



BRIGHT BEGINNINGS
First Baptist Opelika

Parent Handbook

Welcome to Bright Beginnings!

Thank you for entrusting your child to us for his/her early learning experiences. Bright Beginnings is a ministry of First Baptist Church of Opelika. We consider it a privilege to be able to minister to your family through our program.

This handbook has been prepared so that you may know our policies and better understand our program. As parents, you are always invited to visit us, ask questions, and make suggestions.

It is our desire to work with you to ensure that your child has a happy and rewarding year.

Blessings,

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BRIGHT BEGINNINGS MISSION STATEMENT

Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.
~ Proverbs 22:6

Our mission is to provide a Christ-centered environment for children to grow and learn. We will build relationships with families as we share God's love and truth. This will be accomplished in a safe, loving, atmosphere focused on meeting each child's spiritual, mental, physical, emotional and social needs within an active learning setting.

GOALS

- We will provide a loving, Christian atmosphere where we guide children to reach their full potential.
- We will assist children's growth in their understanding of and love for God, themselves, their families, and others.
- We will encourage and facilitate the development of language, math, music, art, physical and problem-solving skills.

CURRICULUM

Bright Beginnings is committed to guiding and teaching each child about God's love and truths. A balanced curriculum of work and play, quiet time and active times, group and individual experiences is planned with the various age abilities of the children in mind. Our teachers are committed Christians who have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. All teachers have experience working with preschoolers. A bachelor's degree in a related field is encouraged and a high school education is required of all our teachers.

ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

Children must reach class age on or before September 2, in accordance with the policy of the local public schools. Children starting our program must be walking by the time they are 14 months old and must be potty trained by the time they start the three -year-old classes.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

In the event of any school closure, parents/guardians will receive communication through our Brightwheel app.

SECURITY

Bright Beginnings has a Child Security System in effect.

- All doors are locked at all times. Between 8:30 and 8:45 and then again between 11:45 and 12:00, someone will be standing at the door to let people in for dropoff and pickup. At all other times, anyone wishing to enter the building will request entrance by pushing the button on the camera at the main door. The door will be opened once an administrator has verified identity.
- NEVER let anyone enter the building with you without having an administrator verify identity.
- Parents must list all persons who will be authorized to pick up their child. Before picking up the child, the authorized person will be required to show a driver's license identification to the administration or the child's teacher. **No child will be released to a person not previously authorized to pick up the child.** This policy is for the safety and security of your child.

TUITION

Our yearly tuition has been split into 9 equal payments due monthly, August through April.

- Tuition is due the first of each month in advance and must be paid no later than the 10th of the month. There will be a \$20.00 late fee added to tuition that is paid after the 10th.
- A full month's tuition is due regardless of the number of days in attendance.
- If tuition is not paid by the last day of the month, the child will be automatically dropped unless the parent makes definite arrangements for payment.
- Credit/debit card payments may be made online through our Brightwheel app.
- Cash and check payments may be handed directly to the assistant director or placed in the black box by the Bright Beginnings office.
 - If paying by check, **please write your child's name on the bottom of your check to ensure proper credit to your account.**
 - Cash payments must be in a sealed envelope with the amount enclosed and the child's name written on the outside of the envelope.
- **Never give tuition to teachers, assistant teachers or children.**
- A \$10 discount per month is given to families with more than one child enrolled beginning with the 2nd child in our program.

REGISTRATION

Registration is held online in January. A NON-REFUNDABLE registration fee/supply fee of \$150 is due at the time of registration. Money will only be refunded if the class does not make.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

The school day begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 12:00 noon. Teachers will begin receiving students at 8:30.

Children must be picked up no later than 12:00 noon. On the first late pick up, parents will be given a warning. For any subsequent late pick up, parents will be charged a late fee at the rate of \$1 for every 2 minutes late. Please make sure to bring this fee with you when you pick up your child.

We have a drop-off system at Bright Beginnings for the 3 and 4-year-old classes. This drop-off system will not begin until after Labor Day. Parents may pull up to the front of the school and a teacher will assist the child in coming into the building. Drop off is from 8:30 to 8:45 am. Please wait until someone is at the drop-off point to greet your child before you let your child out of the car. **Never allow your child to enter the building alone.** After 8:45, you will need to park and bring your child to his/her classroom through the Preschool Ministry doors.

HEALTH POLICY

An Immunization Card must be on file in the Bright Beginnings office before your child is permitted to come to class. These forms are available at your doctor's office and must be completed and signed by a physician. It is the responsibility of the parent to keep the school supplied with current health information.

For the protection of all children, a child with any signs of a contagious disease, will not be permitted in the classroom.

Children should be kept at home when they show any of the following symptoms:

- Fever – should be fever free (**without medication**) 24 hours before returning to school
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea – free of symptoms for 24 hours.
- Any symptoms of the usual childhood diseases – scarlet fever, measles, mumps, chicken pox, and whooping cough, hand/foot/mouth disease
- Common cold / runny nose
- Sore throat, coughing, croup
- Questionable rashes or skin infections
- Impetigo or ringworm
- Pink eye and other eye infections
- Head lice –should be nit free and a note from your child's doctor must be given at the time of your child returning to school.

If your child is being treated with antibiotics, he should be on the medication for at least 24 hours before returning to school. **No staff member of the Bright Beginnings program is permitted to give any medication to a child.**

Should your child contract a contagious illness, please contact the Bright Beginnings office immediately. Notice of the illness will need to be sent to parents of the other children enrolled in our program.

If your child has any symptoms of illness but has been cleared by a doctor to be at school because he/she is not contagious, please submit a written doctor's clearance to the Bright Beginnings office.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

We welcome and encourage parents to help in many ways. Parties, egg hunts, and other special activities in the classroom are times that "extra hands" are especially helpful! If you have a special interest or idea that can be shared, please contact the Bright Beginnings Office or your child's teacher.

SNACKS

A mid-morning snack and water will be provided for the children. Children are not allowed to bring their own snacks. On occasion, there may be a special snack served, and for this reason, it is important to make teachers aware of any allergies your child may have.

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE PHILOSOPHY

The Bright Beginnings Program believes God has created each child as a unique individual. All teachers strive to exhibit unconditional acceptance of all children no matter the circumstance. The teachers will be actively involved in helping each child learn appropriate behaviors. Each class will set limitations on behavior to help children learn about safety and living with others. These limits will fit the development of the child. They will be worded positively, stated simply, and be behaviorally related. Positive and negative reinforcement will be used to encourage appropriate behavior. At no time will a child be humiliated, made fun of, or subjected to harsh, abusive language. Corporal punishment will never be used. If a child displays willful defiance of the classroom rules and/or the teacher, then parent involvement will be requested. If a severe behavior persists and parent involvement does not correct the problem, then the parent will be asked to make other arrangements for their child. Willfully and purposefully hurting a teacher, assistant, or another child can result in your child being dismissed from the program.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Clothing

Children need to be dressed for play. Clothing that is loose, comfortable, and permits active play is best. Tennis or rubber-soled play shoes are necessary for the child's safety in physical movement both indoors and out.

Play is an important part of our program. Children are scheduled to alternate play in the indoor play structure and outside playground. In inclement weather, the music room will be used instead of outside areas. Please dress your child accordingly with warm clothes and coats for cold days and cool clothes for hot days. Please remember, sandals are discouraged.

The children are involved in many activities and sometimes accidents occur. We ask that each child bring a change of clothing including underwear and socks. **PLEASE LABEL ALL YOUR CHILD'S OUTER CLOTHES AND EXTRA CLOTHES**

Items Brought from Home

Our program provides adequate toys and equipment for use by the children. We especially ask that you do not allow your child to bring the following items: money, toy guns or knives, make-up, prized toys that can be lost or damaged, candy, or chewing gum.

Birthdays

This is a special event in the life of a young child and may be observed at school. If you would like to furnish cupcakes, cookies, etc., you are encouraged to do so. Please inform your child's teacher *in advance* of your plans. Please do not bring gifts for your child or have gifts delivered at school. Should you choose to distribute party invitations for celebrations to be held away from school, please make sure to include all children in the class. Addresses and phone numbers of all the children can only be obtained when permission has been granted by parents.