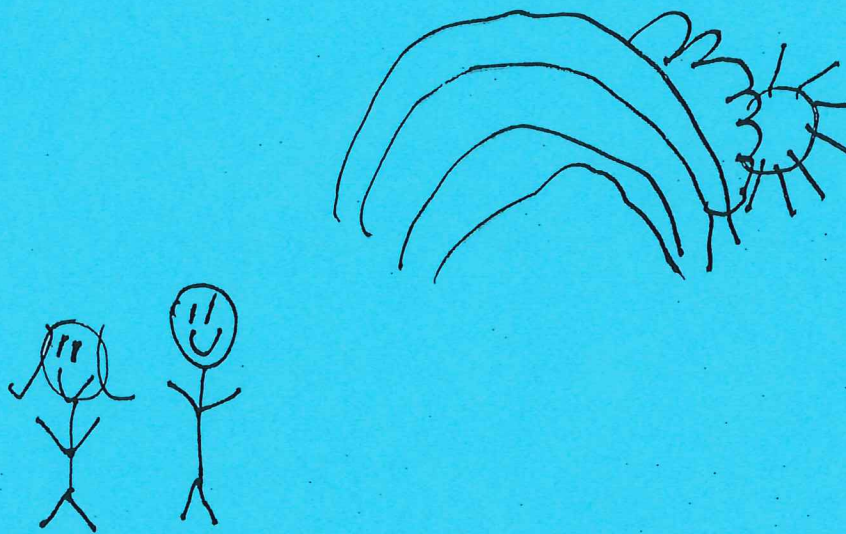


Bright Beginnings Preschool

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

Contents

Philosophy.....	1
Goals.....	2
License.....	2
Admissions.....	2
Hours/Days of Operation.....	3
Child/Staff Ratios and Maximum Group Size.....	3
Daily Schedule.....	3
Tuition and Payment Policy.....	4
Withdrawals.....	4
Inclement weather/snow days.....	5
Supervision Policy.....	5
Field Trips.....	6
Guidance/Discipline Policy.....	6
Accidents/emergencies.....	6
Management of Illness.....	7
Parent Participation.....	8
Snack/lunch.....	9
Nap/quiet time.....	10

Bright Beginnings Preschool
Berlin Mennonite Church
4718 US Rt. 62
Millersburg, Ohio 44654
330-231-4243
email: esrennie@gmail.com

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 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 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.

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 (new in Fall 2019)
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. (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, one employee, 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	12:45-3:15
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	2:20-2:15
10:40-10:55	Snacktime	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:

9:00-9:15	Planning/Greeting
9:15-10:10	Independent Exploration
10:10-10:15	Clean up
10:15-10:35	Grouptime
10:35-10:40	Bathroom/wash hands
10:40-10:55	Snack
10:55-11:00	Prepare for outside play/activity time
11:00--11:45	Outside play/activity time
11:45-12:00	Wash hands/prepare for lunch
12:00-12:30	Lunch
12:30-1:00	Small group instruction
1:00-1:15	Story
1:15-2:15	Quiet time
2:15-3:15	Activity time*

*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: one half day/week program: \$100.00/month

One child: two-day/week program: \$130.00/month

Multiple children: two-day/week program: \$123.00/month (x 2 children is \$246.00/month)

One child: full day program/2 days/week: \$250.00/month

Multiple children: full day program/2 days/week: \$243.00/month (x2 children \$486.00/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 the preschool secretary, Mrs. Alberts. 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. If this happens, your child will still need a lunch for that day. 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.

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.

- Vomiting more than once or 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. Please note that this includes sunscreen. Our staff will not be putting sunscreen on your child if your child attends a half day session. You will need to do this at home before preschool begins. If your child attends the full day session, the staff will be putting sunscreen on your child. A medication form for applying sunscreen will need to be filled out by all parents of a child attending the full day program. Full day students must have their own sunscreen that has been provided by the parents. The sunscreen that is brought to school must have been used at least one time on your preschool child, so that we know that no allergic reaction to it has occurred. Please write your child's name on the sunscreen bottle. The medication form for sunscreen will be given to parents at orientation. We will be having outside play every session, weather permitting (the temperature must be between 25 and 90 degrees for us to play outside) Additional limitations for weather and safety that will be taken into consideration include humidity, wind chill, ozone levels, pollen count, rain, and ice.

Needless to say, 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.

A sign will be posted on the preschool door 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. New state licensing rules require that you must be fingerprinted and have a medical form filled out by a doctor that states that you are medically sound to work in a classroom and do activities and help with children. If you do not have these papers on file at the preschool, you must stay beside your child and not interact or help with the other students. Please let the director know if you would like to take these extra steps in order to work with the other children and participate in activities with them.

We encourage you to do this! Parent volunteers are a very important part of 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 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). Your child's snack should be in his/her backpack. Please provide an ice pack in your child's snack container that will keep your child's snack cold until snacktime. 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. If your child forgets a snack, he/she will be required to sit with the rest of the class at the table during snack time.

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 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. The preschool will have milk on hand, but we are required to only serve skim milk. 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. Blankets and stuffies will be sent home periodically to be washed (or we will send them home daily if your child uses them 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.