



Little Blessings Preschool

Family Handbook

May 2026

WELCOME

Dear Little Blessings Preschool Families,

Whether you are a new or returning family, welcome to Little Blessings Preschool for the 2026-2027 school year!

This is the year for our youngest learners to shine brightly in our classrooms. It will be a magical year, filled with wonder and amazing growth for your little star.

Thank you for choosing Little Blessings Preschool and trusting us with your young learners! We look forward to providing your child with a caring and enriching environment and guiding you and your family through a successful preschool year!

Sincerely,

Shelby Moschini

Director

lbpdirector@bethanycovenant.org

Little Blessings Preschool

Philosophy

Bethany Covenant Church has established a preschool to enrich the experiences of the young child. Through the warm understanding and Christian conviction of each teacher and an environment rich in opportunities for learning and growth, each child will develop an awareness of God and grow spiritually, socially, emotionally, cognitively, and physically. It is the mission of Little Blessings Preschool to provide an atmosphere which:

- Develops spiritual awareness of God's love and the many gifts God has given us through thematic units and day to day experiences.
- Promotes healthy, social and emotional attitudes towards self, others, family, school and the world through cooperative play and guidance from loving teachers.
- Encourages development of cognitive skills, readiness skills, basic concepts and creative expression through art, music, story time and group experiences. Children will learn by doing, using concrete and tangible materials.
- Promotes development of gross and fine motor skills, coordination and perceptual skills through work and play.

As children progress through our preschool classes, they will develop appropriate kindergarten readiness skills.

Mission

Bethany Covenant Church believes that each child is a special and unique person created by God. We are committed to providing children with an excellent preschool education within a Christian environment.

Through guided instruction and creative play, children will grow socially, emotionally and spiritually. They will develop physical and cognitive skills and gain self-esteem and self- help skills.

Staff

Director- Shelby Moschini

Office Administrator- Sandy Brown

Head Teacher(s)- Shelby Moschini
Jennifer Poland

Little Blessings Board Members

Little Blessings Preschool is blessed to have a board of directors dedicated to the well-being of students and staff at Little Blessings Preschool. Board members provide strategic direction and oversight to the organization and lead the nonprofit in achieving its mission. Board members play an active role in fundraising, fiscal oversight and strategic planning. In addition, they establish policies and procedures to ensure smooth operation of the organization, protection of its assets, fidelity to its mission and adherence to legal requirements and filings.

Email: LBPBoard@bethanycovenant.org

Ben Pease- Pastor

Anthony Lapila- Board President

Rebecca Waite- Vice Chair

Penny Krivickas- Treasurer

_____ - Church Member

_____ – Preschool Parent Representative

Julia Weston - Preschool Parent Representative

Denitsa Pasco – Preschool Parent Representative

Please feel free to reach out to the Board President with any questions or concerns

LBPboard@bethanycovenant.org

Days and Hours of Operation

Little Blessings Preschool is open Monday- Friday 8:30-2:30 during the school year. Limited hours are available during the summer months and can be scheduled by appointment. We follow the Berlin Public school schedule for holidays and vacations

Early 3's T/W/TH 9am-11:30am

Pre-K 3 M/W/F 9am-12pm

Pre-K 3 T/TH 9am-12pm

Pre-K 4 M/W/F 9am-1:55pm

Pre-K 5 M-F 9am-1:55pm

Drop off and pick up

General Procedure

We open at 9 AM. Please do not drop-off your child prior to the opening. Parents are expected to accompany their children to the classroom and sign them in and out daily using the designated sign-in sheets.

It is incredibly important to arrive promptly at the beginning of the day and end of the day. Please do not make a habit of arriving past 9am. This causes a disruption to the morning routine and can create nervousness for your child.

An adult must accompany your child to and from his/her classroom and sign them in and out each day. Doors will automatically unlock 10 minutes before class start time and 10 minutes after dismissal.

Absence

If your child is going to be absent or arrive after 9 AM, please call us at (860) 828-9520 or email Littleblessingpreschool@gmail.com. We will be concerned about your child if we do not hear from you.

Authorized & Unauthorized Pick-up

Your child will only be released to you or those persons you have listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. If you would like a person who is not identified as an Emergency and Release Contact to pick-up your child, you must notify us in advance, in writing. Your child will not be released without prior written authorization. The person picking up your child will be required to show a picture ID as verification. Please notify your pick-up person of our policy.

In order to safeguard your child, we require copies of any court ordered custody agreements. Without a custody agreement, we are not able to prevent the release of your child to a parent.

Late Pick Up Policy 19a-79-3a(d)(3)

(When a child is not picked up as planned)

Two program staff members 18 years of age or older will always remain at the program with the child. If the child has not been picked up within 30 minutes of the child's scheduled pick-up time, a program staff person will attempt to call the child's parents/guardians using the numbers provided.

If they cannot be reached, the program staff person will attempt to call the emergency and authorized,

alternate adults provided by the parent/guardians at the time of enrollment. The police will be called after 2 hours if parents or other adults specified on the permission to release forms cannot be reached. At that time the child may be released to the police. The non-emergency number for our local police department is (860)828-7080.

Right to Refuse Child Release

We have the right to refuse to release children if we have reasonable cause to suspect that any person picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way that may endanger the child. To protect your child, we may request that another adult listed as an Emergency and Release Contact pick-up the child, or we may call the police to prevent potential harm to your child. Recurring situations may result in the release of your child from the program.

Snow Days & Make-Up Days

In case of inclement weather, please watch channel WFSB, NBC CT, WTNH, WTIC or check the Seesaw app and our Facebook Page for closings or delays.

In the event the school needs to close due to a weather event, Little Blessings Preschool will try to make-up days after the number of days exceeds the number of days a week the child attends school. Any make-up day will not go past May 31st

An example would be if your child was in:

Early 3s: after 3 missed school day because of snow

Pre K 3 & 4: After 3 missed school days because of snow

Pre K 5: after 5 missed school days because of snow

The make-up days will be determined after the threat of snow is over.

Registration/Admission

A registration fee of \$100 is due at the time of registration. This fee is non-refundable. All registration and student forms must be completed as well as the first tuition payment paid prior to your child's first day of attendance.

Our program serves children 2.5 -5 years old. Tuition payments are to be made monthly and are due on the 1st of every month. A \$20 late fee will be added after the 10th of the month if payment is not received and your child may not return until payment is made in full.

Each child entering the center must have an updated physical form, signed and dated by his/her pediatrician, including current immunization documentation before the start of the school year. Children who are not school age, must have their physicals updated yearly. Children who are school age, are required to have a physical upon entering Kindergarten and then as required by the school district for which that child attends and acceptable to the local education authority.

Children are enrolled without regard to race, culture, sex, religion, national origin, or disability. We do not discriminate on the basis of special needs as long as a safe, supportive environment can be provided.

Withdrawal

Should you withdraw from the program, your contract will hold true so please read it carefully. Once a child is accepted into the program and space is held for him/her, the family is financially obligated for the total annual tuition unless another child fills the vacancy.

Waiver of the Tuition agreement is granted in the following circumstances:

1. The unplanned relocation of the family more than 35 miles from Berlin,
2. A child is five by September 1st and the family decides to send him/her to public kindergarten
3. Another child fills the vacancy
4. All other circumstances will be addressed at the discretion of the LBP Board of Directors.

Tuition and Fees

All payment and fee processing will be completed by our office administrator. He/she will oversee collection of tuition and other fees and contacting families regarding payment issues. If you have a question or concern regarding a payment or fee, please contact the office administrator at LittleBlessingPreschool@gmail.com or the Director at LBPdirector@bethanycovenant.org.

Payment

Payment is always due in advance with no deduction for any absences, holidays, or closures due to inclement weather, power outages, or other situations beyond our control. Payment is due as outlined in the *Tuition Contract*. There is a black lock box located outside the Pre-K 5 classroom where you can drop an envelope of cash or check with your students name on it.

Methods of Payment

Several methods of payment are available. Families may pay by cash or check. Parents will also be emailed a link for the option to pay using credit, debit or Venmo.

Payment Schedule

The first tuition payment is due May 31st. For those choosing the monthly payment option their remaining Tuition payments are due the 1st of each month, September through April.

Late Payment Charges

If payment is not received by the 10th of the month, a late fee of \$20 will be added.

Returned Checks/Rejected Transaction Charges

The family will be charged the bank fee for any checks returned for insufficient funds. Two or more returned checks may result in your account being placed on “cash only” status.

Late Pick-up Fees

Late pick-up is not a normal program option and will only be considered an exceptional occurrence. Late fees will be assessed.

Bathrooms

Program staff must supervise children while they are using the bathrooms. Where toilets and sinks are shared by children and adults, program staff will ensure that the bathrooms are not in use by adults prior to the children entering the bathroom facility. Program staff will supervise and offer assistance to children when needed. At no time shall a child and adult use the toilets at the same time.

Toilet Training

Children enrolled in preschool must be toilet trained before attending preschool. A child having daily accidents is not considered toilet trained. By definition, "accidents" are unusual and should happen infrequently. In these instances, students will work to change independently, the teacher or staff will support a child if needed. A parent or caregiver may be called to pick up or help assist their child if the accident requires extra attention during clean up.

Wearing disposable training pants (i.e., Pull-Ups) is not considered toilet trained. Children enrolled in preschool must wear underwear.

Why do children have to be toilet trained before they begin preschool?

- Strict standards exist with regard to changing and disposing of wet or soiled diapers or disposable training pants, and our classrooms are not equipped for this
- When teachers or staff are out of the room assisting a child with changing soiled clothing it removes that adult from the direct supervision of and interaction with the rest of the class, thereby taking away from learning time for all students

Toilet trained children are children who can do the following:

- Communicate to the teacher that they need to go to the restroom before they need to go
- Postpone going if they must wait for someone who is in the bathroom or if they are away from the classroom
- Alert themselves to stop what they are doing to go and use the bathroom
- Wake up during nap time should they need to use the bathroom
- Pull down their clothes and get them back up without assistance
- Get on/off the toilet by themselves
- Wipe themselves after using the toilet
- Wash and dry hands

Children will be asked many times throughout the day if they need to use the bathroom. Children need to be able to complete this process independently, including unfastening and fastening clothing, using appropriate sanitary expectations and washing their own hands. The teachers do remind children to flush and wash. If a child is having a difficult time with a snap etc, the teacher will assist the child.

It is not uncommon for children who are fully potty trained to have setbacks when they are in a new environment. Preschool teachers are aware of this and will assist the children when necessary. Children should be dressed in clothing that they can easily manage independently. Please send two complete changes of clothes and one pair of shoes appropriate for the season.

We understand that each child arrives at this milestone differently, therefore we will allow 4 weeks from

the first day of school to demonstrate accomplishment of this goal. However, if the situation is not manageable within the classroom environment we will discuss the issue with the parents and reserve the right to suspend attendance of the child at such time.

Health and Wellness

Immunizations are required in accordance with the current schedule recommended by the U.S. Public Health Services and the American Academy of Pediatrics, www.aap.org.

Every August, we check with the public health department or the American Academy of Pediatrics for updates of the recommended immunization schedule. Our state regulations regarding attendance of children who are not immunized due to religious or medical reasons are followed. Unimmunized children are excluded during outbreaks of vaccine preventable illness as directed by the state health department.

Physicals

Routine physicals are required according to the current recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, www.aap.org. A copy of your child's physical should be received before but must be received before your child begins the program. Families are responsible for ensuring that their child's physicals are kept up-to-date and that a copy of the results of the child's health assessment is given to the program.

Illness

Sick Child Procedure 19a-79-5a(a)(3)

- ✓ Program staff shall be knowledgeable about the signs and symptoms of childhood illness.
- ✓ Program staff will be responsible for the initial observation of each child upon arrival and continued observation during the day for signs and symptoms.
- ✓ Any child showing signs or symptoms of contagious illness shall be placed in a designated isolation area under continual supervision.
- ✓ Parents shall be called immediately to remove the child from care.
- ✓ Program staff shall complete an illness form that includes a description of the illness, date, time and location and any action taken by the facility including whether the child was transported to a hospital emergency room, doctor office or other medical facility as a result of the illness.
- ✓ A copy of the illness report shall be provided to the parent no later than the next business day

We understand that it is difficult for a family member to leave or miss work, but to protect other children; you may not bring a sick child to the center. The center has the right to refuse a child who appears ill. You will be called and asked to retrieve your child if your child exhibits any of the following symptoms. This is not an all-inclusive list. We will try to keep your child comfortable, but he/she will be excluded from all activities until you arrive.

- Illness that prevents your child from participating in activities.
- Illness that results in greater need for care than we can provide.
- Illness that poses a risk of spread of harmful diseases to others.
- Fever (100°F or higher under the arm, 101°F or higher in the mouth, 102°F or higher in the ear).

- Diarrhea – stools with blood or mucus, and/or uncontrolled, unformed stools that cannot be contained in a diaper/underwear or toilet.
- Vomiting – green or bloody, and/or more than 2 times during the previous 48 hours.
- Mouth sores caused by drooling.
- Rash with fever, unless a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease.
- Pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge, until on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Head lice, until treatment and all nits are removed.
- Scabies, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Chickenpox, until all lesions have dried and crusted.
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough), until 5 days of antibiotics.
- Hepatitis A virus, until one week after immune globulin has been administered.
- Tuberculosis, until a health professional indicates the child is not infectious.
- Rubella, until 6 days after the rash appears.
- Mumps, until 5 days after onset of parotid gland swelling.
- Measles, until 4 days after onset of rash.
- Has a physician or other health professionals written order that child be separated from other children.

Children who have been ill may return when:

- They are free of fever, vomiting and diarrhea for 48 hours.
- They have been treated with an antibiotic for 24 hours.
- Nit free
- They are able to participate comfortably in all usual activities.
- They are free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling (not related to teething)
- Unless:
 - The child's physician signs a note stating that the child's condition is not contagious, and;
 - The involved areas can be covered by a bandage without seepage or drainage through the bandage.
 - If a child had a reportable communicable disease, a physician's note stating that the child is no longer contagious and may return to our care is required

Allergy Prevention

Families are expected to notify us regarding children's food and environmental allergies. Families of children with diagnosed allergies are required to provide us with a letter detailing the child's symptoms, reactions, treatments and care. A list of the children's allergies will be posted in the main area and kitchen. We are trained to familiarize ourselves and consult the list to avoid the potential of exposing children to substances to which they have known allergies.

Medications (LIFE SAVING MEDICATION ONLY)

All medications should be handed to a staff member with specific written instructions for administration. Medications should never be left in the child's cubby or with the child to administer on their own. Our

staff will ensure that the medication is recorded along with the directions and proceed to dispense the medication as directed.

- **Prescription medications** require a note signed by the family and a written order from the child's physician. The label on the medication meets this requirement. The medication must include your child's name, dosage, current date, frequency, and the name and phone number of the physician. All medications must be in the original container (you may request pharmacies to fill your prescription in two labeled bottles). Please specify the dosage and time(s) to be administered for each medication.

We are not able to put sunscreen or bug spray on your child. Please remember to apply before School.

Communicable Diseases

When an enrolled child or an employee of the center has a (suspected) reportable disease, it is our legal responsibility to notify the local Board of Health or Department of Public Health. We will take care to notify families about exposure so children can receive preventive treatments.

Included among the reportable illnesses are the following:

- Bacterial Meningitis
- Botulism
- Chicken Pox
- COVID-19
- Diphtheria
- Haemophilus Influenza (invasive)
- Measles (including suspect)
- Meningococcal Infection (invasive)
- Poliomyelitis (including suspect)
- Rabies (human only)
- Rubella Congenital and Non-congenital (including suspect)
- Tetanus (including suspect)
- H1N1 Virus
- Any cluster/outbreak of illness
- Tuberculosis

Administration of Medications Policy

Our Program will administer nonprescription topical medications and emergency medications which include prescribed inhalers, premeasured commercially prepared auto-injector (i.e. Epi-pens, Auvi-Q, etc.), emergency oral medication (i.e. Benadryl, Zyrtec with Epinephrine), rectal medications, and injectable medications other than premeasured commercially prepared auto-injector (i.e. Insulin).

The parental responsibilities include providing the program the proper written permission, written order

from an authorized prescriber, and the medication.

The medication authorization form must include information, such as:

- The child's name, address, and birthdate
- The date the medication order was written
- Medication name, dose and method of administration
- Time to be administered and dates to start and end the medication
- Relevant side effects and prescribers plan for management should they occur
- Notation whether the medication is a controlled drug
- Listing of allergies if any and reactions or negative interactions with foods or drugs
- Specific instructions from prescriber how medication is to be given
- Name, address, telephone number and signature of authorized prescriber ordering the drug
- Name, address, telephone number, signature and relationship to the child of the parents giving permission for the administration of the drug by a staff member.

Please note that there are many variations of the medication administration form that medical providers have access to. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure the medication administration form clearly states that it is for licensed child care centers and has all the required information as mentioned above. Please understand that your child may not be able to attend if he/she does not have the proper authorization.

All medications must be in their original child resistant safety container and clearly labeled with child's name, name of prescription, date of prescription, and directions for use. Equipment and medications prescribed to treat asthma, administer glucagon, control seizures, or as an emergent first line of defense medication against an allergic response or a diabetic reaction will be stored in a safe manner, inaccessible to children to allow for quick access in an emergency. All other medications will be stored in a locked container and, if directed by a manufacturer, refrigerated. Controlled medications will be stored in accordance with 21a-262-10 of the RCSA. Only personnel authorized to administer medication will be provided with the means to access the locked medications. Non-prescription topical medications will be stored away from food and inaccessible to children.

Program staff responsibilities include, but are not limited to, ensuring the medication administration form is complete and that the medication being received matches the medication orders and stored as directed.

The program staff will keep accurate documentation of all medications administered. but not limited in the documentation are:

- Name, address and DOB of the child
- Name of the medication and dosage
- Pharmacy name and prescription number
- Name of authorized prescriber
- The date & time the medication was administered
- The dose that was administered
- The level of cooperation of the child
- Any medications errors

- Food and medication allergies
- Signature of the staff administering
- Any comments

Parents will be notified by Seesaw, text or call when/if a child has been administered any prescription medication.

Parents will be notified immediately of a medication error by phone call and notified in writing not later than seventy-two hours after the medication error occurred. Significant medication errors will be reported immediately to the office by telephone and in writing no later than the next business day.

Program staff are trained in the appropriate methods of administration of medications by a physician, physician assistant, APRN, or RN. The facility will have program staff trained in the specific method of administration of medication when a child with a written order from an authorized prescriber is on site. At no time is an untrained program staff allowed to administer prescription medications.

All unused or expired medication will be returned to the parent/guardian or disposed of if it is not picked up within one week following the termination of the order. We will consult with our Health Consultant on the proper way to dispose of controlled substances. All medications disposed of will be made in the presence of at least one witness and a written record of the medication destroyed will be kept for three years and signed by both parties.

Injuries

Little Blessings Preschool is committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment for all children. While minor injuries can occur during normal childhood play and learning experiences, all injuries and incidents will be handled promptly, documented appropriately, and communicated clearly with families in accordance with Connecticut Office of Early Childhood (OEC) licensing regulation.

Parents/caregivers will be notified within one hour of any injury via Seesaw or phone call. A “boo-boo”/incident report will be provided for parent/caregiver signature by the end of the school day or the following school day.

What to Bring

Please bring at least one change of clothes, socks and shoes. Please label all items brought from home with your child’s name to prevent items from becoming misplaced or lost. We are not responsible for lost or damaged items.

Toys from Home

We request that you do not allow your child to bring toys from home into the center unless they are part of a show-and-tell activity.

Clothing

Please dress your child in practical clothing that allows for freedom of movement and is appropriate for the weather. Your child will be involved in a variety of activities including: painting, outdoor play, sand, weather, and other sensory activities.

Our playground is used as an extension of the center, and daily programs are conducted outside whenever weather permits. Flip-flops are not appropriate for center play and make it difficult for your child to participate in some activities.

Guidance for Meals and Snacks

“Snack” means a light meal containing two (2) meal components/ food items

“Meal” means the food served and eaten in one sitting containing three (3) meal components/food items for breakfast and five (5) meal components/food items for lunch.

Early 3s and Pre K 3 will have one snack during the school day.

Pre K 4 and Pre K 5 will have one snack and one meal during the school day.

Parents must supply their child’s snack and lunch box.

Food Allergies

If your child has a food allergy, **you must notify us in writing, with supporting documentation from a physician.**

Food allergies can be life threatening and each child with a food allergy must have an action plan for emergency care completed by the family physician.

WE ARE A NUT FREE FACILITY!

Prohibited Substances

The use of alcohol or illegal drugs is prohibited on the center’s premises. Possession of illegal substances or unauthorized potentially toxic substances is prohibited. Any adult who appears to be inebriated, intoxicated, or otherwise under the influence of mind-altering or polluting substances is required to leave the premises immediately.

Dangerous Weapons

A dangerous weapon is a gun, knife, razor, or any other object, which by the manner it is used or intended to be used, is capable of inflicting bodily harm. Families, children, staff or guests (other than law

enforcement officers) possessing a dangerous weapon will not be permitted onto the premises.

In cases that clearly involve a gun, or any other weapon on our premises, the police will be called and the individual(s) involved will be immediately removed from the premises. This policy applies to visible or concealed weapons.

Child Custody

Without a court document, both parents/guardians have equal rights to custody. We are legally bound to respect the wishes of the parent/guardian with legal custody based on a certified copy of the most recent court order, active restraining order, or court-ordered visitation schedule. We will not accept the responsibility of deciding which parent/guardian has legal custody where there is no court documentation.

Celebrations, Birthdays & Holidays

We enjoy making your child's birthday special! You may join us in the classroom during this special time to do a craft, share a special treat or read a book to your child's class

We encourage families to join us in the classroom to celebrate different cultures, special talents and holidays that your family participates in! Please schedule time in advance with your child's teacher.

Field Trips

Field trips are defined, per the Office of Early Childhood, as any space that is unlicensed and not inspected by the Office of Early Childhood at the same address as the childcare site.

We use unlicensed and uninspected spaces within our property for learning opportunities. We often visit the sanctuary when practicing for concerts/events or the garden in the upper parking lot when exploring nature. These spaces have been walked through and assessed for any health or safety hazards to children. There are always clear expectations set for the children with reminders when we enter these spaces.

Communication

Seesaw: We will use this app to communicate urgent matters, upcoming events, classroom activities and other information pertaining to your child's classroom.

Email: Parents must provide an email address that you use regularly so that we may send you announcements, event invitations, newsletters and general updates.

The director's phone number is provided on the emergency plans form. This phone number is only to be used in emergency situations.

Family Partnership

Parent Bulletin Boards: Located near our school entrance, bulletin boards provide center news, upcoming events, faculty changes, holiday closing dates, announcements, etc.

Newsletters: Quarterly newsletters provide center news, events, announcements, etc. These newsletters are posted on the Parent Board and emailed to parents.

Calendars: A school year calendar and monthly class calendars are made available to parents through email and on our website. These calendars provide important information about school events/activities, school breaks and holidays.

Meet & Greets: Meet & Greets are scheduled for each class at the beginning of the school year. Families are encouraged to drop in anytime between 9:30 and 11:00 am and visit their child's classroom, meet the teachers and other families.

Conferences: Family & teacher conferences occur once a year. During this conference, we will discuss your child's strengths, likes and dislikes, and styles of learning. We will work together to set goals for your child's growth and development. You may request additional conferences regarding your child's progress at any time. We encourage you to communicate any concerns.

Access to Program and Facility

Parents and caregivers will be buzzed into the building via the preschool entrance. They will check in with the office and sign in and out of the building. If you are interested in visiting your child's classroom, please schedule this time with your child's teacher.

Respectful Behavior

Little Blessings Preschool is committed to each student's success in learning within a caring, responsive, and safe environment that is free of discrimination, violence, and bullying. Our center works to ensure that all students have the opportunity and support to develop to their fullest potential and share a personal and meaningful bond with people in the school community.

Thoughtful direction and planning ahead are used to prevent problems and encourage appropriate behavior. Communicating consistent, clear rules and involving children in problem solving help children develop their ability to become self-disciplined. We encourage children to be fair, to be respectful of other people, of property, and to learn to understand the results of their actions.

All children and families will be treated with respect and dignity. In return, we expect the same from all of our families. We will not tolerate disrespectful, hostile or aggressive behavior towards staff, students, or other families. The Director reserves the right to involve the Board of Directors in order to review the situation and work toward an appropriate solution. If this occurs, you may be asked to control your behavior or to remove your children from our care.

Discipline Policy

The goal of discipline is to help the child develop self-control and move toward appropriate social behavior. Examples of developmentally appropriate methods utilized for resolving conflict are:

✓ Positive guidance

When disputes arise among children or between a child and program staff, the program staff will encourage a “talking out” process where the goal is to acknowledge feelings and find solutions using the children’s ideas wherever possible.

✓ Setting clear limits

Program staff will encourage and model positive behavior, positive reinforcement, the use of peer support and clearly defined rules.

✓ Redirection

A child who may be aggressive or who is disruptive or destructive of other children’s work may be asked to make an activity choice in another area. Program staff will continuously supervise children during disciplinary actions. Program shall not be of abusive, neglectful, corporal, humiliating or frightening treatment or punishment including, but not limited to, spanking, slapping, pinching, shaking or striking a child under any circumstances. No child will be physically restrained unless it is necessary to protect the safety or health of the child or others, using least restrictive methods, as appropriate.

Challenging Behavior

Children are guided to treat each other and adults with self-control and kindness. Each student at Little Blessings Preschool has a right to:

- Learn in a safe and friendly place
- Be treated with respect
- Receive the help and support of caring adults

When a child becomes verbally or physically aggressive, we intervene immediately to protect all of the children. Our usual approach to helping children with challenging behaviors is to show them how to solve problems using appropriate interactions. When discipline is necessary, it is clear, consistent and understandable to the child.

Physical aggression toward staff, including punching, slapping, spitting, throwing objects and unsafe behavior such as running away will not be tolerated. If such behavior occurs, the parents or guardian will be contacted and required to pick up the child for the remainder of the day.

If aggressive behavior continues after a behavior support plan has been implemented, disenrollment from the program may be considered.

The health and safety of all staff and students remains our top priority.

Notification of Behavioral Issues to Families

If a child's behavior/circumstance is of concern, communication will begin with the parents as the first step to understanding the child's individual needs and challenges. We will work together to evaluate these needs in the context of our program.

If a child's behavior or circumstances continue to present ongoing concerns, the Director reserves the right to involve the Board of Directors in order to review the situation and work toward an appropriate solution.

On rare occasions, a child's behavior may warrant the need to find a more suitable setting for care.

Examples of such instances include:

- A child appears to be a danger to others.
- Continued care could be harmful to, or not in the best interest of the child as determined by a medical, psychological, or social service personnel.
- Undue burden on our resources and finances for the child's accommodations for success and participation

Biting

Biting is a normal stage of development that is common among infants and toddlers – and sometimes even among preschoolers. It is something that most young children will try at least once.

When biting happens, our response will be to care for and help the child who was bitten and to help the biter learn a more appropriate behavior. Our focus will not be on punishment for biting, but on effective behaviors that address the specific reason for biting.

Notes will be written to the family of the child who was bitten and the biter's family. We will work together with the families of each to keep them informed and to develop strategies for change.

Abuse and Neglect Policy

Our program staff have a responsibility to prevent child abuse and neglect of any children involved in our center.

1. Definition:

Child Abuse includes:

- Any non-accidental physical or mental injury (i.e. shaking, beating, burning)
- Any form of sexual abuse (i.e. sexual exploitation)
- Neglect of a child (i.e. failure to provide food, clothing, shelter, education, mental care, appropriate supervision)
- Emotional abuse (i.e. excessive belittling, berating, or teasing which impairs the child's psychological growth)
- At risk behavior (i.e. placing a child in a situation which might endanger him by abuse or neglect).

Child Abuse is defined as:

A child who has had:

- Non-accidental physical injuries inflicted upon him
- Injuries which are at variance with the history given of them
- Is in a condition, which is the result of maltreatment, such as, but not limited to, malnutrition, sexual exploitation, and deprivation of necessities, emotional maltreatment or cruel punishment.

Child neglect is defined as:

A child who has been:

- Abandoned
- Denied proper care and attention physically, educationally, emotionally or morally - Allowed to live under circumstances, conditions or associations injurious to his well being (CT statutes 46b-120)

2. Program staff responsibilities:

As childcare providers we are mandated by law to report **any suspicion** that a child is being abused, neglected or at risk.

3. Specifics on reporting a suspected case of abuse or neglect

- Call the Department of Children and Families (open 24 hours a day) at 1-800-842-2288.
- The reporter's name is required but may be kept confidential.

Information needed:

- Name of child/Date of birth
- Address of child
- Phone number of child
- Name of parents or guardians
- Address of parents or guardians
- Phone number of parents or guardians
- Relevant information such as: physical or behavioral indicators, nature and extent of injury, maltreatment or neglect
- Exact description of what the reporter has observed
- Time and date of incident
- Information about previous injuries, if any
- Circumstances under which reporter learned of abuse
- Name of any person suspected of causing injury
- Any information reporter believes would be helpful
- Any action taken to help or treat the child
- Seek medical attention for the child – if needed

Mandated reporters must report orally to DCF or a law enforcement agency within 12 hours of suspecting that a child has been abused or neglected. Within 48 hours of making the report, the mandated reporter must submit a written report (DCF – 136) to DCF.

Program staff are protected by law from discrimination or retaliation for reporting suspected abuse or neglect (CT General Statutes, Section 17a-101e).

All phone calls to DCF shall be documented and kept on file at the center. A copy of all statements from staff and the DCF-136 shall also be kept on file.

4. The management of this program supports a zero tolerance for abuse and neglect and will implement immediate action should there be an allegation that a program staff member abused or neglected a child.

The administration will protect the child, including immediate notification of a parent or guardian, once there is an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child in our program.

Any program staff member accused of abuse or neglect may be immediately removed from his or her position until DCF's investigation is completed. Based on whether the allegations were substantiated or not, the program staff would either be dismissed from his/her position or allowed to return to work.

5. Program staff training:

Program staff will be required to attend an annual program staff mandated reporter training. This training will focus on the steps for reporting suspected abuse and neglect, the role of a mandated reporter, and the recognition and prevention of child maltreatment, abuse and neglect. All new program staff will be trained in these procedures prior to their start in the classroom.

6. Provisions for informing families of abuse and neglect policy:

A copy of this policy will be included in our parent information packet, and each family will be given a copy upon enrollment.

When an accusation of abuse or neglect by a program staff member is made, the Director must immediately inform the parents or guardians that a report has been made to DCF. Health care officials may need to talk to a child's parents to access the cause of the child's injuries and offer support and guidance.

Child To Staff Ratios

Children are supervised at all times.

We maintain the following standards for child to staff ratios:

| Age | Child to Staff | Maximum Group Size |
|---------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 24-32 Months | 5 to 1 | 10 |
| 3 years old | 10 to 1 | 20 |
| 4-5 years old | 10 to 1 | 20 |

Supervision of Children 19a-79-3a(d)(5)

Supervision Policy

In classrooms where children are under the age of 3 years old, the program staff/child ratio is 1 program staff for every 4 children under the age of 2 years old and/or 1 program staff for every 5 children 2 years old up to the age of 3. At no time should the group size exceed 8 children under the age of 2 years old and/or 10 children the age of 2 years old up to the age of 3.

In preschool classrooms where children are between the ages of 3 years old to 5 years old the program staff/ child ratio is 1 program staff for every 10 children over the age of three years old. At no time shall the group size exceed 20 children over the age of three years old, even if ratios are being observed.

In school age only classrooms where school aged children are enrolled in a public or private school kindergarten up to the age of 12 years old the program staff/ child ratio is 1 program staff for every 15 children. At no time shall the group size exceed 30 school aged children, even if ratios are being observed.

Group size shall be observed in the classroom, gym, bathrooms, and outside. Children must be always supervised by sight and sound including nap time and during transportation. Program staff shall position themselves to see as many children as possible. When there is a mixed age group, the lower required ratio and group size for the age of the youngest child shall prevail.

NO CHILD/CHILDREN SHOULD BE LEFT ALONE AT ANY TIME

Curriculum & Learning

Learning Environment

We provide a rich learning environment with curricula that are developmentally appropriate to the specific ages in each classroom. We have a flexible day routine that allows children to advance at their own pace. We strongly believe that learning happens through play. Learning and exploring are hands-on and are facilitated through interest areas. Our program is designed to enhance children's development in the following areas: creativity, self-expression, decision-making, problem-solving, responsibility, independence, and reasoning. We encourage openness to that which is different from us, and the ability to work and play with others.

Curriculum & Assessment

Children at Little Blessings Preschool will follow a flexible daily schedule that meets the individual needs of the diverse population of children and families served by our program by following developmentally appropriate practices which include; children with cultural, language and developmental differences.

The daily schedule will include indoor and outdoor physical activities which are planned around the children's interests and needs. These activities will allow for both fine and gross motor development.

The daily schedule will include opportunities for problem-solving experiences that help to formulate language development and sensory discrimination.

Children will have the opportunity to express their own ideas and feeling through creative experiences in all parts of the program, including:

- ✓ Cultural learning experiences
- ✓ Child initiated and staff-initiated experiences
- ✓ Exploration and discovery
- ✓ Varied choices in materials and equipment
- ✓ Individual and small group activities
- ✓ Rest, sleep or quiet activity
- ✓ Nutritious meals and snacks
- ✓ Toileting and clean up
- ✓ Moderate and vigorous outdoor physical activities for children 3 years and older, unless the child has a disability or developmental delay

Children under two years old will not have access to cell phones, laptops and computers that are capable of playing video games. Program staff will restrict access to cell phones, laptops and computers for children ages two and up, unless it is for educational or physical activities.

Little Blessings Preschool uses the Connecticut Early Learning and Developmental Standards (CTELDS) to design a developmentally appropriate learning environment. As part of this curriculum, we gather information about each child's developmental abilities and evaluate progress so we can modify and adjust what we are doing in our classroom so as to deliver the best individualized instruction for each child. This evaluation is communicated to families periodically during the school year using various formal and informal tools, forms, and resources.

For information about your child's day, please check seesaw.

Outdoor Play

Weather permitting; we conduct 20-30 minutes of supervised outdoor play a day for all children. Please dress your child for the weather and ground conditions. You are welcome to keep extra shoes/rain boots and clothing at school. Children are accounted for at all times.

Transitions

Your child's transition in childcare should be a positive and exciting learning adventure. We will work with you and your child to ensure the smoothest possible transition occurs as new routines and new people are introduced.

Electronic Media

Electronic Media are limited to 5 minutes or less per day per child. Internet sites and software are pre-screened to contain non-violence and high-quality educational content.

Emergency Plans

MEDICAL:

In case of a medical emergency, a qualified program staff member will attend to first aid as needed. Another program staff member will notify the family of the child. Attempts will be made to consult with the child's physician/dentist. If neither is available, the program's medical consultants will be contacted. For extreme emergencies, 911 will be called. An ambulance will take the child and a program staff member to the nearest hospital. The child's emergency permission form will be brought with them. A program staff member will notify the family or alternate pick-up person to meet the child at the emergency room. Additional program staff will be called in if necessary to maintain required ratios.

FIRE/EVACUATION:

In the event of a fire or other emergency situation, evacuation from the building will be through the closest fire exit. Program staff will be responsible for supervising the children under their care and leading them to the fire exit. Immediately, the group will walk to (the designated area) safely away from the building, and line up to take a name to face attendance. Director or person in charge will be responsible for taking (the sign-in and out sheets or make available the computer access to such documentation), portable first aid kit, cell phone and emergency files with them. Should it not be possible to return into the facility, staff and program staff will walk children to Uncle D's Diner. Parents will be notified and directed to the evacuation location to pick up their children. Ratios will be maintained at all times and two program staff 18 years or older will remain with the children until all children are picked up.

SHELTER IN PLACE:

In the event of severe weather, such as tornadoes, hurricanes, winter storm, or any other unsafe situation where evacuation is not possible, staff, program staff, and children will remain indoors in a safe location away from closed windows and doors. Program staff will have appropriate supplies available for the comfort and engagement of the children. First aid program staff will be on hand to administer first aid, as needed, until emergency personnel can arrive. Parents will be notified after the immediate danger has passed.

LOCK-DOWN:

Should an emergency or threat that involves potential violence in or around the facility requires the need to stay put, the director/person in charge will notify the staff by text, phone call, or walkie talkie that they should begin a lock-down procedure. 911 will be called.

Each program staff is responsible for the children in their care at that moment. The program staff will gather the children to the safest area of the room, away from any windows or doors. Doors and windows will be locked, lights turned off, and curtains/blinds closed to all interior windows.

Program staff will calm the children and help them stay quiet. Attendance will be taken periodically.

The director/person in charge will remain in constant communication with the emergency personnel.

Parents are not permitted access to the facility until it is determined that it is safe to do so.

During the emergency, the director/person in charge will do all they can to notify parents by Seesaw, however, certain emergency situations may preclude this possibility.

Wait for all clear from the emergency personnel. The director/person in charge will communicate all clear to staff, program staff, and children.

Parents will be notified by Seesaw after all clear has been given by the emergency personnel.

Continuation of Operations:

If an emergency causes the facility to be unsafe for childcare, program staff will notify parents and refer them to 211 for other childcare options. The Operator will submit an initial application for Change in Location and will notify the Office of Early Childhood when an alternate location has been identified so that an inspection can be completed as soon as possible so it can be approved for childcare.

Multi-hazard Emergency Drills:

A multi-hazard emergency will be practiced at least annually which includes the demonstration of all staff, program staff, and children sheltering, locking down and evacuating the facility.

Lost or Missing Child

In the unlikely event that a child becomes lost or separated from a group, all available staff will search for the child. If the child is not located within minutes, the family and the police will be notified.

Administrative Oversight

We strive to ensure that the day-to-day operations of our program are aligned with the current Connecticut Statutes and Regulations for Child Care Centers and Group Child Care Homes, the Program Policies, Plans and Procedures, Program Philosophy and best practice. Our program works hard to ensure that all children, families, and program staff have a daily positive experience.

Most concerns can be resolved by:

1. Discussing the issue with the classroom teacher.
2. Discussing the issue with the program director or director's designee.
Name of Designated Director: Shelby Moschini
 - Telephone #: (860)828-9520 Email: LBPdirector@bethanycovenant.org

Name of Alternate Person in Charge: Little Blessings Board Preident/Vice President

- Telephone #: (860)828-9520 Email: LBPboard@bethanycovenant.org

At times if a concern or issue that is raised may need more attention, a meeting between the parties can be set at a mutually agreed upon time with the parties which can include the parents/ guardians, classroom teacher/ program staff, the head teacher/ alternate person in charge, and the director. We appreciate other perspectives and are committed to continuous quality improvements that will make the experience within our program a positive and nurturing one for all.

At any time during this meeting should there be an impasse and a resolution cannot be reached the matter will be brought to the attention of the administrative leadership team which includes: the executive director, the board of directors and the owner.

3. If the problem is not resolved you may contact the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood Licensing Division.

In case of an emergency, the program will notify the Licensing Division as soon as the emergency is under control.

- ✓ By phone to the Complaint Desk at (800) 282-6063 or (860)500-4450 or
- ✓ By filing online at www.ctoec.org/contact-us/file-a-complaint

In case of abuse/neglect or life-threatening situations the program will call 911 or the Department of Children and Families (DCF) at (800) 842-2288 and the OEC Division of Licensing.

All inspection reports and corrective action plans are available for your review:

- ✓ At your child care program
- ✓ Online at www.211childcare.org, or
- ✓ By FOI request from the OEC Licensing Division

Center Policies

We reserve the right to edit and alter policies as needed throughout the school year, with notice provided to students and families when appropriate.