent Acknowledgement and Agreement Form

I have received the Family Handbook, I understand and agree that it is my responsibility to read and familiarize myself with the policies and procedures. I understand that it is my responsibility to go directly to school management with any questions I may have regarding the policies, procedures and information contained in this Handbook.

Signing this Parent Acknowledgement and Agreement Form, confirms that not only have you received the Family Handbook, but you have also attended the Parent Orientation prior to your child starting the program.

Signature:

Print Parent Name:.....

Print Child/ren Name:.....

Date:

Information in the Family Handbook is subject to change. All family members will receive copy of new policies 30 days in advance to policy going into effect. All parents will be required to sign and date new policy to state they understand and will adhere to new policy changes.