

♥ Welcome to Preschool!

Bethel School District
Parent Orientation Handbook
September, 2019

WELCOME

On behalf of Bethel Early Learning Program, we look forward to building a relationship with your family and getting to know your child. Preschool is a unique introduction to education that allows parents and teachers to work together to offer children the best start. We encourage parents and families to share their time, culture and experience.

Fostering relationships, building autonomy and resilience and nurturing a love of learning are the foundations of our program.

Please, join us in what will be a year of adventure, discovery, development and growth.

Vision Mission and Values

Vision

Bethel preschool programs have a focus on providing inclusive high-quality education for children from all backgrounds. Every student; competent, confident, and compassionate, prepared for a world yet to be imagined.

Mission

To provide a continuum of learning environments designed to promote each child's own individual social, emotional, physical, academic and cognitive development. in a safe learning environment, which fosters a child's natural desire to explore, discover, create, and become a lifelong learner.

Values

Children develop knowledge of their world through active interactions with staff, peers, materials, and events.

Learning is sequential, building on prior understandings and experiences

Learning proceeds at different rates in each area and each child; children will show a range of skills and understandings in any one area of development.

Learning in each area is interconnected. Young children learn best through experiences, which incorporate several areas of development.

Learning is embedded in a culture. Children learn best when their learning activities are rooted in cultural context.

Learning begins in the family, continues in early learning education settings

All children have the potential to achieve the learning standards with appropriate supports and instruction, and become ready for kindergarten

Transportation & Volunteering in Bethel Schools

Many factors are used to help determine where and when (morning or afternoon) your child attends school, including; where you live, length of bus ride, the number of children in the classroom, and your child's needs.

Transportation: Transportation will contact you regarding the pick-up and drop-off times and locations for your child. During the first few days of class please allow the bus drivers approximately five or ten extra minutes, both ways, as everyone will be getting used to the new routes and schedules and this may cause some delays.

Only individuals listed on file and presenting picture identification will be allowed to pick up your child.

If your child is to be picked up from school, please send a note with your child and follow-up with a phone call to your child's teacher. If no note or phone call is received your child will be put on the bus.

It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to call the classroom and transportation at (253) 683-5900 if your child will not be at school.

Volunteering: If you would like to volunteer in your child's school, a volunteer application/background check and proof of MMR vaccination *must* be completed and approved prior to volunteering. Please contact your Family Support Specialist for more information or go online to bethelvolunteers.hrmlplus.net

Health, Dress Code and School Closures

Medication administration at school:

- Only medications prescribed by a physician are to be administered at school.
- Medication must be in its original container from the pharmacy and the label must contain the following information:
 1. Name of student
 2. Name of medication and dosage
 3. Directions for giving medication at school
 4. Name of physician who prescribed the medication
 5. Date medication was prescribed and expiration date
- At the end of the prescription time/expiration date, parents will be notified to pick up the medication and/or bring a current prescription if needed. Medication must be at school in order for the child to attend school.
- A copy of the doctor's orders must be brought in to create the student's health care plan before the student may start attending school.

Please keep your children home if:

- They have a **runny nose with green/yellow discharge**.
- They have a **temperature of 100 degrees (F)** or more.
- They are **vomiting**.
- They have a **rash, lice or nits**.
- They have **diarrhea**.
- They have an **eye infection**.
- They have a **sore throat, barking cough or earache**.
- **Unusually tired, "not feeling good," pale or lack of appetite**.

A phone call home will be made if your child shows these symptoms while at school and you will be asked to pick up your child.

Dress Code Reminders:

Please dress your children in:

- "Play clothes" and weather-appropriate clothing (i.e. warm clothes in cold weather).
- Tennis or closed-toed shoes (no slip-ons/ flip-flops or high heels).

Weather closures: School closures due to weather will be broadcasted on the local news and radio stations. The information will also be found on our district emergency hotline at 253- 683-6001, the district website at www.bethelsd.org, and the district Facebook page.

Attendance

Preschool encourages regular school attendance and records your child's attendance each day. However, sick children do not belong in school, so if your child is ill, please keep him/her home. Parents/guardians are expected to call preschool staff when their child is ill and will not be attending class that day, or will be late to class. Please call staff before class begins.

If parents/guardians do not call to report an absence, preschool staff will call to confirm the child's absence and note if it is excused or unexcused. Attendance is monitored daily and follow-up will occur for extended absences or irregular attendance.

Every effort will be made by preschool staff to keep the child in preschool.

After the fourth consecutive unexcused absence, a home visit to discuss attendance issues will occur with the parents/guardians. After twenty consecutive absences, your child will be withdrawn from the program.

Child Abuse and Neglect

Washington State law and District policy requires all staff to file a report with Children's Protective Services (CPS) if they suspect a child has suffered child abuse or neglect. All staff are mandated reporters.

Child Support and Guidance

The purpose of support and guidance is to create an environment in which children can experience success. In such an environment, children are encouraged, supported, respected and nurtured. Children also gain the skills to control their own behaviors, to resolve conflicts with others and to understand the impact of their choices. Behavior support is a partnership between program staff and families. Site staff will use positive guidance techniques. When guidance situations do arise positive guidance techniques, including redirecting children and assisting children to solve interactions with others through peaceful negotiations will be used. Staff will also communicate and work with parents to better understand and resolve conflict situations.

When there is a concern for physical safety in the classroom and the suggested strategies do not work, staff will develop a written plan and hold a family conference to develop an individual plan for the child as soon as possible.

Staff use many techniques to assist children in resolving conflicts. Although methods vary depending on children's ages and the severity of the situation, all teach problem-solving skills and instill an intrinsically motivated sense of right and wrong. Teachers use the following techniques when dealing with conflict situations:

- **Limit setting:** Children are given basic, clear, and concise rules to guide their behavior. Boundaries and expectations expand as children develop.
- **Consistency:** So children know what to expect, limits and expectations are consistent throughout the classes, and all adults respond in a similar way to conflict situations.
- **Tone:** A kind yet serious tone delivered by intervening adults reinforces children's sense of security and lets them know the situation is under control.
- **Modeling:** Adults clearly demonstrate compassionate, caring behaviors that set examples for children to follow.
- **Passive intervention:** Teachers give children time to work through their own problems, but are there to help if things escalate to destructive or aggressive behavior.
- **Physical intervention:** Children are physically separated if they begin to hurt each other.
- **Identifying/ interpreting:** Teachers clarify problems, diffuse tension, and facilitate problem solving.

- **Validating feelings:** Acknowledging one's own emotions and those of other children facilitate learning.
- **Generating options/solutions:** Children are given the tools to settle conflicts (negotiate, make retribution, collaborate, etc.).
- **Redirection:** A request to stop a negative behavior is accompanied by a suggestion for an appropriate behavior to replace it.
- **Natural consequences:** Teachers point out and reinforce natural consequences as they occur. Children see the results of their own behavior and begin to modify it accordingly. "You threw sand after we asked you not to. Now you need to leave the sandbox and find a different area to play in."

Classroom/Family Celebration

Preschool respectively honors and supports classroom celebrations. We respect the diversity of families and value inclusivity. For this reason, activities and celebrations will be designed and planned so all children and parents/guardians can participate. The preschool curriculum emphasizes experiences and materials representing the everyday lives of all children in the classroom.

Organized observations and celebrations of commercialized or religious holidays, holiday symbols and birthdays will not occur. However, preschool staff and other adults in the classroom will positively acknowledge children and parent's spontaneous comments about holiday observances and family or community celebrations. We have many celebrations in preschool that are generally focused around changing seasons and celebrate our friends and families on an individual basis.

Families, extended families and the community are welcome to share interests, hobbies and cultural information. For example, family celebrations and events. All sharing sessions will be discussed first with preschool staff to ensure agreement with the classroom/family celebration policy. If parent/guardians have a concern about this policy, they should discuss it with a preschool staff person at their site. If concerns are not resolved, then the parent/guardian can be referred to the Preschool Director.

Parent Concerns

Parents/guardians may present concerns to the appropriate person(s) about the preschool program to any preschool staff member or the Preschool Director. Concerns will be processed as rapidly as possible. Names of all site staff and administrators, as well as the process for contacting them shall be given to all parents/guardians at orientation or upon request.

Confidentiality

All preschool and family information obtained by preschool staff is confidential. For programs administered by a school district, written consent will not be necessary in order to share routine information (e.g., transportation and emergency information, immunization records, health summary, health screening results, information useful for classroom planning, etc.) within the district. Routine information will be shared within the district to facilitate preschool activities, kindergarten transition and enrollment.

Drug and Alcohol-Free Working Place

In compliance with the Federal Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988, all school facilities and all of its related activities are drug and alcohol free. All preschool volunteers and parents/guardians will abide by and acknowledge that all preschool activities being drug and alcohol free.

Safe Arrival and Departure

The preschool staff must release the student only to the adult(s) for whom written authorization has been given. This information is maintained in the child's record. In an emergency, if the child's parent or guardian has verbally authorized classroom staff or the transportation department to release the child to an individual not on the written authorization list, they may do so providing the individual has proper identification. Only adults may pick up a child from preschool. If the staff member who releases the child does not know the adult, identification is required to assure that the adult is properly identified and is authorized to pick up the child. All parents/guardians are expected to call the preschool when their child will be absent from class. If the parent/guardian does not notify the staff of absence, staff will contact parent/guardian or emergency contact within 30 minutes of the start of class to confirm the child's absence. Preschool staff members must be present when children board their buses. If a parent/guardian transports a child, they must deliver the child to the classroom or to a preschool staff member. Preschool children will only be released to a person that is 18 or older. Children may arrive within 5 minutes of their class start time and must be picked up within 5 minutes of class of end time. ***Children picked up at the preschool or at the bus stop will only be released to parents/guardians, or persons designated in writing as having permission from the parent/guardian.*** Program Contacts

Sally Keeley – Director
(253) 683-6923

Kristin Ray-Early Learning Coordinator
(253) 683-5557

Kayley Stone – Secretary to the Director
(253) 683-5550

Christina Cooper – ECE Special Education Coordinator
(253) 683-5854

Bethel School District is an Equal Opportunity employer and complies with all federal rules and regulations, including Title IX, RCW 28A.640, RCW 28A.642 and Section 504. Bethel does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, honorably discharged veteran or military status, sexual orientation including gender expression or identity, the presence of any disability, or use of a trained service animal by a person with a disability in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Contact the Assistant Director of Human Resources at (253) 683-6023 or the Executive Director of Special Services