***Bright Beginnings Child Care and Preschool***

**Parent Handbook**

 **Policies and Procedures**

Director/Teacher:

*Ms. Amy*

*Staff – Teacher assistants*

*Ms. Blanca*

*Ms. Andrea*

 *Ms. Trinity*

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**Program:**

Here at Bright Beginnings our philosophy is to provide a balance of both child directed play and discovery and teacher directed time. The daily schedule helps all children learn to cope with transitions, self-direct and listen to and follow directions. In our class children will learn and refine the social skills needed for being in a group setting - sharing, taking turns, listening and considering other people's feelings. The group is like a “family”. They learn to get along, overcome problems, help, support, and respect each other. We create a positive environment by modeling respectful behavior and offering strategies and guidance to overcome problems.

**Discipline Philosophy**

It is the school’s ambition to promote positive personal growth in all children. Using positive redirect, the staff teachers’ students to respect others students, their belonging and the school. The staff avoids comparison and competition among children. Rather, positive redirection is employed, allowing the children to discover what they can do instead of what they cant do. No corporal punishment or other violation of a child’s personal rights will ever occur. Instead, we work with each individual child to develop the social skills that they are lacking to help prevent future behavior mistakes. Time out may be used and the child will be separated from the group for a child-regulated period of time. This technique is ONLY used when a child is hurting him/herself, others, or equipment. When the child shows that he/she is ready to demonstrate acceptable behavior, they are encouraged to join the rest of the group and try again.

**“Problem Solvers”**

Throughout the day, the children begin to solve their own problems with the help of a teacher offering applicable solutions. For example: Johnny and Max are playing trucks. Max comes to the teacher crying while saying Johnny took his truck from him. As the teacher, instead of telling Johnny “we don’t take trucks from friends,” we guide Max on how he thinks HE should solve the problem. We then pull out our solution kit and offer suggestions.

Say how you feel to the friend

Say stop

Get help from the teacher

We allow the child to select the solution and try it out. If it doesn't work we try something new. If it does work we see a huge smile on the child's face.

**QUALITY COUNTS PROGRAM**

Bright Beginnings participates in the *Quality Counts Yolo* program. *Quality Counts Yolo* supports early learning programs to ensure children are ready to succeed in kindergarten and beyond. *Quality Counts* is a voluntary program that provides a unique opportunity for early care and education providers to improve their program through First 5 California’s *Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)*. Benefits of joining this network are connection to resources, face to face consulting, assistance with improving the quality of the care you provide, up to $600 in incentives for program staff to attend relevant training and early childhood education college coursework targeted towards quality improvement, and support for family engagement through the Strengthening Families™ Framework.

*Quality Counts Yolo* coordinates services with the following agencies: First 5 California; First 5 Yolo; City of West Sacramento; Yolo County Office of Education; Yolo County Library; Children’s Home Society of California; and, Help Me Grow Yolo County. Our collaboration with Help Me Grow Yolo County allows us to ensure that all families with children, birth to age 5 are connected to resources in Yolo County that support healthy growing and learning. Attached to this letter is a *Release of Information (ROI) form* that will allow your child to receive confidential developmental screening that assists our program in preparing for lesson planning (providing individualized activities that meets each child’s developmental needs); assists parents in learning more about their child’s development; and supports parents in the referral process when and if concerns arise about a child’s development. I look forward to discussing ways that our program is participating and how your children are benefiting. At Bright Beginnings, we are thrilled to be part of the group of early learning professionals in Yolo County working towards enhancing quality of care for all children and families so that Yolo County’s children are ready for school, and able to succeed in kindergarten and beyond. You may see your children and their teachers interacting, as they play and learn with some of the new materials we’ve received! Since we’re a Home Run Certified Preschool your child will also receive a West Sacramento Home Run college savings account when they graduate my program! For more information please visit wshomerun.com For further information about *Quality Counts*, feel free to visit the *Quality Counts California* website at [www.qualitycountsca.net](http://www.qualitycountsca.net/).

**Hours of operation:**
7:45 am to 5:30 pm - Monday through Friday.

**A Typical Day:**
**Depending on the needs of the children, schedules are flexible and may vary.**
7:45 - 8:30 Arrival, table time, free play

8:30 – 9:00 Breakfast and clean up
9:00 – 11:00 (**Pre-School Curriculum)** Story time, Circle time, Singing, ABC's, reading and writing, shapes and flashcards.
11:00 – 11:15 Bathroom breaks/wash hands for lunch
11:15 - 12:00 Lunch.
12:00 – 3:15 Change diapers/potty, Nap/rest time - everyone participates.
3:15 - 3:30 Wake up time. Change diapers/potty
3:30 -3:45 Afternoon snacks.

3:45 -4:00 Table activity- play dough, coloring or crafts.

4:00 -5:00 Story time and circle activities free play outdoor or indoor, table toys, dress up, trains, cars and blocks or a movie.

5:00-5:30 Departure

**Enrollment Procedures:**
The following forms required by myself and the state of California and need to be completed prior to placement.

1. Enrollment agreement (signed contract).

2. Consent for emergency medical treatment form.

3. Identification and emergency information form.

4. Notification of parent’s rights.

5. Parent notification of additional children in care.

6. Nebulizer Care Consent/Verification for children needing inhaled medication.

7. School Immunization Record with a copy of the child’s medical card.

Note: All forms must be updated at least every year or as needed. The registration/processing fees must be paid, prior to admission.

**Trial period and Termination:**
A period of 2 weeks trial is given for adjustment. After this time period the parents or the provider may decide to terminate care without prior notice.
After the trial period, care can be terminated with 2 weeks written notice. Payment for two weeks will be accepted in lieu of notice. All final payments are to be paid at the time of notice. In cases of non-payment, legal actions may be taken and the parents will pay all legal fees incurred.
I will also give two weeks’ notice if the child is to be terminated from care. Any abuse or violation of the rules/policies of the contract/handbook may be just cause for termination.
Immediate termination can occur for behavior problems, or dangerous parental situations. If immediate termination is given by me for the above or any other reason to be at my discretion, any deposit will be forfeited.

**Rates for 2024-25:**

Full-time rates are based on 5 days per week up to 50 hours, if more hours are needed the fee will be adjusted. Your individual weekly fee is outlined in your signed contract. All rates may be reviewed and increased on Jan 1 of each year starting Jan 2022. **If you are unable to bring your child/ren to daycare you WILL be charged for their spot. If I am unable to care for them for any reason you will NOT be charged, with the exception of my paid Holiday’s and vacation listed in this handbook.**

**Deposit & Tuition:**

**Deposit to reserve a spot-** a non-refundable $150 deposit is due on the day of enrollment.

**Tuition** is due on the first of every month. Tuition is expected whether or not your child attends in order to reserve space for your child. This includes all holidays, vacation, sick and personal days that I am closed. If payment is due on a holiday/vacation day, payment needs to be made the week or day prior.

Tuition accepted via: check, Venmo or cash.

*All payments are non-refundable.*

**Definitions:**
Full Time: Daycare contracted on a set scheduled time slot for 5 days per week.
Part Time: Daycare contracted on a set scheduled time slot for 4 days or less per week.
Drop-In (hourly): Self-explanatory. It will be $20.00 for each hour with a minimum of 2 hours or a flat $70 all day fee.
Overtime: Overtime is considered any time outside the contracted time interval and, any time after 5:30 pm. I'm under no obligation to provide an extension of time. Late arrival does not justify late departure.

\***Overtime Fee:**
$5.00 for the first minute after 5:30 pm and an additional $1.00 per minute every minute thereafter.

\*Late Payment Fee:
$10.00 per day that payment is not received. If fee isn't paid by Monday morning of the next week, your child will not be cared for until the outstanding balance in paid. Continued late payments will result in the termination of our contract.

Returned Check Fee:
There will be a $25.00 charge plus any additional costs I incur for a returned check. If two checks bounce in a year's time, cash will then be required.

**Registration:**
Part-time, Full-time care, before and after school = $25.00

Drop-in, Hourly, Short Term, Temp care = $30.00. This fee is for processing forms and records.

**Payment schedules:**

Payments are due Monthly by the 1st of the month. **Payments are always made prior to care**. Exception to this is drop-in (hourly) care; payment is due the day of service.
Overtime is paid in the week it was made. **Child Action**: I will accept payment through Child Action, Cal Works and Yolo County subsidized care program. The application must be filled out and returned to Child Action within 3 days of your child's enrollment. If care is started in the middle or end of the month, Copayment is paid at enrollment for that month. A fee of 1 week's payment will be required at the time of enrollment, this fee will be for the last week of care. Parent will be responsible for any charges not covered by Child Action or Children Home Society, such as overtime, and late fees. Extra fees are paid the week they are made.

**PAID Vacation and absences**:
Daycare will be closed 3-4 weeks for vacation. Spring, Summer and Winter. (dates to be provided below for each year) Notification of at least 3 months will be given prior to any closed days, with the exception of emergencies or illness.

In addition to school breaks we have allowed 3 sick days a year which are paid.

\* Parents are responsible for finding back-up care during provider absences.
\* There are a limited number of spaces available; therefore, weekly payments are not based on child's attendance. No refunds are given for late arrivals/early departures, parental vacations or exclusion due to illness.

**2025 paid Vacation Dates:**

* **April 14th-21st (Spring break)**
* **July 28th – August 1st (Summer break)**
* **December 22ndst-Jan 2nd (Winter break)**

**Holidays:**
Daycare will be closed for all federal holidays and the following days WITH pay: New Year's Day

Martin Luther King Jr.

President’s Day

Cesar Chavez Day

Memorial Day

Juneteenth

Independence Day

Graduation Day

Labor Day

Columbus Day

Veterans Day

Thanksgiving and the Day after

Christmas Eve

Christmas Day

**Arrival and departure:**

Please make your goodbye brief (no more than a couple minutes), the longer you prolong departure the harder it gets. Never leave without telling your child goodbye. No one other than the parents or designated person will be allowed to pick up your child without prior arrangement. I must be notified in advance and have a written note with the person's name and relationship to the child.

**Court Orders**

If there is a court order keeping one parent away from the child, I must have a written note from the custodial parent in my file to that effect. Otherwise, I cannot prevent the non-custodial parent from picking up the child.

**Communication:**
To provide the best possible care, please feel free to communicate any needs, wants, and or concerns regarding your child. It is only through parent/provider interaction that a goal of quality, nurturing care can be achieved.

**Activities:**
Age appropriate activities are scheduled with flexibility allowed responding to the needs of the individual child. The activities include daily circle time with, letter, shape, color, and number recognition, singing and story reading. We will have crafts and projects, and have free play.

**Preschool Curriculum**

We offer a preschool curriculum for children 2 years and older. This program covers a lot of essential skills, teaching children sign language, numbers, letters, colors, and shapes in interactive, fun ways. They’ll learn and grow as they enjoy poems, books, stories, games, finger-plays, arts and crafts, science projects, and a variety of physical activities.

**STAR OF THE MONTH**

Each month we will have a Star child of the month. Each week he/she will have the opportunity to participate in something special. Family Homework- Please help your child decorate their “Star Student” poster. Use pictures, stickers, magazine clippings, crayons, sequins, etc. Let your imagination go wild. The finished posters will be displayed on the wall during their special month.

**Froggy:**

“Froggy” is our classroom stuffed frog. He will be sent home with our Star Student of the month, and should be returned the first school day of the following month. When Froggy returns he should bring something back from his trip. Please fill out the journal and add pictures to share with the class. Your child will be asked what he did, where he slept, did he travel, or go anywhere fun? Please wash Froggy before he returns to school.

**Share & Tell :**

We often have children bring in share and tell items that have to do with the letters, colors or theme we are learning about. Please refer to the monthly calendar.

**Birthday Celebrations**

On your child's birthday please feel free to bring in 14 treats to share. We hold birthday celebrations after nap at 3:15

**Locked Door Policy**

All gates and doors will be locked during school hours. If your child will be picked up during nap/quiet time (12:00-3:30) please text Ms. Amy to pick up at the front door so you do not disturb sleeping children.

**Wish Board**

We have many school supplies we will be using daily, and would love the extra help replacing as needed. Occasionally on the white board you will see our “Wish list.” Every little bit helps :)

**Community Helper Visits (In-Class Field-Trips)**

We often have visitors come in from the community to teach the children new and exciting things! These visits will never cost more than $5-10 per child and often may be free.

**Graduation**

Each year we have a graduation ceremony for children promoting to TK/Kindergarten. Upon graduation your child will receive a packet from the City of West Sacramento with the information needed for the Home Run4Kids program. The City of West Sacramento will open a college fund and deposit $50. If your child runs all the bases of the program they will be eligible for 2 years of free college tuition. For more information please visit wshomerun.com

**Special Events:**

Each year we hold a few special as a part of our family engagement.

Mother’s Day - Muffins with Mom

Father’s Day - Donuts with Dad

Halloween Party

Annual Christmas Party

Annual Graduation

**Food and Nutrition**:

A healthy breakfast and lunch as well as two snacks will be provided for each child. Parents are responsible for special diets and for providing formula if needed. We are joined with Beanstalk Food Program and must meet their nutritional guidelines therefore, will be serving a variety of proteins, whole grains, lots of fruits and vegetables. Sugary foods will only be served on special occasions.

\*Breakfast is served at 8:30m If your child arrives after 8:45 please have them fed prior to coming to school.

**Special Diets:**
If a child has a particular dietary need, substantiated by a medical evaluation, I must be informed and given a doctor's note. Substitute meals or snacks may then be brought from home.

**TV viewing:**
I allow limited TV viewing consisting of Phonics and other age-appropriate educational television. On occasion I let the children pick a child appropriate video to watch. Children are NEVER required to sit and watch TV, and TV is not offered in place of free play or learning activities.

**Nap & Rest Period**

Our nap time is from 12:30-3:30, as the State of California requires all children under five years of age to have a rest period. Child is not required to sleep but resting quietly is mandatory.

**Child abuse:**
I am required by law to report to the local Social Services Office of any suspected physical, emotional, sexual or suspected abuse or neglect.

**Potty training**:
I will be more than happy to help with potty training provided that it is not done before the child is ready. Parents are asked to initiate the training at home (on vacation or weekend) before starting it at daycare. Once training is initiated, parents are to supply 5 ply-training pants with plastic pants or pull-ups.

**Diaper Changes:**
Diapers are checked and changed every 1 1/2 - 2 hours or more frequently if required. Exception, each child will be diapered after waking up from their nap. Hand washing of myself and child is performed after each change.

**Supplies needed:**
Parents are responsible for supplying Diapers, Weather appropriate change of clothes (2 changes of clothes for children who are being toilet trained). \*Swimsuit, towel, and sunscreen (summer time only)\*any other necessary items (powder, ointment) NOTE: Please provide enough diapers to last at least one week. I will notify you when your child's supply needs to be replenished.

**Health Matters:**
Please do not bring your child if he/she is sick; I can only care for children with mild cold like symptoms (clear runny nose, slight cough, and no fever). Per Health Department regulations children will not be allowed to attend the daycare if they exhibit symptoms such as:
**\*Rash \*Fever (100 F. higher) \*Excessive cold and/or cough \*Vomiting \*Diarrhea \*Lice or nits \*Discharge from eyes or ears \*Unusual drowsiness \*Persistent or excessive crying \*Communicable diseases (chicken pox, roseola, conjunctivitis, mumps, measles, influenza, or pinkeye)**
If they become ill during daycare hours - parents will be contacted immediately to remove their child within 1 hour of being notified. If parents are not available, the emergency contact person will then be notified. Once the child is removed from daycare due to illness, they may not return for a full 24-hour period, or be accompanied by a doctor's note.

This strict policy will protect all involved. Your compliance is appreciated, and you will be compensated with the assurance that all ILL children will be kept home. PLEASE keep in mind that well children are demanding and sick children are even more so. Please be fair to your child, the other children who come to my daycare, and to myself and family, and do not bring your child to me when they are ill. If you are unsure, please call prior to bringing your child. It is extremely important that we work together in keeping our children healthy. One child’s cold may be another child’s bronchitis or worse. We MUST be over-cautious to protect our children.

Children with a mild cold may attend daycare. Symptoms must be treated! If your child has a clear runny nose, give them something to help dry it up (Benadryl or Dimetapp are great antihistamines!). It is next to impossible to keep it from spreading to others if their nose is constantly running. If at any point symptoms become excessive, child becomes extremely irritable, child is unable to participate in regular activities, or I believe that I am unable to provide quality care to ALL of the children with the sick child present; parent(s) will be called to pick the child up.

Please note: This illness policy applies to my family or me as well. If my children are very sick, I will inform you and you may have the option of bringing your child or finding alternate care. I try as much as possible to keep my children isolated from others when they are ill, but this is unfair to them to have me home and unable to care for them while I am caring for your child. They need my attention just as much as your child needs yours when they are ill. As you know, I don’t take paid sick days so it’s very hard for me to call in sick when my children or I am ill. I try to avoid sick days, but some things are out of my control. Please have a backup provider in case of an emergency.

\*\* Sibling Rule: please keep **both/all** children home to avoid spreading

**Medication:**
I can administer medication if needed, but only if the Medication Consent Form has been signed. All medicine must be in the original container with the child's name clearly written on it. Written instructions with the child's name dose and times need to accompany the medication.

**Medical Coverage:**

Each child is required to have medical coverage in the event that an emergency occurs.

If a medical emergency occurs while a child is in my care, I will call an ambulance (911) and NOT drive the child to the hospital.

For an urgent, but non-emergency (i.e. child needs immediate attention by a doctor) I will call and require a parent/guardian to take the child to the doctor. All hospital/emergency visits will be paid and covered by parents.

**Medical emergencies:**
In case of a serious accident or sudden illness requiring medical attention, the following procedures are followed:
1) a phone call is made to 911.
2) Child's parents (or emergency contacts) are called.
3) Child and health records are taken to emergency service at Kaiser, UC Davis or Sutter.
4) In all cases, an emergency report is completed and a copy given to parents as well as the Department of Social Services.
\* It is extremely important, especially in instances of illness or emergency, that the emergency contact information is up to date and all information is correct. Please report any changes immediately to keep your emergency contact information current.
\* For minor injuries like bumps and bruises, I will provide home first aid. If the injury is more serious, (I.e. needs stitches, broken arm, or dislocation, etc.) the parent will be notified immediately. Parents will be responsible for all costs involved in emergency medical treatment, including emergency transportation if required.

**Facebook**

Please find us on Facebook. “Bright Beginnings Child Care and Preschool” page and our *private (closed)* family group “Bright Beginnings Child Care/Preschool Parent/Teacher Discussion board” I will be posting pictures to the FB page and any reminders to the closed FB group. Our IG account is brightbeginningsws.

**My Assistants/Teachers:**

I have two full-time assistants/teacher to help me with the children. They are both fingerprinted and background checked. They are fully certified in CPR and First aid. They will also be caring for the children in my absence for whatever reason.

**Withdrawal**

Parent/guardian who withdraws their child from my care must give a 30 day notice, in writing. You will be liable for a full month of childcare fees in the event the notice is not given. In the event it proves necessary to retain an attorney to enforce any of the terms of this contract, you will be liable for all reasonable attorney fees and court costs. I have the right to drop any child without notice at anytime.

**A final note:**
I am always open to suggestions and feel communication is a very important part of this business. If there are any problems or concerns, I encourage you to talk to me about it. If a lengthy conference is needed, a time that is convenient to both of us will be scheduled, as the other children still need my attention during business hours. Thank you for the opportunity to work with you and your child, and I look forward to the future.

I retain the right to enforce these policies at will. Lack of enforcement of a certain policy at any given time does not indicate that the particular policy is no longer in effect.

Amy Fuller

Owner