



Bright Beginnings Preschool  
*A Ministry of Silver Street United Methodist*

# Parent Handbook

## Table of Contents

<b>Letter from the Pastor .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Letter from Director .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Introduction to Program .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Mission Statement .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Philosophy .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Goals .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Curriculum .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Admissions .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Registration.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Calendar Year .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Tuition and other costs .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Payment Policy .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Fundraising.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Communications.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Progress Reports .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Classroom Visitation.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Management/Behavior .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Behavior Expectations .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Dress Code .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Health Policy.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Weather Closings .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Drop off/Pick up procedures.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Parking Lot.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Snacks/Birthday .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Toys.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Confidentiality .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>What a Child Learns from Play .....</b>	<b>15</b>

## Letter from Pastor

Welcome to Bright Beginnings and to the Silver Street United Methodist family! It is our privilege to have you here.

We are so pleased you have chosen to include us as a part of your child's educational, social and spiritual development. In Matthew 19:13-15, Jesus welcomed little children to come to Him that He might bless them. My prayer is that we will continue that ministry Jesus began, that we will be a blessing to you and your child. I pray that each child will grow in understanding, knowledge, friendship, interaction, ability and finally in love – God's love for them and their love for Him.

While my prayer is that we will be a blessing to them, the reality is, they will, over this coming program year, bless us more. What gifts they have to give. Our hearts will be blessed as separation concerns fade away and trust is given. We will be blessed as witnesses to their new found achievements and pride. We will be blessed as we watch them play and share. We will be blessed with their child-like honesty and the funny things they say. We will be blessed by their excitement and energy. Having children in our facility during the week adds life to the building and life to those of us who get to watch them grow. Thank you for sharing these blessings with us.

Angela and the Bright Beginnings staff have worked hard to prepare for this year. I appreciate the many hours they have spent getting ready, thank you. I am confident they are looking forward to meeting the children and you. Do not hesitate to ask them about any questions you may have.

Finally, let me say that if I can be of service to you or your family, whether it concerns the preschool program or not, please let me know. Also, if you do not have a church home, I hope you will accept my invitation to come worship with us. Our worship times are 9:00am and 11:00am. Thanks again for choosing Silver Street and Bright Beginnings.

Pastor Robert

## Letter from Director

Welcome to Bright Beginnings Preschool! The first day of school is an exciting milestone in your child's life. Your child is embarking on a journey that will lead them on many roads of discovery and learning.

As wonderful as this new experience may be, it can also be quite stressful for the young child. New situations and change can, at times, be unsettling for all of us. For many children this may be their first experience of separation from parents or care givers at home. It is common for even the most outgoing child to be anxious the first day of school.

We have provided a few suggestions for assisting your child during this time. Remember the preschool staff will be available to provide support and assistance; making your child's first school days happy days.

- Prepare your child for the new school experience by explaining what to expect. Answer all questions directly and honestly.
- Establish a routine involving both the night before a school day as well as morning preparation. Rituals and routines will add predictability and are comforting in unfamiliar situations.
- Clearly state to your child where you will be and when you will return. It may also be helpful to discuss what will happen when you are reunited.
- Maintain a clear good-bye routine.

This handbook has been developed to help strengthen the relationship between families and the school by providing you with specific information about our school.

We are excited that you will be with us for the upcoming school year.

Welcome!

Angela

## Introduction

Bright Beginnings Preschool is a ministry of Silver Street United Methodist Church, offering developmental and age appropriate early education in a Christian environment. The preschool is self-supportive and nonprofit. Students who attend come to us with a broad range of religious and ethnic backgrounds.

Bright Beginnings Preschool offers classrooms, a fenced playground area, and use of the church's fellowship hall. There is a child-sized bathroom located between the classrooms. There are also separate adult sized bathrooms available for use and privacy within the church building. A kitchen is available for occasional staff use.

Children will be accepted on a "first come, first serve" basis. Bright Beginnings Preschool follows the Indiana State Public School Guidelines for enrollment age and children will be placed in classes according to their age as of August 1st. Children must be age two on or before August 1st for enrollment. **Children are not discriminated against for any reason including race, gender, religion or national origin.** In order to insure a safe, comfortable learning environment, the preschool reserves the right to withdraw any child if he/she exhibits behavioral incompatibility with our program.

Employees of Bright Beginnings Preschool are CPR trained, have passed a tuberculosis test and have been screened through the Indiana Department of State Police for any convictions for "barrier crimes." All of our employees are committed to making your child's preschool years at Bright Beginnings a positive start to his/her education.

## Mission

Our mission is to provide a variety of opportunities for each child to expand his/her interest in the world around him. We hope to encourage children to express themselves through art, music, language, and play. Large and small motor skills will be encouraged through individual and group play. Opportunities for observation, questioning, and listening will be provided. Most experiences will be through "hands on" projects.

## Philosophy

We believe that children learn best by doing, i.e. by exploring, interacting, creating, and discovering through personal hands-in play activities. We also believe that all children are unique with individual patterns of development and styles of learning. Each is able to succeed at learning when individual differences are respected and individual needs are met. The motivation for children's learning derives from their experiences, their natural curiosity, and their desire to make sense of the world around them. An effective educational program will provide experiences that meet children's needs while stimulating active learning and all areas of development.

## **Our Goals in working with your child**

**SPIRITUALLY:** To help your child:

- grow in the knowledge and love of Jesus and the Bible
- develop happy, wholesome feelings toward his/her church and church family
- become familiar with selected Bible stories, songs, and verses

**SOCIALLY:** To help your child:

- grow in his/her ability to work and play with others
- respect the personal and property rights of others
- become more friendly, likable, thoughtful, and helpful
- develop an attitude of kindness, cooperation, and courtesy

**PHYSICALLY:** To help your child:

- establish desirable health and safety habits
- strengthen and coordinate his/her body through large and small muscle activities

**INTELLECTUALLY:** To help your child:

- progress at his/her own rate
- develop independent thinking, problem solving, following directions, and carrying out planned procedures to the best of his/her ability

**EMOTIONALLY:** To help your child:

- gradually mature in emotional response
- properly express emotional responses
- face and overcome emotional problems
- develop a positive self-image

**READINESS FOUNDATION**

- A readiness program for reading, math, music, and art will be presented appropriately according to your child's age.

## **Bright Beginnings Preschool Curriculum**

### **All Ages**

Our goal is to provide a safe, healthy, secure and happy environment for the children in which they can develop their skills. Within the warmth and protection of loving teachers, the children are challenged and stimulated by age-appropriate activities and materials that will address their individual needs and interests. Opportunities to participate in fun developmentally appropriate activities and use materials that are based on themes will be offered to each child.

### **Two Year Olds**

Two year-old children develop rapidly. Our goal is to provide the children with an environment to explore their world and individually encourage them in their development of cognitive skills, creativity, language development, listening skills, self-sufficiency, gross motor skills, fine motor skills and socialization skills.

### **Three Year Olds**

The curriculum of our three year-olds continues the exploration and discovery of themselves and their world through a wider range of experiences than the younger classes. Three year olds will begin to move from self-awareness to nurturing a concern for others and their world.

Here are the highlights of our curriculum:

- Introduction of one color and one shape per month, plus a brief introduction to letters and numbers.
- Beginning of obedience of school rules and showing respect for others.
- Listening and following directions as well as use of manipulatives for coordination.
- Following two part directions, using scissors, repeating a song or finger play.
- Sharing, using good manners, improving fine motor skills.
- Displaying appropriate behavior when in line and at circle time.
- Using beads and lacing to improve fine motor skills.
- Recognizing first name in print.
- Completing tasks and solving problems independently; introduction of drawing stick figures.
- Reviewing all skills taught and reinforcing a positive school attitude for next year.

All of these skills and concepts will be introduced and reinforced in the context of our monthly themes using fun, age-appropriate, hands-on activities and games. They will be emphasized monthly and reinforced throughout the year.

## **Four Year Olds and Young Five Year Olds**

Our desire is to promote a positive approach to expanding the interest of each child and presenting an appropriate environment of learning. Four and young five year-old children are active and enthusiastic learners; most learning experiences will be a variety of hands-on activities involving the children in large and small groups. Our curriculum is developed for every child to experience success, progress at his/her own rate, have a positive view of school, and acquire the readiness skills needed for kindergarten.

Highlights of our four and young five year-old curriculum are:

- We use the AlphaTales curriculum to introduce the alphabet (lower and upper case) including recognition and sounds throughout the year.
- Numbers and math skills (counting, estimation, recognition of numerals) will be done throughout the year.
- Social development, body parts, and emotions.
- Holding a pencil and crayon correctly, and colors.
- Manners, participating in group activities.
- Lacing and measurements.
- Eye-hand coordination, sequencing, large motor skills, and shapes.
- Rhyming words, following directions, concepts of whole and half.
- Opposites, patterns, classifying by size and color.
- Know first and last name, age, and phone number.
- Speaking in six to ten word sentences.
- Sight words.
- Review of all skills and concepts taught throughout the year.

All of these skills and concepts will be introduced and reinforced in the context of our monthly themes using fun, age-appropriate, hands-on activities and games. They will be emphasized monthly and reinforced throughout the year.

## **Admissions**

Children who are 2 years old through age 5 are eligible to enroll in Bright Beginnings Preschool. Admission requirements and enrollment procedures are as follows:

- A child must be 2 years old by August 1<sup>st</sup> to be admitted to the Parent's Morning Out Program.
- Children must be 3 years old by August 1<sup>st</sup> to be admitted to the Preschool class.
- Children must be 4 years old by August 1<sup>st</sup>, and/or eligible for Kindergarten the following Fall, to be admitted into the Pre Kindergarten Class.
- Exceptions may be made on a case by case basis.

Classes are filled on a first come, first served basis, once a class has been filled, a waiting list will be established.

## **Registration**

Information about your child is required by preschool policy and specific documents must be viewed as part of the enrollment process. Please be prepared to provide us with information about your child that will be helpful while they are attending our school such as health, immunization and guardianship information. It will be necessary for you to complete an enrollment contract and provide us a copy Health Immunization form (available at most physicians' offices). At the time of registration an annual non-refundable registration fee will be required.

## **Calendar Year**

The program year runs on a ten month schedule, August through May. Labor Day, Thanksgiving break, Christmas break, Presidents Day, MLK Day and Spring break (to coincide with the New Albany/Floyd County School District). In addition Bright Beginnings will not have class on Good Friday.

## **Tuition, Fees and Other Costs**

An annual, non-refundable, registration fee is due at the time of registration to ensure a reserved space on our enrollment list. Because our class sizes are limited, we cannot guarantee a reserved spot without the appropriate fee payments. Tuition is due monthly at the beginning of each month August through April.

## **Payment Policies**

1. Tuition is due on the first day of school each month. A late fee of \$10.00 will be added if payment is not made by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month.
2. Prepayment of tuition is allowed. If payment is made in advance, for the entire year, a 5% discount is given.
3. Tuition will remain the same every month regardless of days missed due to illness, holidays, vacation plans or inclement weather. In the event of unforeseen or extensive school closings, the Preschool will consider make up days if appropriate.
4. If a child enrolls in the middle of a month, tuition will be pro-rated for that month.

## **Preschool Fundraising**

Bright Beginnings sponsors two major fund raisers per year; a Candle Sale in the fall and the Spaghetti Dinner in the spring. Though participation is not mandatory, all families are encouraged to participate.

## **Parent Communication**

We will do our best to keep parents informed of the activities of the preschool and the progress of your child. It is very helpful if you read this handbook and the other communications that we send home. We will communicate through a monthly newsletter from the preschool, monthly class calendars, notes from the director and teachers, phone calls from the director and teachers and face to face conversations. Please help us by keeping us informed of any problems or changes with your child. Feel free to call the teacher or director with any questions.

## **Progress Reports**

Progress reports will be sent home the first week of December and the first Week of May. Please call your child's teacher if you wish to discuss the report.

## **Classroom Visitations**

Enrolled student's parent or legal guardian may visit classrooms at any time. Please contact your child's teachers to make arrangements.

## **Classroom Management and Behavioral Expectations**

Our philosophy concerning appropriate treatment of early childhood behavior is based on the understanding that each child is an individual not only in terms of personality but also development. Therefore, our curriculums, as well as our behavioral expectations, are "age and stage appropriate." We strive to meet the needs of each child with reason and respect. Limits and rules are appropriate, consistent, and understandable to the children.

The young child attending preschool is venturing from his or her home environment for the first time into a world of other children, classrooms and teachers. At Bright Beginnings Preschool we strive to guide the children as they learn appropriate social behavior by modeling and positively reinforcing acceptable behaviors and problem solving strategies. Intervention of inappropriate behaviors occurs on two levels. Redirection to a more positive behavior is attempted first. If this is inadequate and particularly if the behavior is potentially harmful to the child or peer, the teacher will remove the child for a brief timeout and discuss more appropriate behaviors with the child. A timeout follows the rule of thumb of one minute per year of age of the child. Timeouts

rarely occur as the teachers use conflicts and problems as an opportunity to teach children constructive ways of resolving disputes. Behavioral interventions are always neutral and nonjudgmental and never demeaning to the children.

**There will be no discipline that is associated with:**

- 1. Denial of food or a snack.**
- 2. Embarrassment.**
- 3. Corporal punishment in any form.**

### **Behavior Expectations**

- 1. Be kind to others.**
- 2. Be safe.**
- 3. Respect the physical environment.**

Verbal warnings and redirection are used to curb inappropriate behavior. However, when a child consistently and intentionally hurts his/her peers and/or a teacher, ignores and disregards safety guidelines and/or damages or destroys the preschool environment the following discipline guidelines will be utilized.

**INCIDENT 1:** His/her teacher will counsel the child, and an incident report will be completed and forwarded to the child's parent/legal guardian and placed in the child's file.

**INCIDENT 2:** Same as INCIDENT 1 above.

**INCIDENT 3:** The Director will request a meeting with the child's parent/guardian to determine a better behavior strategy for the child. Written report will be placed in the child's file.

**INCIDENT 4:** The child will be given a one (1) day suspension. The child's parent/legal guardian will be required to meet with the Director and teacher before the child is readmitted to the classroom.

**INCIDENT 5:** The child will be given a three (3) day suspension. The child's parent/legal guardian will be required to meet with the church's minister, Director, and teacher before the child is readmitted to the classroom.

**INCIDENT 6:** The child will be dismissed from Bright Beginnings Preschool.

### **Dress Code**

When dressing your child, remember that we paint and play outside daily. We recommend comfortable play clothing for everyday wear. Tennis shoes are strongly recommended as your child's footwear.

## **Health Policy**

All children are required to be certified by their physician that they are current with all immunizations.

It is inevitable that children will contract viruses, bacterial infections, and other illnesses. We ask that you, as parents, honestly determine the health of your child before sending him or her to school. If you were up frequently during the night with your child and suspect illness, please do not send your child to school simply because there is no fever. In addition, if your child has had a fever during the past 24 hours, do not send him or her to school.

If your child has been exposed to a communicable disease, we ask that you notify us promptly of the exposure (Chicken Pox, Conjunctivitis, Strep Throat, and Impetigo, Head Lice, etc.). Do not bring your child to school if you are aware of an illness that has not yet been diagnosed by a physician or treated with an antibiotic for 24 hours. Do not bring your child to school if there is evidence of head lice. Parents will be notified if a child shows evidence and will be required to keep the child home until the problem is resolved.

If a child shows symptoms of illness during the school day, he or she will remain in a designated, supervised area and parents will be contacted immediately. It is the parent's responsibility to make arrangements for their child to leave school as soon as possible. If parents cannot be reached by telephone, we will contact the designated emergency person. When a child has been exposed to a communicable disease or lice, while attending school, the parents will be notified.

### **Sick Child**

Mary had a little lamb,  
she also had the flu.  
And when she left her preschool,  
the others had it too.  
So anytime your child is sick,  
please keep her home with you.  
Then the children in our preschool  
will be happier and healthier, too!

### **Inclement Weather Closings**

Bright Beginnings Preschool will follow the New Albany/ Floyd County Public School's schedule for snow days and inclement weather. If they are closed, we are closed. If public schools are on a one or two hour delay, preschool will be from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Please listen to radio or television stations for school closing announcements.

**Please remember that tuition remains the same each month** regardless of how many days might be missed because of snow, holidays, illness or other reasons not within our control.

## **Drop Off and Pick Up Procedures**

Preschool starts promptly at 9:00 a.m. Please do not bring your child earlier than 8:55 a.m., as this interferes with the teacher's set up time. Please provide any information that the teacher may need to care for your child in the form of a written note. Please provide, in writing, the name of any person who will be picking up your child if it is different from usual.

Preschool ends each day at 12:00 p.m. A ten-minute grace period will be given. After that time, a fee of \$1.00 per minute will be charged for any child picked up after 12:10 p.m. Please make checks payable to the teacher in charge of your child.

## **Parking Lot**

Please remember to drive slowly through the parking lot.

## **Snack Policy**

Snack time is mid-morning. Please notify your child's teacher if any new allergy arises that is not listed on the registration form.

## **Birthdays, Parties & Invitations**

Birthdays are important to young children, and we recognize each birthday individually. Treats may be brought for snack time for your child's class. Your child's teacher can help with suggestions for the type of treat to be served. Please arrange this with the teacher at least one week in advance.

Party invitations handed out in class must be to all the class's students, or you are asked to mail them individually. We will not hand out invitations to only part of the class. Teacher approved party treats, likewise, should be sent for the entire class.

## **Toys in the classroom**

Children are asked not to bring toys to school. There will be certain sharing days when the children may bring in a favorite toy to share with the other children during "Show and Tell" We will also have days when we ask the children to bring in something related to our discussion topic at circle time.

## **Confidentiality**

Information pertaining to any student, parent or legal guardian will not be disclosed outside the staff directly dealing with the individual. Exceptions will be made only with written consent.

## WHAT A CHILD LEARNS FROM PLAY

When he builds with blocks:

He learns to use his imagination to create something from his own thinking.

He has the satisfaction of being able to make something.

He learns about sizes and shapes, weights and balances, height and depth, smoothness and roughness.

He may be learning to play with others.

When he paints:

He learns about colors and how he can use them.

He learns to use his imagination and transfer his ideas to paper.

He gets emotional satisfaction from being able to express himself.

He learns how to use small muscle coordination to handle a brush.

When he plays in the home living center:

He learns what the roles of family members are.

He understands what it feels like to play at being somebody other than himself.

He learns to use his imagination.

He learns to cooperate with other children.

When he makes a gift out of paper and glue:

He learns about doing things for others.

He learns how to use materials like scissors and paste.

He learns how to use his imagination to make the kind of present he has in mind.

He learns about shapes, sizes, and color.

When he plays on the playground equipment:

He learns how to use his body effectively.

He experiences joy in achieving a skill.

He has the fun and relaxation to be found in bodily movement.

He learns the limitations of his body.

He learns safety and caution.

He learns to take turns and to share a piece of equipment.

He learns how to use his imagination and find new ways of using the equipment.