

Bethany Preschool

Parent Handbook

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Visit our Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/bethanypreschooldsm/>

Bethany Preschool ensures all guardians can access and clearly understand all content of this handbook as well as other documents provided by the school. Please let us know if translations, reading assistance or other assistance are needed.

Welcome to Bethany Preschool

Thank you for your interest in the preschool program. We look forward to working with you and your child in the future. The following information is designed to better acquaint you with our program. Bethany Preschool is licensed by the State of Iowa and has been in existence since September 4th, 1984. We have included information to assist you in making educational choices for your child.

Preschool

Monday, Wednesday, Friday

9:00 am – 11:30 am

For three and young four-year-old students

Students in this class will focus on:

- Sing simple songs
- Name and match colors
- Name and match shapes
- Tell name and age
- Listen to short stories
- Follow simple directions
- Express feelings
- Play cooperatively with others
- Running
- Jumping
- Balancing
- Recognize up to ten letters, especially letters in their name
- Put toys away
- Put shoes and jacket on (with help to zip)
- Verbally count to ten
- Identify numerals to five
- Copies simple patterns

Pre-K

Monday, Wednesday, Friday

12:30 pm – 3:00 pm

For students entering kindergarten next school year

Students in this class will focus on:

- Sing songs and do actions
- Know city of residence
- Express feelings verbally
- Share and take turns
- Manage classroom rules and routines
- Follow two step directions
- Sequence stories and pictures
- Walk backwards
- Stand and hop on one foot
- Identify and classify colors and shapes
- Writes first and last name
- Identify up to 20 upper and lower-case letters in random order
- Product correct sound for 10-20 letters
- Verbally count to 20
- Identifies numerals to 10
- Extends and creates simple patterns

**Bethany Preschool is licensed to have up to thirty students in each class offering*

Developmental Stages of Preschool Children

From **age 3 to age 5** children move through these stages. We'll be watching for these developments. You can watch for these at home, too.

Social/Emotional Development:

Sense of self – adjusting to new situations, demonstrating appropriate trust in adults, standing up for rights, recognizing and managing feelings appropriately

Responsibility for self and others – demonstrating self-direction and independence, taking responsibility for own well-being, respecting and caring for classroom environment and materials, following classroom rules and routines

Prosocial behavior - playing well with other children, recognizing feelings of others and responding appropriately, sharing and respecting rights of others, using thinking skills to resolve conflicts

Physical Development:

Gross motor - demonstrating basic locomotor skills, showing balance while moving, climbing up and down, pedaling and steering wheeled vehicles, demonstrating throwing, kicking, and catching skills

Fine motor - controlling small muscles in hands, coordinating eye-hand movements, using tools for writing and drawing

Cognitive Development

Learning and problem solving - observing objects and events with curiosity, approaching problems flexibly, showing persistence in approaching tasks, exploring cause and effect, applying knowledge or experience to a new concept

Logical thinking - classifying objects, comparing/measuring, arranging objects in a series, recognizing patterns and repeating them, showing awareness of position in space, using one-to-one correspondence, using numbers and counting

Representations and symbolic thinking - taking on pretend roles and situations, making believe with objects, making and interpreting representations

Language Development

Listening and speaking - hearing and discriminating the sounds of language, expressing self-using words and expanded sentences, understanding and following oral directions, answering questions, actively participating in conversations

Reading and writing - enjoying and valuing reading, demonstrating understanding of print concepts, demonstrating knowledge of the alphabet, using emerging reading skills to make meaning from print, comprehending and interpreting meaning from books and other texts, understanding the purpose of writing, writing letters and words.

Bethany Preschool

Philosophy and Statement of Purpose

The preschool program of Bethany Reformed Church is designated to serve as a ministry not only for our church but for our community. In doing so we are saying to our community that we recognize we are not an entity unto ourselves, but we have a mission to be of service, in a variety of ways, to those around us.

We recognize as well that the preschool years are extremely formative years in the life of a child. While the family life of that child is more influential, the preschool years are also a time of increased awareness of an interaction in the world beyond the family. The view of life a child receives during these years is largely determined by the child's experiences with his or her family and the child's increased experiences in the world. By providing a preschool environment where Christianity is experienced in a work and play setting, the positive self-awareness in the child's world will be enhanced.

While all components of the program will include pre-academic and language skills and will be well developed and planned, the two most important Christian principles of the preschool are (1.) developing a positive self-concept and (2.) increasing each child's ability to interact with others in a positive way.

Our developmentally based interest centers for each of our age groups provide "hands on" play activities and individualized participation in the areas of: socialization and dramatic play, art and creativity, literacy, manipulatives and mathematics, science and nature, and language development. In addition, we provide large group experiences in the above areas, as well as, music and movement.

As a Preschool Ministry, we recognize that each child is made in the image of God and thereby has a value more than all the world's riches. If a child can come away from our preschool showing increased self-respect and increased respect for others, viewing the world in a more positive way, having more self-confidence, and feeling that he or she is a unique person specially made by God, then, by God's grace, we have succeeded in providing the kind of program we intend.

Bethany Preschool Standards

The main goal of Bethany Preschool is to provide a pleasant atmosphere where three to five year old children can play and learn together.

- Bethany Preschool will keep records and reports on the staff, children, finances, and attendance.
- Bethany Preschool staff members will attend in-service staff training and continuing education classes each year in accordance with the State of Iowa and Bethany Preschool Board requirements.
- Bethany Preschool will enforce all safety and health policies.
- Bethany Preschool will provide a director and staff in accordance with state requirements.
- Bethany Preschool will provide a facility with a minimum of 35 square feet per child of indoor floor space.
- Bethany Preschool will have a designated program approved by the Preschool Board.
- Bethany Preschool will maintain an open-door policy. Parents are always welcomed and encouraged, both as visitors and participants.
- Bethany Preschool considers all information to be confidential.
- Bethany Preschool staff will report to the Department of Human Services if there is evidence or suspicion that a child has suffered sexual abuse, physical abuse, or neglect.
- Bethany Preschool will implement discipline and social guidance techniques that accentuate the positive.
- Bethany Preschool will plan and provide educational and entertaining community field trips.

Registration Policy

Bethany Preschool, in compliance with Iowa state standards, will require that ***a complete set of registration forms be on file on the first day a child attends school:***

- Completed Physical Examination Form signed by a physician
 - *A physical form is valid for one year from the date of the physical exam. If the physical “expires” before the end of the school year or the child returns for a second school year, a new physical must be done and the form turned into the preschool. To insure that a child’s Physical Examination is good for the entire school year, we suggest that you set up appointments in the early spring to have your child examined in June or early July.*
- Completed Immunization Form signed by a physician or health official
 - *Your physician or clinic must list all immunizations on the form. If the physician signing the form did not administer all of the immunizations, the name of the physician or clinic who did must appear opposite the vaccines he or she did administer. Also, some physicians prefer to complete their own physical examination form which includes a list of the child’s immunizations. This is fine, but the physician will need to complete an immunization form since we must have the form in our files.*
- Pick-Up Form
- Picture Release Form
- Travel and Activity Authorization
- Parental Emergency Dental Consent
- Parental Emergency Medical Consent
- Parent Statement of Handbook – Acknowledgement/Preschool Policies

For children attending Bethany Preschool for a second year, the state of Iowa requires that parents must complete new registration forms.

A very important part of the registration information is the “Pick-Up” form, which is designated to let us know who may pick up a child from school. For those individuals other than parents listed on the form, telephone numbers and relationship information must be provided. Also, state law does not allow us to keep a parent from picking up a child unless the adult(s) having custody of the child can provide us with a written court order showing that this parent is not to have any contact with the child. In that event, we should be provided with a copy of the document for the child’s file.

Enrollment Policy

Bethany Preschool accepts enrollments in the morning class of children turning 3 on or just before September 15th. We will also accept a child anytime during the year after they have turned 3 and are toilet trained, providing space is available.

Enrollment in our afternoon class is geared for 4 and 5 year olds who plan on attending kindergarten the following year. All children must be toilet trained prior to starting school.

There is a \$40.00 registration fee for children enrolling at Bethany Preschool. This fee is non-refundable and should be paid when you register your child for preschool.

Open Door Policy

Bethany Preschool maintains an “open-door” policy allowing parents or designated guardians of each enrolled child to stop in at any time to observe school activities and to see their child’s progress.

At the beginning of each school year it is usually helpful to the children if time is allowed for them to get oriented to school and to the school routine.

Transportation Policy

We do not provide transportation to and from preschool. If you are interested in carpooling, the director will have a file of those persons interested in doing so.

While your child is being transported during any field trips, the following policies will be in place:

- Parents may choose to ride along on the church bus or drive their personal vehicles to follow us or meet us at the field trip destination. They can also choose to transport their own child or allow their child to ride on the bus. They cannot transport any other preschool child as Iowa law would then require a background check, proof of valid driver’s license and insurance, and child restraining seats.
- When the church bus is used, we will seat 2 children per seat or 2 children with 1 adult on the outside of the seat. We will not exceed the bus’s maximum capacity of 40 persons.

Parental permission slips must be signed and on file for your child prior to each field trip. If a permission slip is not on file, your child will not be allowed to participate.

Drop Off & Pick Up Policy

Please enter the preschool using the RED preschool door on the south preschool wing. It is the parent's or designated driver's responsibility to walk the child into the building, sign the child in, hang up his/her coat, supervise the child's hand washing, and make sure the staff person on duty is aware that the child has arrived. They are also responsible for picking up the child inside the building, signing the child out, helping the child on with his/her coat, removing items from the child's basket, and making sure the staff is aware that the child is leaving the building.

Only the parent or persons designated by the parent will be allowed to pick up a child from preschool. If they unexpectedly find themselves unable to pick up the child, they should notify the teachers by calling the teacher's cell phone and advising the staff of the name of the person who will be picking up their child. If the person is not on the pick-up list or has not picked up the child before, they will be required to show proof of identification.

Use the parking lot to park your car. For the safety of the preschool children, driving and parking is prohibited under the carport, blocking the mailbox, and next to the sidewalk and building.

Class starts at 9:00 a.m. for the morning session and 12:30 p.m. for the afternoon session. Please keep in mind that the staff needs time to prepare prior to each session; and to clean up and reset for the next session, and eat lunch in the short time between the two sessions.

For the safety of your children, please do not drop off your child more than five (5) minutes prior to the start of his/her class as staff will not be available to tend to your child. To reinforce this policy the preschool door will be unlocked at 8:55 a.m. for the morning class and 12:25 p.m. for the afternoon class.

Dismissal time is 11:30 a.m. for the morning class and 3:00 p.m. for the afternoon class. If a teacher is required to stay with a child after dismissal, there will be a \$5.00 charge for the first 15 minutes past the dismissal time and an additional \$10.00 charge for each 15 minutes thereafter. The extra charge will be paid to that teacher and should be included in the next tuition payment. If you have an emergency, it is your responsibility to see that someone picks up your child at the scheduled time, or contact us so that we can help arrange a plan.

Please advise your child's grandparents, aunts & uncles, day care provider or anyone else who might be transporting your child to preschool of any of the above information that they may need to know as well.

Snow and Emergency Closings

Bethany Preschool follows the same snow and bad weather closings as Saydel School District. Local radio and television stations announce any Saydel weather closings.

Morning preschool will be canceled if Saydel is operating on a 1 or 2 hour delay or is closed for the day.

Afternoon preschool will be canceled if Saydel is closed for the day or announces prior to the start of the afternoon session that they plan to close early.

In uncertain weather conditions, Bethany Preschool will make every effort to notify you if we feel it is not safe for your child to be traveling to and from school. If you are unsure, call one of the teacher's cell phone or the school at 265-6962. Please remember that this is only preschool and to use your discretion for your own and your child's safety.

School Closing

Bethany Preschool follows the Saydel School calendar fairly closely for Christmas and Spring vacations. To be sure of our vacation times check your yearly calendar or monthly newsletter. Bethany Preschool **will be** in session on days that Saydel is off for conferences and in-service training.

Outdoor Play

On sunny days, **please apply sunscreen to your child** before they come.

Children will not be playing outside if the temperature or wind chill is below 25 degrees or if there is any snow on the ground. On days when the temperature and wind chill are above 25 degrees, playing outside may occur if time allows. You can check the temperature and wind chill factor at kcci.com.

Please bring clothing appropriate for the weather such as warm coat, mittens, hats, and scarves. All clothing items should be labeled with the child's name. Teachers will assist children in keeping track of their belongings. However, the preschool and staff cannot be responsible for lost, stolen or broken items. **If a child does not have appropriate outdoor clothing, they will not be allowed to go outside in order to protect their health and safety.**

Tennis shoes are recommended for safety reasons especially during outdoor play.

Health

If your child is vomiting, or has diarrhea, a fever, or any other symptoms of a contagious illness, please keep him or her at home. As soon as your pediatrician feels that it is in the best interest of your child and other children, he or she may return to school. **Children should be fever, vomit and diarrhea free for 24 hours before returning to school.** Since minor respiratory problems are common and danger is minimal, we do not require that your child stay home if he or she has a cold.

A phone call to the teacher's cell preschool office before class starts would be very much appreciated when your child is ill or will be absent. We will be concerned if he or she is not present. The office number is 265-6962. Please leave a message if no one is available to answer the phone.

Children who become ill while in our program will be isolated from the other children and parents and/or daycare providers will be contacted if possible. It will be the discretion of the Preschool Director to determine whether that child will remain at preschool. Such conditions as listlessness, an elevated temperature, or an unexplained rash could result in the child not remaining at preschool for the day. As a consideration to our other students and staff, we trust our parents will cooperate in enforcing this policy.

The Bethany Preschool will cooperate in your child's medication needs if possible. If your child is on medication, you will be asked to complete a form designating the amounts and times the medicine is to be administered. All medicine must be in its original container, labeled with your child's name. To assure that medicines are properly stored, give them to the staff person in charge of your child or the director. A staff person will return the medicine to you at the end of the day.

If there is a health emergency, the staff will take whatever action is needed to get the child treated by medically trained personnel. Parents will be contacted first if possible. If a parent cannot be immediately reached, the staff will use the parent's or doctor's instructions from the forms to get the necessary treatment. We will call 911 and attempt to have the child taken to the hospital of preference if possible. A staff member will accompany your child, while another will remain at the school and continue to attempt to contact parents. **PLEASE KEEP ALL MEDICAL INFORMATION UP TO DATE. MAKE SURE WE KNOW WHERE YOU CAN BE REACHED.**

(Health continued)

The Bethany Preschool will require, in compliance with state standards, that each child have an admission physical examination report signed by a licensed physician. This report shall include an immunization record. All forms, with the exception of the physical immunization forms, must be completed and on file before the child enters the program. The physical and immunization forms must be completed and returned the first day of attendance. Physicals and required immunizations for children up to kindergarten age are given by the Polk County Health Services for little or no cost. Call 243-4545 to set up an appointment.

Bethany Preschool has a written plan for medical emergencies in compliance to state regulations. See Bethany Preschool's Policies and Procedures Manual for complete written policy regarding health, safety, and medical emergencies.

Safety

The Bethany Preschool has written plans for emergencies. Fire and tornado emergency procedures are posted at strategic points throughout the preschool, and are practiced and documented monthly.

Snacks

Snacks will be served every preschool day with the children taking turns providing them on a rotation basis. Just prior to your child's turn to bring snacks, the child will bring home the snack bag. We ask that the snack bag be filled and brought back to school. Please provide enough snacks for everyone in your child's class, plus two extras as we occasionally have guests.

In order to meet Iowa state licensing guidelines, it is necessary that the snacks served meet state requirements for nutritional value and that we offer two healthy snack choices every preschool day. Parents may choose to bring 100% juice or 2% milk which can be considered as one of the choices. Bethany Preschool will keep juice and a snack on hand in case a child is unable to bring snack and/or drink on their scheduled day. Water will also be available to drink.

Once during the year, close to the child's birthday or half birthday if their birthday falls during the summer months, the child will be the V.I.P. (Very Important Person). A special snack bag will be sent home. It is not necessary to do anything out of the ordinary at this time unless you so desire. Cupcakes or cake are a favorite snack at birthdays or on other special occasions. Since state regulations will not allow us to count these as nutritional snacks, we suggest a healthy snack (fruit) *in addition* to the cake.

Healthy Snack Suggestions:

(Due to health issues, we require prepackaged items.)

- animal, snack, saltine or graham crackers
- pretzels
- store-bought breads (pumpkin, banana, etc.)
- cereal or cereal mix
- fruit
- prepackaged crackers with cheese spread (counts as 2 healthy snacks)

You can probably think of other healthy snack choices that are not listed. If you have any questions, please feel free to call the preschool director.

Unhealthy Snacks Not Considered Nutritious by the State:

- pop corn
- candy
- pudding
- Jell-O
- fruit snacks/roll-ups

Due to the hazard of possible choking and allergies, please refrain from bringing peanuts or peanut products.

Wellness Policy

Iowa law states that the Wellness Policy must address:

1. Nutrition Education Goals –

Bethany Preschool will provide ongoing, age appropriate, enjoyable nutrition education that is implemental in all curriculum areas.

2. Physical Activity Goals –

Bethany Preschool will provide daily physical education, including students with disabilities, in which students will engage in moderate to vigorous activity. Personnel shall not use physical activity or withhold physical activity as punishment.

3. Other School-based Activities that Promote Student Wellness Goals –

Bethany Preschool will offer classroom health education that reinforces and encourages skills to maintain a physically active lifestyle. Bethany will also provide opportunities for physical activities during classroom times, as well as during large motor time. Bethany will also provide parents with nutrition information and information on the importance of physical activity.

4. Nutrition Guidelines for All Foods Available on Campus –

Bethany Preschool will follow state guidelines on food and nutrition with regards to food available at preschool.

5. Plan for Measuring Implementation –

Bethany's director and preschool board will ensure compliance with established state nutrition and physical activity wellness policies.

Discipline Policy

Webster describes discipline first as “training of the mind or character; trained condition of order and obedience”. At Bethany Preschool, we believe that we are in the business of healthy character-building. We also believe that the happiest, most emotionally healthy children are those who know their boundaries and freedoms, and can realize the difference between the two. Such a child develops a positive self-concept based on his or her ever-expanding knowledge of his or her worthiness in the plan of a loving God and his respect for the worth of other human beings.

With this in mind, we see positive guidance for each child in orderly, mannerly conduct as a top teaching priority. Each teacher will consider it his or her privilege to both model and teach positive social skills which include healthy ways of interacting with others, resolving differences, and showing respect for others and their properties.

Children will not be allowed to engage in any behavior or actions which will harm themselves or another individual or interfere with another individual’s learning experience. Children will not be allowed to cause damage to the property of the church and preschool or another individual.

Discipline of the children will be handled in the following manner:

1. At the first sign of “trouble” a teacher will give a positive verbal warning to the young person(s) and if appropriate, suggest re-direction. If action involves children who are disagreeing, it is usually necessary to talk with them, find out the problem and see if they can come to a solution.
2. If the actions persist, a teacher will re-direct the child(ren) to a new activity.
3. If the child must be talked with about a specific behavior for the third time, it will be necessary for the child to “cool down” in a designated area of the room for a short time. Following the “cool down” period, a teacher will talk with the child again to explain rules and what behavior is expected.
4. If a child must be talked with on a continuing basis because of disciplinary problems, the director and teacher will arrange to meet with the student’s parents or guardian(s) in order to develop some mutual goals for the child and a plan (or plans) for parents and teachers to follow in order to reach the desired goals.

Discharge

In the unfortunate situation where a child is not able to respond positively to the rules of the preschool and where it is felt that his or her continual actions could result in injury to another person or to his or her own self, or in property damage to the church, preschool or individuals, it may be necessary to tell the child’s parents or guardian(s) that we can no longer allow the child to be part of Bethany Preschool.

Personal Items

➤ School Bag

- Each child should have a bag in which to carry things home. It should be easily opened and large enough to hold school papers. This can be purchased or homemade. **Please mark it with your child's name.** The bag should be brought each school day and will be hung on a hook in the hallway with the coats. It will make going home a lot more organized for all. The bag will be used to carry home any important notes, permission slips, and items they may have. **Parents should check the bag after each preschool session.**

➤ Baskets

- At school each child will be assigned a basket in which his/her papers, notes and sharing items will be kept for the day. It will be marked with his/her name and **should be checked each day by the parent or designated adult who is taking the child home.** The basket can also be used to store mittens or gloves and hats.

➤ Clothing

- **Play clothes** are appropriate dress. Remember, we will be using clay, paint, chalk and markers, and will be playing outside in good weather. We try to keep covered up but that doesn't always work. Children should be totally washable and not need to be worried about staying clean. **Tennis or rubber-soled shoes** are recommended for safety reasons on the playground, waxed floors, and for activities that involve a lot of movement.
- Clothing should be manageable to the children. We are available for bathroom help but prefer children to be totally independent with buckles, zippers, buttons, etc. Self-confidence comes from being able to "do it myself!" **Please leave an extra set of clothes in your child's backpack in case of restroom, snack or playtime accidents.**
- Please dress your child appropriately for the weather and to the preschool environment. Children will not be playing outside if the temperature or wind chill is below 25 degrees or if there is snow on the ground. On days when the temperature and wind chill are above 25 degrees, playing outside may occur if time allows. You can check the temperature and wind chill factor at kcci.com. Coats, mittens, hats, and scarves **should be labeled.** **Remember to send your child's indoor shoes when he or she wears boots to school.** Teachers will assist children in keeping track of their belongings. However, we cannot be responsible for lost, stolen, or broken articles.

➤ Toys

- The preschool provides plenty of creative toys, so we ask that you **NOT bring toys to school unless they are requested by a teacher for a special activity or sharing time.** This eliminates a broken heart if a favorite toy were to be lost, stolen, or broken.

Accident Policy

Students are required to be fully toilet trained in order to attend Bethany Preschool. If a student has a non-health related bowel movement accident, a phone call will be made to the legal guardian. From the time the phone call was made, the guardian will have 30 minutes to arrive to preschool to change their child. If the guardian cannot arrive within 30 minutes, it is the guardians' responsibility to make arrangements for someone else to change their child. Anything over 30 minutes is considered unacceptable. **Teachers will NOT be allowed to change bowel movement accidents.**

*If this becomes problematic, you may be asked to remove your child from our preschool until the child is fully toilet trained.

This policy is to keep up with state health and safety standards, as Bethany Preschool is not set up or licensed to be changing children in our preschool.

If an accident is health related and your child is vomiting or has diarrhea, you will be asked to pick up your child within 30 minutes and the child will not be allowed to return to school until fever, vomit and diarrhea free for 24 hours.

Please make sure your child has a full change of weather appropriate clothing in their backpack every day. This includes:

- Shirt
- Pants/Shorts
- Underwear
- Socks

A spare set of clothes is not just for bathroom accidents, but also in case of spills at snack, wet clothes after playing outside, or any messes that may be created during art.

Tuition Payment Policy

All tuition payments will be managed by the Preschool Treasurer and treated as confidential. The rest of the Preschool staff will neither be aware of nor responsible for tuition management.

Tuition for Bethany Preschool is due by the 5th of each month. If tuition is paid by the 5th of each month, you will receive a \$5 discount, whereas tuition received after the 5th of the month will be full price. Checks are to be made payable to "Bethany Preschool".

Give tuition money to the Church & Preschool Secretary / Treasurer, Betty Swank, or drop it in the slot beside the office door, or mail it directly to Preschool Treasurer, Bethany Preschool, 720 N.E. 52nd Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50313. **Please do not give it to another staff member.**

If tuition is not received by the 10th of the month, a reminder of payment due will be sent. If the tuition is not paid by the 15th of the month, you will be contacted by the Preschool Liaison, who will work with you on making appropriate financial arrangements. If delinquency continues, accounts will be charged a \$5.00 late fee per week. *In the event that no effort is being made by the family to make any financial restitution within the subsequent 30 days, the Preschool Board will be forced to refuse to allow the child to continue attending preschool.*

If tuition checks are returned to us by the bank for insufficient funds, there will be an additional \$35.00 fee added to the month's tuition since we are charged for these returns by our bank.

If two or more children from the same family enroll, a \$10 reduction of monthly tuition fees is allowed for that family.

The yearly tuition costs are calculated and pro-rated into even monthly payments regardless of how many days preschool may be in session in any given month. Refunds for days missed because of illness, appointments, or school or family vacations are not possible since our operating costs continue and we save space for each child. Any child who has continual absences without a valid reason will be replaced by a child on the waiting list. If for some reason you find it necessary to withdraw your child from the preschool, please notify us in writing 2-4 weeks in advance or you will be required to pay that month's fee.

Our treasurer is Betty Swank. If you need to talk with Betty, she can be reached by calling her cell phone at 515-971-1924 or the office at 265-6962, or by e-mailing to office@bethanyreformed.com.

A Typical Day at Preschool

In an effort to reach Bethany Preschool's goals, our program uses a learning center environment. We offer children a wide range of learning experiences (indoors and outdoors) which focus on themes that are important or central in the children's lives. Such experiences offer the child a choice of learning styles and activities. These choices allow the child to be a decision maker and an active learner around his/her own unique interest. It also affords the child the opportunity to work through learning activities at his/her own pace.

The environment at Bethany Preschool provides each child with many opportunities to feel successful and foster a love of learning.

A typical day includes:

- Daily sign in focusing on name recognition
- Free choice math and fine motor activities
- Opening Group Time
 - Prayer
 - Calendar
 - Weather
 - Book about our theme
- Small Groups
 - Small Group One
 - Math, Science, Writing, or Literacy Activity
 - Small Group Two
 - Bible Story, Character Building Puppet Show or Music Activity
- Bathroom Break
- Indoor or Outdoor Gross Motor Play
- Bathroom Break and Handwashing
- Snack
- Free Play in Learning Centers
- Closing Group Time
 - Letter/Number of the Week
 - Devotion

What Do We Do in Bethany Preschool?

- **Circle time** is a group gathering during which we share our ideas, plans, and observations. Circle activities are designed to stimulate youngsters' thinking, enrich their social skills, and expand their attention spans.
- **Gross-motor activities** give children the opportunity to use their muscles – as well as their imaginations – as they engage in fun, healthy exercises, such as running, jumping, and climbing.
- **Fine-motor activities** help improve small-muscle development and eye-hand coordination. Some common items found in the fine-motor/manipulative area include puzzles, beads and laces, pegboards, crayons, and scissors.
- **Art activities** help youngsters creatively express their thoughts and feelings. They help reinforce fine-motor skills and concept development in areas such as colors, shapes, and size relationships.
- **Dramatic-play activities** help children express themselves, practice life skills, improve social skills, increase self-esteem, build vocabulary, and solve problems. And, well, dramatic play is just plain fun!
- **Music activities** promote youngsters' listening skills, creative expression, and social skills. In music, children can explore sound, volume, tempo, and rhythm.
- **Science activities** offer children many hands-on opportunities for observation, exploration, investigation, making predictions, and experimentation.
- **Sensory activities** allow youngsters to experiment with textures and the properties of different substances. These activities also promote the development of other skills, such as math, science, and language.
- **Block play** gives children experience with many different concepts, such as shape and size discrimination, spatial relationships, number skills, balance, organization, cause and effect, and classification. Cooperative play skills, problem solving, and creativity are also promoted in block play.
- **Story time** is designed to help youngsters develop an appreciation and enjoyment of literature. Reading activities enhance children's vocabulary and comprehension skills, and also expand their knowledge base.

Bethany Preschool Access Policy

Bethany Preschool is responsible for ensuring the safety of children at the school and preventing harm by being proactive and diligent in supervising not only the children, but other people present at the facility.

1. Any person in the school who is not an owner, staff member, substitute, or subcontracted staff or volunteer who has had a record check and approval to be involved with child care shall not have “unrestricted access” to children for whom that person is not the parent, guardian, or custodian, nor be counted in the staff to child ratio.
 - a. **“Unrestricted access” means that a person has contact with a child alone or is directly responsible for child care.**
 - b. ***It is imperative that centers not allow people who have not had a record check assume child care responsibilities or be alone with children. This directly relates both to child safety and liability to the center.**
2. Persons who do not have unrestricted access will be under the direct “supervision” and “monitoring” of a paid staff member at all times and will not be allowed to assume any child care responsibilities. The primary responsibility of the supervision and monitoring will be assumed by the teacher unless he/she delegates it to the teacher assistant due to a conflict of interest with the person.
 - a. **“Supervision”** means to be in charge of an individual engaged with children in an activity or task and ensure that they perform it correctly.
 - b. **“Monitoring”** means to be in charge of ensuring proper conduct of others.
3. Preschool staff will approach anyone who is on the property of the church without their knowledge to ask what their purpose is. If staff is unsure about the reason, they will contact their Director or another board member to get approval for the person to be on site. If it becomes a dangerous situation, staff will follow the “intruder in the center” procedures. Non-agency persons who are on the property for other reasons such as maintenance, repairs, etc. will be monitored by paid staff and will not be allowed to interact with the children on premise.
4. A sex offender who has been convicted of a sex offense against a minor (even if the sex offender is the parent, guardian, or custodian) who is required to register with the Iowa sex offender registry (Iowa Code 692A):
 - a. Shall not operate, manage, be employed by, or act as a contractor or volunteer at the child care center.
 - b. Shall not be on the property of the child care center without the written permission of the center director, except for the time reasonable necessary to transport the offender’s own minor child or ward to and from the center.
 - i. The center director is not obligated to provide written permission and must consult with their DHS licensing consultant first.
 - ii. If written permission is granted, it shall include the conditions under which the sex offender may be present, including:
 1. The precise location in the center where the sex offender may be present.
 2. The reason for the sex offender’s presence at the facility.
 3. The duration of the sex offender’s presence.
 4. Description of how the center staff will supervise the sex offender to ensure that the sex offender is not left alone with a child.
 5. The written permission shall be signed and dated by the director and sex offender and kept on file for review by the center licensing consultant.

Biting Policy

Periodic outbreaks of biting may occur wherever young children are grouped together. When it happens, it can be scary and frustrating for children, parents, and teachers. Understanding the reason for biting is the first step to changing a child's behavior. Children bite for a variety of reasons including cause and effect, imitation, seeking attention, frustration and stress. If biting breaks out, we will work to change the environment and help children change their behavior.

When biting happens, the teacher will:

1. Remove the child from the situation and focus attention on the child who was bitten.
2. Encourage the biter to help take care of the child who was bitten.
3. Talk to the child who bit and discuss appropriate alternate choices instead of biting.
4. Notify the parents of both children involved.

Teachers will also try to identify the "triggers" that may lead to biting. Once triggers are identified, teachers can work on prevention strategies.

First Aid in response to biting:

1. Wear gloves, clean area with soap and water, run water over area for 5 minutes
2. Apply ice to reduce pain/swelling
3. Bandage wound as necessary
4. Write an incident report for both children involved

(If bite breaks the skin, we will follow above steps plus contact the parents of BOTH children and encourage them to contact their doctor to determine if they need to be seen.)

We wish we could guarantee that biting will never happen while at preschool. Unfortunately, there is no such guarantee. You can count on us to deal appropriately with biting so it will end as quickly as possible. We want the best for all the children in our program! If you want more information on biting or have questions or concerns, please let us know.

Parent Statement of Handbook Acknowledgement/Preschool Policies

I have received a copy of Bethany Preschool’s Handbook. I understand that it provides guidelines and summary information about our preschool policies and procedures at Bethany Preschool. I also understand it is my responsibility to read, understand, become more familiar with and comply with the guidelines established by Bethany Preschool. I further understand that Bethany Preschool reserves the right to modify, supplement, or revise any provision or policy, with or without notice, as it deems necessary or appropriate.

I, _____, parent/guardian of _____, have read the Bethany Preschool Handbook and understand all the policies and procedures detailed in it. If I did not understand part of the Bethany Preschool Handbook, I have asked the director or teacher and clarified the matter. I now stand in full knowledge of the policies and procedures outlined in the Bethany Preschool Handbook.

Signature of parent/guardian

Date

*This signed document is to be returned to the preschool Director prior to the beginning of the school year and will be kept in your child’s file.