

Bright Beginnings Preschool

Parent Handbook



**Train a child in the way he should go, and
when he is old he will not turn from it.**

Proverbs 22:6

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Welcome to Bright Beginnings Preschool. This handbook contains information regarding our preschool program. It is very important that you keep it readily available for reference throughout the school year. It will answer many questions you have about Bright Beginnings.

Our Philosophy

Bright Beginnings Preschool was established to provide quality, loving care for children in a Christian atmosphere. Opportunities are provided for mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual growth through a variety of creative experiences. Children are encouraged to learn and explore at their own pace in areas that interest them. We are pleased that you have chosen to include us in the growth and development of your child.

Ten beliefs about Early Childhood Education

1. Children grow and develop at different rates and each child's rate is separate and distinct from that of any other child.
2. Children are naturally curious and eager to learn, and they learn best when they are able to follow many of their own interests and desires to learn.
3. Morals and values can also be taught outside of the home. Children can learn character-building traits such as compassion, honesty, and integrity in a Christian-oriented program.
4. Play is a child's way of working and learning.
5. Children learn from each other. They learn to experience a sense of responsibility and achievement, to respect themselves and others, and to learn how to learn.
6. A rich learning environment, one deliberately designed with much to explore and discover, is essential in helping young children learn basic skills.
7. Basic skill development is essential in an early childhood environment. Teaching basic biblical principles and readiness in a Christian atmosphere can be done in a meaningful, creative way. A variety of developmentally appropriate approaches to teaching and learning are included.
8. The development of initiative and self-reliance is encouraged in an atmosphere of trust and structured freedom.

9. Children benefit from activities that will provide for their physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and spiritual self.
10. The most important variable in the early childhood education setting is the educator.

Our Goals

The following long-term goals for early childhood education reflect the view that all areas of development – cognitive, language, affective (social, emotional) and physical or motor – are integrated as the child interacts with the learning environment. The goals include, but are not limited to the following:

1. To enhance and facilitate development in all domains: cognitive, language, affective, spiritual, and physical.
2. To develop knowledge of self, others, and the physical and social world.
3. To develop attitudes that will encourage lifelong learning, such as curiosity, initiative, persistence, and self-confidence as a learner.
4. To develop thinking and problem-solving abilities.
5. To develop the ability to express one's own and identify other's perspectives.
6. To develop the ability to see adults as respectful, nurturing, supportive, responsible and helpful resources.
7. To develop the ability to relate the body to objects and events in the environment.
8. To develop aesthetic appreciation.
9. To develop character-building traits such as compassion, honesty, and integrity.
10. To develop knowledge of basic biblical principles in a Christian atmosphere.

**Please note.... formal assessments are completed on each child enrolled at the preschool. These are generally completed in the Spring and are age-appropriate. This valuable information is shared with parents in April and/or May. The preschool does not report child level data to the Department of Job and Family Services. (Rule # 5101:2-17 of the Administrative Code)

License

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services licenses Bright Beginnings Preschool. The toll-free number for the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services is:

1-866-635-3748 option 4

At the end of the handbook, you will find an attachment about licensing and other valuable information. Please take the time to read this information.

Admissions

A child is considered to be enrolled in the program only after the administrator confirms the availability of space and the required paperwork is received (including the \$25.00 registration fee). Before preschool begins required forms need to be completed regarding basic enrollment, emergency contacts, and health information. Any change to this information while a child is attending preschool must be communicated to the preschool director immediately so that current information is always on file. This is for the safety of your child. A medical examination for your child must be obtained and the

required form must be signed by a physician or certified nurse practitioner. This form is required to be submitted within 30 days of admission. This medical form must be updated every 13 months.

Hours and Days of Operation

The preschool is in operation:

Tuesday and Thursday – 9:00 – 3:15
Monday and Wednesday – 9:00 – 11:30 and 12:45 -- 3:15

Bright Beginnings follows the East Holmes Local School District calendar for holidays, vacations, etc. The program is closed on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day. (may vary somewhat from EH calendar)

Staff/Child Ratios and Maximum Group Size

The preschool observes the following staff/child ratios and small group sizes maintained for each age group:

Four years old and not enrolled in or eligible to be enrolled in Kindergarten:

1: 14 (1 child care staff member to 14 students. Maximum group size is 28)

At least three years old and less than 4 years old:

1:12 (1 child care staff member to 12 students. Maximum group size is 24)

If an additional child care staff member is present, more children may be allowed in the class.

Classroom occupancy limits will be followed. (Our occupancy limit is 19 children per class)

Bright Beginnings Preschool will not exceed these ratios.

**Please note.... There is always two staff members on site when preschool is in session. Bright Beginnings employs a director/teacher and one child care staff member.

Daily Schedule

The children's daily schedule is flexible enough to provide adaptability when necessary but structured enough to provide predictability for the children. We want students to view their school as a safe and comforting place, where they know what to expect and when to expect it.

Half day schedule:

9:00-9:15	Planning/Greeting	12:45-1:00
9:15-10:10	Independent Exploration	1:00-1:45
10:10-10:15	Clean-up	1:45-1:50
10:15-10:35	Group Time	1:50-2:10
10:35-10:40	Restroom/wash hands	2:10-2:15
10:40-10:55	Snack	2:15-2:35
10:55-11:20	outside play/activity time	2:35-3:00
11:20-11:30	Storytime	3:00-3:15

Full day schedule:

9:00-9:20	Greeting/planning
9:20-10:20	Independent Exploration/Art
10:20-10:30	Clean-up
10:30—11:00	Group time (bathroom for those that need to)
11:00-11:30	Large Muscle Play (outside or fellowship hall)
11:30-12:00	Bathroom, wash hands, and Lunch
12:00-12:30	Small group instruction
12:30-12:40	Story time
12:40-1:40	Rest time
1:40-2:35	Free play/unit project
2:35-2:40	Bathroom/wash hands
2:40-3:00	Snack
3:00-3:15	Prepare to go home/dismissal

*Activity time can be, but is not limited to outside play, small group instruction, library, large muscle activities, project recall, etc.

Tuition and Payment Policies

One child: two-day/week program: \$150.00/month

Multiple children: two-day/week program: \$143.00/month (x 2 children \$286.00/month)

One child: full day program/2 days/week: \$275.00/month

Multiple children: full day program/2 days/week: \$268.00/month (x2 children \$536.00/month)

Discounts: 10% off for all members of Berlin Mennonite Church. (child's parents must be members)

Please make checks payable to Bright Beginnings Preschool. (It is extremely helpful if you write your child's name in the memo line of your check). You may also pay in cash.

Bright Beginnings Preschool tax ID # is available upon request.

No refunds or make-up days will be provided for scheduled days children are absent.

Payment is due the first day of the month that your child attends preschool. A tuition schedule is provided for your convenience. Payment may be placed in the director's mailbox or given to preschool staff. If payment is not made by the 15th of the month, a \$10.00 late charge will be added unless prior arrangements have been made.

Full tuition is due for each month regardless of a child's illness, vacations, or holidays.

Withdrawals

Parents wishing to withdraw their child may do so at any time. A one-week notice, in writing, is required.

Inclement Weather/Snow Days

Snow days will follow those of East Holmes School District. Cancellations for Bright Beginnings will be announced on WKLM (95.3 FM). If East Holmes has a 2-hour delay, the morning class will be cancelled in the half day session on Mondays and Wednesdays. If there is a 2 hour delay in the all day program on Tuesdays and Thursdays, preschool will begin at 11:00. New licensing rules as of January 1, 2017 specify that a child care staff member/employee must be on site, in addition to the director, to have preschool. Each preschool class is entitled to miss 5 days of class. After 5 days of class have been missed, we will begin making up days. These are made up at the teacher's discretion regarding days and times. REMIND app will be used. Please make sure you join this class ap.

Supervision Policy

A major responsibility of the teacher/director is to ensure health and safety of each child in our care. Staff persons are responsible for the safety needs of each child in the group, along with anticipating possible hazards and taking necessary precautions and preventive measures.

Arrival/Departure: It is extremely helpful when you bring your child only five (5) minutes before the session is scheduled to begin. Prior to that time, the staff is busy preparing activities for the day. The preschool door is locked until approximately 5 minutes before the session is to begin.

Parents are required to bring their child into the classroom. The teacher will record the child's attendance upon arrival. Any special messages, special pick-up notes, etc. are to be given to the teacher or placed in the teacher's mailbox, which is provided. Children may not be dropped off at the entrance of the building or be sent inside alone. The teacher must be aware of each child's presence before the parent departs.

Supervision of Preschoolers: At no time will a child be left unattended at preschool. Staff will supervise children at all times. If a child becomes ill, he/she may be isolated in a section of the room not in use, but within sight and hearing of a staff member.

Release of a child: Bright Beginnings will release children only to persons on the release form provided by the parent. If an emergency arises, the parent must provide a written, signed note giving the person permission to pick up their child. We will check ID's of anyone we do not recognize. Please let people know this ahead of time so they bring a photo ID and they are not offended. Persons under the age of 16 are not permitted to pick up a preschool child. The children's safety is our top priority!

If a carpool arrangement is planned for the whole year, please provide us with a written statement to that effect. The carpool driver must be listed on your child's emergency form.

Bright Beginnings will not release children to anyone, including parents, who appear to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Emergency contacts will be called to transport the child home. Police will be notified if necessary.

Custody Agreements: If there are custody issues involved with your child, you must provide the preschool with court papers indicating who has permission to pick up the child. The preschool may not deny a parent access to their child without proper documentation.

Child Abuse Reporting: Teachers/Directors are mandated reporters of child abuse. If staff has suspicions that a child is being abused or neglected, they MUST make a report to the local children's services agency. The safety of the children is always our first concern.

Field Trips

Most field trips taken at Bright Beginnings Preschool will be self-transport trips. This means that the parent is responsible for transporting the child to the field trip and staying with the child during the field trip. A staff member with first aid, communicable disease and CPR training will be present on all field trips. It is possible that we could take a walking field trip on the sidewalk here in Berlin. Before any child participates in a field trip, the preschool will obtain written permission from the parent or guardian.

All children's medical/dental records and emergency contacts will be taken along on each trip.

Each child will wear a form of identification on each trip. This information will include the name of the preschool, the address of the preschool and the phone number of the preschool.

In place of field trips, every attempt will be made to have special visitors throughout the school year. Some examples are visits by the policeman, the fireman and fire trucks, dentists, doctors, veterinarians, etc.

We may take routine field trips (or within the vicinity field trips). This may include visits to other parts of the building which we are not licensed for or an outside field trip for a walk, picnic, etc. Each parent will need to sign a routine field trip permission slip for this. This form will be given to parents at preschool orientation.

Guidance/Discipline Policy

Bright Beginnings Preschool believes that helping the child to learn self-control is very important. Our hope is that each child will learn self-discipline through careful guidance. Your child will be treated with love and respect. If children are treated with respect, they in turn learn to respect the teacher and their friends. Our expectations will be kept within the child's reach and the child will be made aware of these expectations. Positive reinforcement (commenting on children doing the "right" thing) and positive redirection (removing the child and giving them an appropriate activity) will be used. A child may be asked to sit for a short period of time to give the child a chance to regain control if he/she is having a difficult time. Time outs will be age appropriate in length and done within the classroom. The teacher will not impose punishments for failure to eat or for toileting accidents. This discipline policy applies to all staff members and parents while they are at the preschool.

If a situation arises where a child is consistently endangering himself, peers or staff, it may become necessary to disenroll the child. Every attempt will be made to work together with the parents and the child to correct the behavior. However, the safety of children is always our primary concern. The administrator would be in communication with the parents prior to this occurring. If the child demonstrates behavior that requires frequent "extra attention" from the teacher, we may choose to develop and implement a behavior management plan. This plan would be developed in consultation with the parents and would be consistent with the requirements of Rule 5101:2-12-19.

Accidents and Emergencies

The center has devised several procedures to follow in the event an emergency would occur while a child is in our care. In the event of a fire, tornado, or other environmental threat staff would follow the written instructions posted in the classroom(s), describing emergency evacuation routes, and the procedures to be followed to assure that children have arrived at the designated spot. In order to prepare children for the unlikely need to evacuate, the preschool does conduct monthly fire drills and quarterly lockdown drills. Should we need to evacuate due to fire or weather conditions, or the loss of power, heat, or water to the preschool, our emergency destination is the multi-purpose room at the Share and Care Thrift Store. A sign will be posted on the door of the preschool indicating that we have been evacuated and the location where parents can pick up their child. If possible, parents will be contacted as soon as possible to come to pick up their child. If a parent cannot be reached, we will contact the emergency contacts as listed on the child's enrollment information. Please note that fire drills are conducted monthly, tornado drills are conducted in March, April, May, and September and lockdowns are conducted quarterly. Instructions for these events are posted in the classroom.

There is always one staff member present that has received training in First Aid/Communicable Disease and CPR. In the case of a minor accident/injury, staff will administer basic first aid and TLC. If the injury would be more serious, first aid would be administered and the parents would be contacted immediately to assist in deciding an appropriate course of action. If any injury is life threatening, the EMS will be contacted and parents will be notified. Staff will not transport children in their vehicles. Only parents or *EMS will transport.

**Please note: Bright Beginnings will not serve a child that has not been granted "permission to transport" in the case of emergency. The child's parent/guardian must consent to the child being transported by local EMS on the enrollment form.

An incident/injury report will be completed, and given to the person picking up the child, on the day of the incident/injury, if any of the following occur: the child has an illness, accident, or injury which requires first aid; the child receives a bump or blow to the head; the child is transported by the emergency squad; or an unusual or unexpected event occurs which jeopardizes the safety of the child. If a child requires emergency transportation, the report shall be available within 24 hours after the incident occurs.

Management of Illness

Bright Beginnings Preschool provides children with a clean and healthy environment. However, we realize that children become ill from time to time. If this is your child's first group experience, it is possible that he/she may experience more frequent illnesses at the beginning before their immune system becomes more active. We observe all children as they enter the program to quickly assess their general health. We ask that you not bring a sick child to preschool. A sick child will be sent home.

A child with any of the following symptoms will be immediately isolated and discharged to the parent or emergency contact:

- Temperature of 100 degrees F – in combination with any other signs of illness
- Diarrhea (more than 3 abnormally loose stools in a 24-hour period)
- Severe coughing (causing the child to become red in the face or to make a whooping sound)

- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Redness of the eye, obvious discharge, matted eyelashes, burning, itching
- Untreated skin patches, unusual spots or rashes
- Unusually dark urine or gray or white stools
- Stiff neck with an elevated temperature
- Evidence of untreated lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestation
- Vomiting when accompanied by any other sign of illness
- Sore throat or difficulty swallowing

Any child demonstrating signs of illness not listed above will be isolated and carefully observed for symptoms. The parent will be notified. If a child does not feel well enough to participate in classroom activities, the parent will be called to pick up the child. Anytime a child is isolated, he/she will be kept within sight and hearing of the teacher. Any linens or cot that has been used for a sick child will be washed and disinfected before being used again.

Bright Beginnings will not administer vitamins or medication. If a child must have medication at a certain time during the session, the parent or guardian must come to the preschool to administer the medication. Cough drops are prohibited. If your child requires a medication for a life-threatening condition, such as an inhaler or an Epi-pen, these medications will be administered by trained staff members. Please let the director know immediately if your child requires these medications. There is additional paperwork to fill out and forms to complete.

Bright Beginnings Preschool follows the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) which states that we will not discriminate in the enrollment of a child based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or disability. Bright Beginnings preschool will administer medication to children with disabilities and administer care procedures to children with disabilities.

We will be having outside play every session, weather permitting (the temperature must be between 25 and 90 degrees for us to play outside) Please dress your child accordingly. Additional limitations for weather and safety that will be taken into consideration include humidity, wind chill, ozone levels, pollen count, rain, and ice.

A note will be sent home to notify parents if children have been exposed to a communicable illness. Children will be readmitted to the preschool after at least 24 hours of being free of fever and other symptoms. If the child is not symptom free, a doctor's note will be required stating that the child is not contagious.

Please note that your child's immunization record must be on file at Bright Beginnings Preschool. Your child's doctor should include this with your child's completed physical form. If your child is not immunized, you will need to provide a statement telling the reason for this. Please alert the director if you choose not to have immunizations for your child. The health department will be contacted if the need arises, to determine how to handle attendance for a child who is not immunized.

Parent Participation

We encourage you to come to preschool to be with your child at any time. You are welcome here! Parents have unlimited access to areas of the building used for childcare during the hours of operation. We do ask for parent volunteers for special occasions and parties at preschool. This gives

you a chance to visit our classroom and be involved with the activities. We encourage you to do this! Parent participation is a necessary ingredient to a successful preschool program.

Please note that the building is locked during each preschool session for safety reasons. To enter the building during a session, you must knock on the preschool entrance door or call/text the director's cell phone number. The main entrance of the church (under the carport) is also locked and has a buzzer system so that the church staff knows who is coming and going. Strangers are not permitted into the building. The door will not be "propped" open under any circumstances.

The director is available to discuss a child's progress or needs at any time. However, due to teacher responsibilities and schedules, parents are asked to make appointments with staff when it is necessary to engage in lengthy conversations. Teachers want to be able to focus on you and your child at these times.

If parents have any concerns or questions at any time, it is recommended that the following chain of command be used until an answer or solution can be found:

1. Teacher/Director
2. Pastor

Please feel free to bring concerns up when they occur. Often the issue can be addressed when it is still small, before the issue becomes bigger. Staff fully realizes that you trust us with your little ones and we want our relationship to be a good one.

Snack

We will be having a snack every day at preschool. Because of state licensing rules and Holmes County Health Department mandates, we are asking that each child bring his/her own snack each day to preschool. Your child's snack should consist of at least two of the four food groups. (Some examples are listed below). There is a designated shelf at preschool to place your child's snacks and lunch. Please provide an ice pack in your child's snack container that will keep your child's snack cold until snack time. The practice of bringing individual snacks will allow your child to become accountable for packing his/her own snack and to be responsible for it. Please refer to the state mandated form about snacks that will be given to you at orientation.

Samples: Crackers and 100% juice/ cheese and bologna/pretzels and apple slices/Fritos and grapes (***grapes need to be cut in half***)/ animal crackers and yogurt/carrots and pudding/graham crackers and milk.

Please bring everything that is needed for your child to eat the snack (napkins, utensils, etc.)

Also, your child's snack needs to be nutritious. We are modeling good nutritional habits and good dental hygiene.

If a child fails to bring a snack to preschool, a snack will be provided by the preschool. This snack will be pretzels or crackers and 100% juice.

Lunch

All day students will need to bring a lunch each day. The lunch is required by state law to have the 4 food groups represented. One serving of meat, 2 servings of fruits and/or vegetables, 1 serving of bread and grains, and 1 serving of fluid milk are required in your child's lunch. Please include milk in the lunch daily. Please see the state mandated food chart for meals that is in your orientation packet. The Holmes County Health Department prefers that parents place an ice packet in the child's lunch box/bag to keep the lunch cold until meal time. If need be, we do have a refrigerator available at preschool.

Nap/Quiet time

(For all day students only)

We will be having a nap/quiet time each day for students who attend the all-day program. Each child will be assigned a cot for naptime. If your child does not nap, he or she will be provided with a quiet activity to work on during this time. Your child is welcome to bring a blanket or stuffy (stuffed animal) to cuddle with during this time. The blanket needs to fit in a 2-gallon sized baggie. Preschool will provide these bags. Blankets will be sent home at the end of the month to be washed (or we will send it home daily if your child uses it at night) Cots are sanitized every three months here at preschool.

Birthday Celebrations

On or near your child's birthday, we will plan to celebrate it at preschool. You may wish to give your child's classmates a birthday "treat". If so, the treat should be wrapped individually and will be sent home with each child. On the day that we celebrate your child's birthday, we will sing to them and discuss their birthday. They will also get to pick a prize from the birthday box.

We are very happy that you and your child will be a part of Bright Beginnings Preschool. Thank you for allowing us to be a stepping-stone in your child's development.

Center Parent Information

The center is licensed to operate legally by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS). This license is posted in a noticeable place for review.

A toll-free telephone number is listed on the center's license and may be used to report a suspected violation of the licensing law or administrative rules. The licensing rules governing child care are available for review at the center.

The administrator and each employee of the center is required, under Section 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code, to report their suspicions of child abuse or child neglect to the local public children's services agency.

Any parent of a child enrolled in the center shall be permitted unlimited access to the center during all hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided by the center or evaluating the premises. Upon entering the premises, the parent, or guardian shall notify the Administrator of his/her presence.

The administrator's hours of availability to meet with parents and child/staff ratios are posted in a noticeable place in the center for review.

The licensing record, including licensing inspection reports, complaint investigation reports, and evaluation forms from the building and fire departments, is available for review upon written request from the ODJFS. Inspections are also online at <http://childcaresearch.ohio.gov/>. Parents may search for a specific program and sign up to be notified when the program's latest inspection is posted online.

It is unlawful for the center to discriminate in the enrollment of children upon the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin or disability in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 104 Stat. 32, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq. To file a discrimination complaint, write or call Health and Human Services (HHS) or ODJFS. HHS and ODJFS are equal opportunity providers and employers.

Write or Call:
HHS
Region V, Office of Civil Rights
233 N. Michigan Ave, Ste. 240
Chicago, IL 60601
(312) 886-2359 (voice)
(312) 353-5693 (TDD)
(312) 886-1807 (fax)

Write or Call:
ODJFS
Bureau of Civil Rights
30 E. Broad St., 37th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215-3414
(614) 644-2703 (voice)
1-866-277-6353 (toll free)
(614) 752-6381 (fax)
1-866-221-6700 (TTY) or (614) 995-9961

For more information about child care licensing requirements as well as how to apply for child care assistance, Medicaid health screenings and early intervention services for your child, please visit <http://jfs.ohio.gov/cdc/families.stm>.