



Bright Beginnings Preschool

Parent Handbook

2018-2019

At Bright Beginnings, our primary goal is to provide a positive learning experience for your child in an environment that inspires exploration, experimentation, and discovery.

We believe a positive self-image is vital to your child's development, growth, and independence.

Children are encouraged to acquire self-help skills, make choices, and interact with peers in a positive manner.

Children will be supported to attain the necessary skills to be successful in Kindergarten.

Jane Helgestad
Bright Beginnings Preschool Coordinator

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60 W. Central Ave.
St. Michael, MN 55376

Locations

Bright Beginnings classes are held at the Albertville Primary and Community Education Building in the STMA School District.

Calendar

Bright Beginnings follows the STMA district calendar. If STMA Schools are not in session, neither is Bright Beginnings.

Daily Sign-in/out

Each parent or authorized person must have verbal contact with a staff person and must sign the child in/out daily. Authorized pick-ups must be listed in the child's accounts. Additions/removals can be made online or call the office at 763-497-6512. Children will only be released to persons authorized. If child is to be released to anyone not listed, please contact the classroom teacher or coordinator.

Pick up Authorizations/court orders

Children will be released only to their parent(s) or person(s) authorized. If a child is to be released to anyone other than the people listed; a written note, fax or email authorizing pick up must be received prior to pick up time or add a authorized person to your account. We will not accept telephone calls for authorization except in extreme emergencies. An authorized person must be at least 13 years of age or older and will be required to show identification. Parents, please realize that we have new staff and substitutes so you may be asked to show identification when picking up your child. A biological parent can only be designated as an unauthorized pick-up through a court order. In cases of restraining/protection/court orders stating a parent or person is not allowed to pick up a child, Kids Play will need a copy of the order. If no court order is on file with Kids Play, we have no choice but to allow a parent to pick up their child. Proper ID will be required. Kids Play will not be involved in custody or parenting time disputes between parents. We will not keep track of each parent's "parenting schedule" and/or who has physical custody on a given day. Staff cannot get involved in custody or parent time issues between parents. Your child's safety is important to us.

Payments

Tuition is due the 5th of each month. An emailed invoice will be sent prior to the due date. Tuition can be paid via auto-payments (preferred method), online, cash, or check. If not paying online, a tuition box will be provided in each classroom. Tuition is a flat rate regardless of the number of days class is held per month. Parents are responsible for the full payment, even if child is not in attendance. If there are financial difficulties, please speak with the office to make payment arrangements. Families who qualify for free/reduced lunch will also qualify for reduced/free tuition. Meal applications are available on the STMA school website www.stma.k12.mn.us. Qualifications letters must be turned into the Bright Beginnings office.

Withdrawals

A 2 week notice is required for all withdrawals from Bright Beginnings. Please notify the coordinator via email. If notice is not given, parents are responsible for the entire

month's tuition.

Telephone and E-mail

Parents are encouraged to call or e-mail staff with questions or concerns. Phone calls during student contact time will be routed to voice mail.

Staffing

Each classroom has a maximum of 20 students. At least 2 adults will be assigned to the classroom, possibly more if student's needs are high. The lead classroom teacher will be certified and hold a MN teaching license.

Self-Help Skills

All children attending Bright Beginnings preschool must be fully toilet trained upon entrance. As a staff, we understand that all children have accidents and are prepared to assist children during these times. Each child should have an extra set of clothing inside their backpack for such emergencies. If a child has an accident at school, parents will be notified. If a child has repeated accidents, parents and staff will communicate options for continuation in the program. With limited staff to attend to each child's self-help needs, withdrawal from the program may be required.

Behavior

Preschoolers behavior are unpredictable. Our staff will use the following strategies: verbal warnings, loss of privileges, removal from activity, taking a break, and communication with parents. If the behaviors are unresolved, a conference with staff and parents will be held to determine a plan.

Behaviors that threatens other children and staff, causes destruction of property, involves verbal, emotional, or physical bullying, or running from site/staff are not tolerated.

Transportation

Transportation is the parent's responsibility. Carpooling needs may arise within the classroom, if able, please consider helping a family in need.

Parking is available in the upper or lower lots of the Community Education Center. DO NOT LEAVE SIBLINGS OR OTHER CHILDREN IN PARKED CARS. Please bring all children into the center to check your child into preschool.

The CEC has an intercom system in place for security. Most doors will be open during pick-up and drop off times. If not, Doors A and D have intercoms attached, you can enter through these locations.

Pick-up and Drop-off Authorizations should be in place online in your student's file. Your child will not be released to anyone without prior consent. Court documents are required for any restraining or legal orders.

If you are habitually late picking up your child, a LATE FEE will be assessed. Bright Beginnings charges \$6 per 5 minutes late. If you are running late, please call your child's teacher or the office. Our main concern is for the welfare of the children. It is a stressful situation to place a child in when all other children have been picked up.

Bus

Bright Beginnings offers a for fee bus service to and from the Albertville Primary only. If the optional service is chosen, it is the parent's responsibility to be at the bus stop for

drop-off. Don's Bus Service provides transportation for STMA. Parents with questions should contact the bus company at 763- 497-2585. For more information regarding transportation, go to the STMA web site at www.stma.k12.mn.us; click on Parents – Transportation. Call the bus company for information.

Lost and Found

Lost & Found items will be temporarily stored and then donated to charity. Please check with your classroom teacher or in the main hallway lost and found lockers. Due to the large volume of lost items, it is important to clearly label coats, boots, lunch boxes, and book bags.

Health/Wellness

All children are required to have up to date immunizations.

If your child is unable to attend school, please call your child's teacher. If your child exhibits the following symptoms, please keep them at home. Fever, severe cold, green mucus, vomiting, diarrhea, pink eye require that your child stay home a minimum of 24 hours after the symptoms have disappeared. If a child becomes ill at school, the parent will be the first called and then emergency numbers. Child will wait in the CE/AP nurse's office until an adult arrives.

Communicable diseases such as head lice, strep throat, pink eye, etc. should be reported to ensure the safety of all the children. Due to the number of students that utilize our facilities, a child may come back to school once nits and lice are gone. Children on medications should stay home during the first 24 hours of administration.

Bright Beginnings staff does not administer medications at school. If your child has special health needs, be sure to update their profile online and speak with your child's teacher.

In the event of an accident at school, staff will administer the proper treatments, document the injury, and call the parents if necessary. In an accident where immediate medical attention is needed, 911 will be called first.

More health and wellness information can be found on the STMA district website <http://www.stma.k12.mn.us/district/departments/health-services>

Mandated Reporting

Staff members and volunteers are required by state law to report instances of observed or suspected child abuse or neglect. Staff will report directly to the program coordinator and together will report to the proper authorities

Emergency Drills

Fire, tornado, and lockdown drills will be practiced throughout the school year in accordance with state law.

Tobacco Free/Chemical Free

Smoking and use of tobacco products, alcohol, and chemicals are prohibited on school district property.

MN School Dangerous Weapon Law

Bringing a dangerous weapon on school property is a violation of Minnesota law. This is

any device or instrument designed as a weapon or through its use is capable of producing great bodily harm or death. Parents please remember this when attending classes and/or entering school property. Children are discouraged from bringing toy weapons to school; these toys will not be allowed in the classroom.

Snacks

Bright Beginnings provides snacks for all children. All attempts are made to provide nutritious snacks as we follow the SMART SNACK guidelines set by the district and state. If your child has a food allergy, please notify your child's teacher and update the online medical needs.

Inclement Weather

Bright Beginnings follows all STMA Schools weather policies. If the district is closed, so is Bright Beginnings. If the district is 2 hours late, there will be no morning sessions. If there is an early dismissal, Bright Beginnings will cancel the afternoon sessions.

All Bright Beginnings families will be added to the automated school system that calls, emails, or text messages announcements. Local TV stations, WCCO radio, Facebook, and twitter will also make announcements regarding weather.

Bright Beginnings does not reimburse tuition for snow days until after 2 days a month within your child's session has been missed. If a third day is called, a prorated amount will be subtracted from your child's account.

Publication of Student Images

Images of students taken in the public arena such as sporting events or fine arts public performances may be released on public media and may identify students by names, grade, or in any other personally identifiable manner. In addition, because of classroom or activity participation throughout the school year, pictures and videos of students may be used for displays, photo albums, community newspaper articles, school newsletters, calendars, news broadcasts, movies, the yearbook, and etcetera. Student names, grade, and other personally identifiable information may accompany the student images. These images may be posted on the Internet through the STMA web site, online newspapers, Twitter, and Facebook. Parents with concerns or questions about photographs and videos may contact the school office personnel and may request that their child not be included in media presentations.

Volunteering/Chaperones

Parent volunteers are welcome within each classroom. Teachers will have a schedule posted outside the classroom and will communicate needs through newsletters and announcements. No classroom volunteers during the first few weeks of the school year. This is a time for students and teachers to familiarize themselves with the class. Each teacher will make the determination as to when volunteering will begin.

All volunteers and chaperones are required to have completed a background check with the district. No outside checks are accepted. To obtain a background form, go to <http://www.stma.k12.mn.us/district/departments/volunteer-district-background-check> and submit the form with \$15 to the district office.

Conferences

Parent/teacher conferences are offered twice a year – November and April. Your

child's teacher will communicate when these conferences will be held and what the process is for signing up.

Book Orders

Book order forms are sent home frequently with your child. All book orders are voluntary but a great way to build your home library. Bright Beginnings does collect bonus points from each order which allows us to purchase classroom books and supplies.

Fundraising

Bright Beginnings is a tuition based, state-funded program. However, we continue to make efforts to raise funds for program scholarships and supplies. Once a year, we offer a program wide fundraiser through Clubs Choice. This is an optional effort that benefits all classrooms throughout the program. In addition, Dairy Queen hosts a once a month benefit for both our ECFE and Bright Beginnings programs.

Ready 4 Kindergarten Sessions

Bright Beginnings will offer a series of supportive seminars to help guide families through the transition to kindergarten. 3 sessions will take place during the school year to provide support, answer questions, and introduce you to the world of K-12 learning. These sessions are optional, but recommended for first-time kindergarten parents.

Parent Aware Program

Bright Beginnings became a 4-Star Parent Aware rated program in 2013. To earn a 4-Star rating, programs are excelling in the use of best practices in preparing kids for kindergarten. Bright Beginnings has modeled these practices through the following: partnering with parents, ongoing assessments, adapting lesson plans to meet individual needs, disability and cultural training, along with further professional development. For more information on Parent Aware, check out <http://parentawareratings.org>.

Curriculum

Bright Beginnings uses a variety of early education curriculum. Creative Curriculum and Handwriting without Tears are combined with thematic units to cover a broad spectrum of developmental areas and promote active, creative learning. The main focus of Bright Beginnings is to create motivated learners who are excited and ready to attend the kindergarten setting. Children are assessed through the year to determine appropriate classroom experiences and to align learning to the Common Core Standards of Early Education.

Advisory Council

We welcome any parents to join our advisory council meetings. Meetings are held 2-3 times throughout the school year. The state of MN requires that our program establish/maintain an Advisory Council. This council is to be made up of parents currently in the program, a few staff, and community members.

What does the Advisory Council do?

1. Recommend program policies, goals, and objectives.
2. Develop/train volunteers
3. Promote program through outreach and community relations

4. Assist in program evaluations
5. Serve as an advocate in the community and Legislature
6. Expand resource development
7. Fundraising

It is important to note that the council makes only recommendations and does not have authority to make final program decisions.

Complaints – Students, Employees, Parents and Other Persons

The school district takes seriously all concerns or complaints by students, employees, parents or other persons. While written reports are encouraged, a complaint may be made orally. A person may file a complaint at any level of the school district; i.e., principal, superintendent or school board. However, persons are encouraged to file a complaint at the building level when appropriate. It is best to discuss concerns or complaints with the person most familiar with the incident and, if the concern or complaints is not satisfactorily addressed, to the principal or supervisor, superintendent and school board.

Federal law requires that school districts designate specific individuals and procedures for disability discrimination, sex discrimination, equal education and employment opportunity, homeless and harassment.

Contact information is as follows:

Student Disability Discrimination - ADA/504 Coordinator – Superintendent Dr. Ann Marie Foucault, 763-497-3180, District Office in Middle School West, 11343-50th St. NE, Albertville, Minnesota

Homeless Compliance – District Homeless Coordinator - Superintendent Dr. Ann Marie Foucault, 763-497-3180, District Office in Middle School West, 11343-50th St. NE, Albertville, Minnesota

Student Sex Discrimination – Human Rights Officer – Director of Human Resources Douglas Birk, 763-497-3180, District Office in Middle School West, 11343-50th, St. NE, Albertville, Minnesota

Student Sex Nondiscrimination Program Compliance – Title IX Officer – Activities Director Douglas Birk, 763-497-2192, High School, 5800 Jamison Ave, NE. St. Michael, Minnesota

Student or Staff Harassment – Human Rights Officer - Director of Human Resources Douglas Birk, 763-497-3180, District Office in Middle School West, 11343-50th, St. NE, Albertville, Minnesota

Equal Education Opportunity/Equal Employment Opportunity – Human Rights Officer - Director of Human Resources Douglas Birk, 763-497-3180, District Office in Middle School West, 11343-50th, St. NE, Albertville, Minnesota

Bullying Prohibition Policy (Policy 514)

The purpose of this policy is to assist the school district in its goal of preventing and

responding to acts of bullying, intimidation, violence, and other similar disruptive behavior. An act of bullying, by either an individual student or a group of students, is expressly prohibited on school district property or at school related functions. This policy applies not only to students who directly engage in an act of bullying but also to students who, by their indirect behavior, condone or support another student's act of bullying. "Bullying" means intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct that is objectively offensive and:(1) there is an actual or perceived imbalance of power between the student engaging in prohibited conduct and the target of the behavior and the conduct is repeated or forms a pattern; or (2) materially and substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities or performance or ability to participate in school functions or activities or receive school benefits, services, or privileges. "Cyberbullying" means bullying using technology or other electronic communication, including but not limited to a transfer of a sign, signal, writing, image, sound, or data, including a post on a social network Internet site or forum, transmitted through a computer, cell phone, or other electronic device. Intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct may involve but is not limited to conduct that causes physical harm to a student or a student's property or causes a student to be in reasonable fear of harm to person or property; under Minnesota common law, violates a student's reasonable expectation of privacy, defames a student, or constitutes intentional infliction of emotional distress against a student; is directed at any student or students, including those based on a person's actual or perceived race, ethnicity, color, creed, religion, national origin, immigration status, sex, marital status, familial status, socioeconomic status, physical appearance, sexual orientation, including gender identity and expression, academic status related to student performance, disability, or status with regard to public assistance, age, or any additional characteristic defined in state statute. However, prohibited conduct need not be based on any particular characteristic defined in this paragraph or state statute.

Harassment and Violence (Policy 413)

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from religious, racial, or sexual harassment and violence. The school district prohibits any form of religious, racial, or sexual harassment and violence. If harassment occurs, students must report the situation to an adult, and school personnel will make every effort to stop the harassment.

Interaction Between School Staff and the Public (Policy 907)

Every employee is the school system's point of contact with the public. The Board encourages every employee to assume responsibility for the public image of the school system. Similarly, each and every staff member should be treated with respect and dignity by parents and members of the public.

STMA School Board Policies

A full list of district-wide policies is located online at www.stma.k12.mn.us under School Board and Policies