



Bethany Christian Preschool  
Parent Handbook  
2017-2018

Bethany Christian School  
615 SE 9<sup>th</sup> Street  
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33316  
(954) 522-2554 ext. 409



Dear Parents,

It is an honor to welcome your family to Bethany Christian Preschool! We are very excited about the upcoming year and the opportunity to serve you during these formative years of your child's growth and development. Thank you for choosing our preschool and entrusting us with the care of your precious little ones. This is indeed a privilege we do not take lightly! We are confident that our preschool will provide a loving, happy, Christ-centered environment where children can learn, grow, make friends, and have fun.

We strongly believe in the importance of the family and home. Our desire is to partner with you in the care and education of your child. The key to the success of that partnership is good communication! The purpose of this handbook is to provide unity among our families, students, and staff. We do this bringing honor and glory to God. By uniting our families and staff in Jesus Christ, we are better able to reach the excellence for which we strive! This handbook also serves as a means to orient our families to the policies and procedures of Bethany Christian Preschool, as well as provide the framework for working together.

However, like any handbook, it is unable to cover all of the possible questions that could develop. Please feel free to contact me ([jbrasington@bcsftl.org](mailto:jbrasington@bcsftl.org)) if you need assistance beyond what this handbook provides. Policies change from time to time, and these changes may alter the information contained in this document. You will be notified, in writing, of any significant changes that may occur.



Again, thank you for enrolling your child in our preschool. You and your child are important to us, and we look forward to serving you!

Joyfully,

Julie Brasington, Preschool Facilitator

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## Bethany Christian Preschool Important Dates 2017-2018

First Day of School (Preschool Mini-Sessions)	August 22
First Chapel of the Year	August 30
Back to School Night (6:30 pm)	August 31
Labor Day (NO SCHOOL)	September 4
Boosterthon Fun Run	September 22
Spiritual Emphasis Week	September 25-29
Farm Day	TBA
Parent/Teacher Conference Day (NO SCHOOL)	October 23
Teacher Professional Day (NO SCHOOL)	October 20
Veterans Day (NO SCHOOL)	November 10
Early Dismissal	November 17
Thanksgiving Break (NO SCHOOL)	November 20-24
PK3-PK4 Christmas Program (10:00 am)	December 15
Early Dismissal	December 15
Christmas Break (NO SCHOOL)	December 18-January 1
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (NO SCHOOL)	January 15
Snow Day	January 26
Parent/Teacher Conferences (optional)	February 5-9
Grandparent's Day (9:00 am)	February 15
Early Dismissal	February 15
Teacher Professional Day (NO SCHOOL)	February 16
Presidents Day (NO SCHOOL)	February 19
The Hungry Games Event	February 24
Book Fair	March 12-16
Easter Break (NO SCHOOL)	March 29-April 6
Teacher Professional Day (NO SCHOOL)	May 7
PK3-PK4 Spring Program (10:00 am)	May 11
Memorial Day (NO SCHOOL)	May 28
Last Day of School/Early Dismissal	June 1

# Introduction

Bethany Christian School is a ministry of Rio Vista Community Church. We would love for you to join us for services on Sunday mornings at 9:00 am or 11:00 am.

## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Bethany Christian School is to educate, equip and encourage our students to reach their God-given potential and impact the world for God's glory through a growing relationship with Jesus Christ.

## VISION STATEMENT

The vision of Bethany Christian School is for a continuously improving educational environment which nurtures in our students a love for Christ, His Word and His work, and prepares them academically and spiritually to impact the world with the Gospel.

## PHILOSOPHY

Bethany Christian Preschool was established to serve the needs of our families by providing a loving, nurturing, Christ-centered environment of play-based discovery and learning for preschoolers. In our preschool, children will be treated as precious creations of God, each with unique talents, interests, and needs. Bethany Christian Preschool supports parents as the primary educators of their children. Our wish is to form a partnership with parents to provide a strong spiritual foundation as we endeavor to "train up a child in the way he should go" (Proverbs 22:6).

## ACCREDITATION

Bethany Christian School is accredited by the Christian Schools of Florida (CSF), Middle States Association (MSA), and The National Council on Private School Accreditation (NCPSA). Bethany Christian School is regularly inspected by the Florida Department of Health as well as county and state fire and safety inspectors. Bethany Christian School abides by all rules and regulations relating to the health, safety, and well-being of the children in our care. All preschool staff meet or exceed the approved standards for education and experience set forth by the State of Florida and Broward County. All faculty members are required to be CPR/ First Aid certified and to pursue professional growth by means of continued course work, in-service training, and seminars.

# Our Programs

**CREATION STATION - Ages 6 weeks to 2 years (birthday on or before Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>)**  
5 days per week (Full) - Monday through Friday

Creation Station seeks to help children grow spiritually and socially as he/she learns to relate to a loving, caring group of adults and peers. The children's daily environment will include guided exploration with developmentally appropriate toys and educational equipment that stimulate learning, peer interaction that will promote healthy social relationships, and a creative, hands-on curriculum appropriate for each child's spiritual, academic, and social growth and development.

**TWO-YEAR-OLD PROGRAM (PK2) - Must be 2 by Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>**  
2 days per week (1/2 or full) - Tuesday and Thursday  
3 days per week (1/2 or full) - Monday, Wednesday and Friday  
5 days per week (1/2 or full) - Monday through Friday

The focus of the two-year-old program is to help young children learn about God, independence and positive social behavior. Language development is stressed and stimulated through stories, songs, music and rhymes. Indoor and outdoor play helps to develop coordination and motor skills. The program also includes a basic introduction of numbers, shapes, and colors, as well as many other fun activities.

**THREE-YEAR-OLD PROGRAM (PK3) - Must be 3 by Sept. 1<sup>st</sup> (Must be potty-trained)**  
3 days per week (1/2 or full) - Monday, Wednesday and Friday  
5 days per week (1/2 or full) - Monday through Friday

The three-year-old program encourages learning and creativity through center-based play areas. Classrooms are furnished with art, block, dramatic play, library, and manipulative learning centers. The goal of the PK3 program is that the children develop an awareness of letters, letter sounds, numbers, and how to cooperate in a group. Throughout the program, the teacher talks about God's love and principles as a way to guide and direct our lives.

**FOUR-YEAR-OLD PROGRAM (PK4) - Must be 4 by Sept. 1<sup>st</sup> (Must be potty-trained)**  
5 days per week (Full) - Monday through Friday

The focus of the four-year-old program is to prepare children for kindergarten. Listening skills, math and reading readiness are introduced through songs, rhymes, art projects, stories, games and other interactive learning centers. A variety of fine motor skills are used throughout the day to help prepare the children to write. Children are encouraged to develop the good work habits and organizational skills necessary to succeed in the future. Children will memorize Bible verses and see how God is part of their everyday life.

# General Information

## FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

The first day of school is exciting for both the parent and the child. We make every effort to make this transition as smooth as possible. The first day, your child will be scheduled for a Preschool Mini-Session where your child will attend class for a period of 90 minutes while parents attend a brief meeting in the Fellowship Hall. With a smaller class size, the Mini-Session helps the children feel more comfortable in a new environment. We ask that parents bring their children to the classroom door and leave promptly so that we can help the children establish regular routines. We find that some children may cry when you first leave, but with a little reassurance, they are usually playing in a matter of minutes. Feel free to call the school to check to see how your child is doing in those first few days and we will call you if we see that your child is struggling. However, once the children become familiar with the routine and surroundings they soon find that school is quite fun. We will be praying for you and your family as you make this adjustment!

## ARRIVAL/DROP-OFF

The preschool doors will open at \*7:55 am and close at 8:10 am. Any student arriving after 8:10 am must be brought to the preschool reception desk for check-in.

Parents have two (2) Drop-Off options...

1. Parents may park in the parking lot and walk their child into the school building. Please cross using the crossing guard and enter through the double white wooden doors of the church building. Then walk through the preschool reception area and proceed to your child's classroom.
2. Parents may drop their child off using the half-circle driveway located by the playground. Staff members will take the children out of cars and into the building to their classrooms. Please drive 5 mph while on campus.

\*The Creation Station opens at 7:30 am. Creation Station families must always bring students directly to the classrooms.

## DISMISSAL/PICK-UP

Dismissal will take place at the double glass doors by the playground.

Dismissal Schedule -

PK2 (Half Day)	12:25 pm
PK3 (Half Day)	12:35 pm
PK2, PK3, PK4 (Full Day)	2:55 pm*

\*Dismissal for full day students ends at 3:10 pm.

## Dismissal Schedule for school-wide designated HALF-DAYS -

PK2	11:10 am
PK3	11:20 am
PK4	11:30 am

Parents have two (2) Pick-Up options...

1. Parents may park in the parking lot and stand on the sidewalk by the playground to wait for their child.
2. Parents may use the half-circle driveway located by the playground. Teachers will load the student into the car.

\*The Creation Station will be open until 5:30 pm. Creation Station families must walk into the building to pick up their child directly from the classroom.

### CAR LINE PROCEDURES

- Please drive slowly (5 mph) at all times in the half-circle driveway and parking lot.
- **For the safety of our children and families, cell phone use is not permitted at any time while in the car drop-off/pick-up line.**
- Please pull your car forward as far as possible so that the staff can load/unload multiple cars at once.
- Parents are required to display the school-issued car tag daily in the front window on the dashboard of their vehicles. Please add an arrow on the car tag with a bold marker pointing to the side of the car where the child's car seat will be found - this makes it easy for the teachers who are loading.
- The car tag identifies the vehicle and indicates parental permission for student pick-up. For the safety of your child, we will not place a child in another person's vehicle without prior permission. Please arrange ahead of time by writing a note to the teacher.
- **Drivers must remain in the car at all times if using the car drop-off/pick-up line.** This keeps everyone safe and helps the line move along quickly.
- When stopping the car for staff to load/unload student, please put the car in the **park position**.
- If you need to speak to a teacher, please wait until the end of the drop-off process, or schedule a conference.
- Please let the teacher know in writing on or before the day when a child needs to remain in Aftercare.
- If a child has not been picked up once dismissal is over at 3:10 pm, the child will be taken to Aftercare.
- Please do not leave your car parked without a driver in the drop-off/pick-up half-circle driveway.
- Please communicate this information to anyone who will be dropping off or picking up your child.

- Please remember to be kind and courteous to other drivers while using the car line and school parking lot.
- The white gate located at the entrance of our south parking lot is an electronic gate. The gate will open as a car approaches and will close again electronically.
- Creation Station families do not use the car line.

### **EARLY CARE**

- Supervision is provided in the church building Fellowship Hall for students arriving between 7:30-7:50 am.
- There is no charge for this service.
- For the safety of our students, any student arriving early must be escorted into the building and signed in by a parent.
- Preschool students will be taken to their classrooms by a staff person.

### **AFTERCARE**

- Children enrolled in the PK2 full-day classes are eligible for Aftercare from 3:15-5:30 pm. There is no Aftercare available for PK2 half-day students.
- Children enrolled in the PK3 full-day class are eligible for Aftercare from 3:15-5:30 pm and must be potty-trained. There is no Aftercare available for PK3 half-day students.
- Children enrolled in PK4 classes are eligible for Aftercare from 3:15-5:30 pm.
- Please note that a \$1.00 per minute late fee will be charged after 5:30 pm for every student who is not picked up on time. Aftercare is \$20/day.
- You may purchase Aftercare punch cards at the preschool reception desk or BCS front office.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Bethany Christian Preschool is required to take attendance and to keep accurate attendance records each day.

### **EARLY PICK-UP**

Occasionally it is necessary for a student to be released prior to the regular dismissal time. Early pick-up will be handled at the preschool reception desk with prior notification to the teacher. Please submit requests to the preschool reception desk and the student will be escorted to the preschool reception area for pick-up. Students may not be released to parents from the classroom. If the student is returning to school following the early pick-up, please report to the preschool reception desk to sign in before the student returns to class.

### **TARDINESS AND ABSENCES**

Being on time to school is very important for your child! A timely arrival ensures that your child does not miss out on the important learning activities that happen early in the day when they are most alert. It also helps all of the children enjoy an

uninterrupted flow to their classroom's morning routines. School begins at 8:10 am. Any student arriving after 8:10 am must be brought to the preschool reception desk to be signed in for the day. If a student will be absent due to illness, please notify the Preschool Facilitator by 8:30 am with a reason for the absence. You may call the school at (954) 522-2554 ext. 409, or email the teacher or the preschool reception desk. Please notify the teacher or the Preschool Facilitator about any long-term absences (family trips, etc.) as soon as possible.

## **TOYS**

We ask that children leave toys at home. In a group environment, the introduction of children's own toys can cause complications with the process of learning to share. This is a major developmental goal for preschoolers, and they are able to master it more successfully using the items at school. It is, however, one of the reasons many of our classrooms have Show and Tell or Student of the Week, which offer children an outlet for bringing to school something special that is then shared in a structured, successful manner. This does not include "loveys" such as special blankets or stuffed animals that younger children use to help them transition to new environments. Teachers may make decisions about these items on a case by case basis.

## **NAPTME**

All full-time preschool students have a rest time after lunch. The amount of time spent resting depends upon the age of the child. If children do not sleep after a while, they may lie quietly on the mat or look at books provided by the school. Quiet music is played during rest time. A nap mat will be purchased for the child with the school supply money provided by the parent at the beginning of the year. These nap mats will go home at the end of the year. Full-time preschool students will be given a special nap bag. Please include a small pillow and blanket for your child to use during nap time. Nap bags will be sent home at the end of each week for washing. Please return this bag with your child to school each Monday.

## **CHAPEL**

The students participate in a weekly school wide chapel service on Wednesday mornings from 8:50-9:30 am. We enjoy a time of music and worship, videos, speakers, and special student presentations. We love having parents join us!

## **BIRTHDAYS**

Birthdays are a special occasion for young children and worthy of celebration! Parents are encouraged to send in fruit, small donuts, small cupcakes, or cookies for their child to share with their classmates during a designated part of the day. Please notify the teacher in advance if you would like to send in special treats. Please check if there are any classroom allergies in advance. We are happy to distribute party invitations if every child in the class is included.

## **PARTY POLICY**

Each preschool classroom celebrates a variety of holidays throughout the year with parties. Parents may sign up to volunteer to help throw these parties, but we ask that parties be kept simple. Bounce houses, water slides, or rented equipment are not permitted for use on school property. Student activities involving these items are not covered under our school insurance policy. For questions regarding our insurance requirements, contact the Business Office at (954) 522-2554, ext. 212.

## **ENTERING THE PRESCHOOL**

During school hours, please enter the preschool using the double glass doors by the playground. You will need to ring the doorbell before being securely buzzed into the building. Please proceed to the preschool reception area for check-in.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Children leave things behind from time to time during the school day. All clothing and lunch boxes should be labeled with your child's first and last name when possible.

Lost items will be kept at the preschool reception desk.

## **BICYCLES**

Students may ride their bicycle to school with their parent or guardian. Bikes may be locked to the bike rack located in front of the elementary school building.

Students may not ride their bikes or skateboards on school property, including the parking lot. The school is not responsible for lost or damaged bicycles.

## **LIBRARY RESOURCES**

Library books for PK4 students circulate on a 2-week loan. Books should be returned on or before the due date to the classroom library bin. Students with overdue books may not be permitted to check out any additional books until the overdue book is returned or a replacement fee is paid if it is lost.

# **Academics**

## **CURRICULUM**

Bethany Christian Preschool curriculum is based on the belief that children learn through play. Play is their work. It is through play, art, music, and our hands-on approach that subject areas (language arts, math, science, etc.) are introduced. Our developmentally appropriate curriculum is customized to meet each child's individual needs: socially, emotionally, physically, cognitively, and spiritually. The preschool's daily practices provide consistency while incorporating emergent curriculum which stimulates each child's unique interests, curiosity, and sense of discovery.

The Creation Station uses the Wee Learn Curriculum that accommodates the children's differences in learning styles through play. The PK4 program uses the acclaimed curriculum Handwriting Without Tears. The preschool also contributes the following to your child's learning experience:

- Social development (self-esteem, self-confidence, growing independence, self-control, cooperative play, sharing, taking turns, kindness, manners, respect, focus on a task, persistence in a task in a group setting)
- Physical development (gross and fine motor skills)
- Language arts (phonological awareness, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, speaking, listening, storytelling, read-alouds, songs, rhythm, chants, poetry, fingerplays, word play, concepts, letter recognition, letter sounds, writing, puppetry, drama)
- Math readiness (spatial relationships and comparison, visual discrimination, classifying, sequencing, patterns, number recognition, one-to-one correspondence, counting, calendar)
- Science discovery (matter, light, seasons, weather, hurricane safety, human body, plant life, butterfly life cycle, farm animals, cooking experiences, etc.)
- Art experience through creative use of a wide variety of media
- Social studies (awareness of self, family, community, holiday celebrations)
- Spiritual development (Bible stories, character traits, fruit of the Spirit, Bible memory verses, personal relationship with Christ, prayer, praise and worship)
- Monthly themes
- Discovery learning centers
- Annual events/performances - Farm Day/Zoo Day, Boosterthon, Spiritual Emphasis Week, PK3 Christmas pageant, Snow Day, Grandparent's Day, etc.
- Weekly chapels with music and movement
- Special Area Classes - Music, Library, Spanish, PE, Computer (PK3 and PK4)
- Supervised playground time is provided in the morning and, occasionally, in the afternoon, weather permitting. Outdoor play promotes healthy growth and development and creative social interaction.

## **STUDENT SERVICES**

Bethany Christian Preschool assesses student performance and development using a variety of resources – including the Gesell Test of Developmental Observation, the Ages & Stages Questionnaire for Social and Emotional Development, and other teacher-devised instruments. Bethany can also refer parents to outside resources which are able to provide diagnostic and instructional assistance to children facing educational or social/emotional challenges in the traditional learning environment. In order to best serve the needs of our students, we may require parents to provide their student's physicians/therapists with an exchange of information release form allowing the physicians to share developmental information and recommendations with school administrators and faculty. To help Bethany adequately meet the needs of our students, we will consider input from all concerned school personnel.

# Code of Conduct

## CHILD GUIDANCE AND BEHAVIOR PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

Discipline is a door of opportunity - the opportunity to teach children appropriate ways to meet their needs. The root word for discipline is "disciple," so good discipline, like discipling, trains children to develop self-control. Training is the key word - not punishment. Good discipline is guidance toward right behavior. The goal of discipline in the classroom is to train children to be Christ-like and at Bethany Christian Preschool, this training is always done in a caring and positive way.

Before any method of discipline is used, there must first be rules. Rules set healthy limits for children and provide a framework in which teaching and learning can take place. Rules are reviewed daily with the students, as well as what proper behavior might look like in the classroom setting. As a preschool, we will focus on 3 main rules and expectations - *I obey, I am kind, and I stay safe*. Individual teachers may also have specific rules in their classrooms to help support a positive, safe environment.

Our discipline procedures will consist of the following strategies:

- Focusing on positive behaviors and reinforcing those behaviors as often as possible.
- Encouraging children to use their words when having a disagreement with another child. Facilitating children in their attempts to settle their own disputes. Training in communication and forgiveness.
- Redirecting behavior when this seems potentially effective.
- Separating a child from the group - one minute away for each year of age.
- Counseling children individually about their behaviors.
- Bringing a child to the preschool reception area for a supervised, brief time away from the classroom or situation.
- Making parents aware of disciplinary concerns.
- Praying for/with the child and remembering to separate the 'doer' from the 'deed.' Correction is directed at the behavior, not the child.

Disruptive behavior distracts from the full benefit of the preschool program. Here are some examples of disruptive behavior:

- Requires constant attention from the staff.
- Inflicts physical or emotional harm on other children, adults, or self.
- Disrespects people and materials provided in the program.
- Consistently disobeys the rules of the school and classroom.
- Verbally threatens other students and/or staff.
- Uses verbal or physical activity that diverts attention away from the group of children.

Discipline procedures for disruptive behavior:

- Disruptive behavior will be documented by the teacher. This documentation will include any negative behaviors that directly impact other children, staff members, or the group as a whole. This documentation will be shared with the parent in either a phone conference or in a face-to-face conference. It is our desire to partner with you in this process and develop a plan to do what's best for the child.
- If a child has difficulty managing his/her behavior on a recurring basis, parents will be asked to meet with the teacher and the Preschool Facilitator.
- In rare incidences, if the child's behavior continues to be inappropriate, consistently disruptive, and/or dangerous, it may be necessary for the child to be sent home for a time to be determined, or removed from the preschool program altogether. We promise to do everything we can before that point.

Even at a young age, we want our students to recognize their need for a Savior, to learn how to extend kindness, and to grow in an attitude of forgiveness. Our desire is to reach the children's hearts through faithful, consistent training and we strive to communicate the unconditional love of Christ every time we guide a little one through a negative behavior or choice. We believe that every child is precious, and we are committed to partnering with you in the process of shepherding hearts for Christ!

### **CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

Bethany Christian Preschool's desire is to follow the principle set forth in Matthew 18:15-19 and to quickly settle any concerns that arise. Matthew 18:15 states, "If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over." If you should have questions or concerns about your child or about classroom procedures, please talk to your child's teacher and work to resolve matters between the two of you. Bethany Christian Preschool feels very strongly that communication will enhance the quality of the school! If a situation arises after you have talked with your child's teacher and you are not satisfied, please schedule a meeting with the teacher and the Preschool Facilitator. We also encourage our students to follow this principle when communicating with friends and classmates.

### **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

Bethany Christian School will not tolerate bullying in any of its forms. The State of Florida defines bullying as "systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students." In a preschool, many younger students have not developed the interpersonal skills necessary to adequately express their immediate needs and feelings. This immaturity may cause some students to act or respond in a mean-spirited manner – lashing out verbally or even physically. The teachers and administrators will seek to work with these

students to help them learn to express themselves with words and good choices (please see our Child Guidance and Behavior Procedures and Policies). While such actions are unacceptable and will be subject to discipline, isolated incidences will not be classified as “bullying.”

### **SEXUAL HARRASSMENT POLICY**

It is the policy of this school that all contact between students, teachers, and other adult employees be kept with respect for the individual students, be of a nature which does not make a student feel uncomfortable, and be conducive to creating a stable environment. All students and all school employees are expected to conduct themselves with respect for the dignity of others. If a student, parent, or employee has concerns about the nature of another person’s conduct or physical contact by an adult employed by this school, by a fellow student, or by a member of the public, the student/employee should immediately report this concern to a school administrator and/or to a parent or guardian. All such reports will be investigated by school authorities. Criminal charges will be handled by civil authorities. Anyone found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action. All such reports will be handled with discretion and confidentiality to avoid further embarrassment and to protect the victim and the person making the report.

### **REPORTING ABUSE**

It should be understood that the school is legally obligated to report child abuse to the appropriate social agency. If a person’s allegations present a child as the victim of abuse, neglect or exploitation, the school is legally obligated to report the incident to the abuse hotline at 1-800-96-ABUSE. This may result in an official investigation by law enforcement officials and/or criminal charges. Those who report reasonable suspicions of child abuse are legally protected from prosecution and lawsuits and will not suffer adverse consequences or retaliation.

### **EMPLOYEE AND STUDENT DIGNITY**

Conduct, whether intentional or unintentional, that subjects another person to unwanted attention, comments or actions because of race, national origin, age, sex, physical characteristics or disability, robs the person of dignity and is not permitted. Bethany Christian School does not condone harassment of employees, administration, students, or others on our campus. Any person who believes he or she has been subjected to harassment should report it immediately to the school administration for immediate investigation.

## **Dress Code**

All preschool students wear uniforms to school as described below.

- All shorts, pants, skirts, and skorts are to be khaki or navy blue uniform wear (not denim, capri, or cargo style).
- All shirts must have the school logo and be ordered through Debbie's Uniforms. Polo shirts are red, white, navy blue, or red/blue striped with school logo.
- Female students may wear skorts or skirts that are no shorter than 4 inches above the knee. Navy jumpers with school logo and paired with blouse or polo are also permitted. Navy or red color drop waist knit dresses with logo are also permitted.
- We encourage parents to have female students wear navy or red shorts or bloomers under their skirts/dresses for modesty purposes.
- Shirts must be tucked in.
- Acceptable shoes include those with closed toes and heels. **For your child's safety, Crocs, sandals, jellies, heels, flip-flops, etc. are not permitted.**
- Face-painting, stickers, or temporary tattoos on the face are not permitted, except on days when the school has school-sponsored events (Snow Day!).
- Hats, scarves, sweatbands, or sunglasses are not to be worn during the school day.
- Please dress your child appropriately on days when the weather is cooler.
- Parents will be notified if there is a persistent problem staying within the dress code.

\*Creation Station students are not required to wear uniforms.

## CASUAL DAYS

Casual Day is a fun way to raise money for our school. Proceeds are applied toward the 4th-8th grade class trips and it costs just \$1.00 to wear something uniquely your own. School dress codes regarding modesty and proper shoes still apply. Casual days for the year are listed on the online school calendar. Students may bring their Casual Day money to the provided bucket near the preschool entrance on the morning of the Casual Day.

## UNIFORM RECYCLING

A uniform bank offering used uniforms to families is available at our school store. This is a great way to save money on uniforms! The school accepts donations of used uniforms for sale to others at a nominal fee. The uniform bank is located in the upper school and is open during school office hours from 7:30 am to 3:30 pm.

# Communication

## WEBSITE

Our school website, [www.bcsftl.org](http://www.bcsftl.org), is a great source of information for our families. We encourage all parents to sign up for the school-wide email database via

our website. Updates of important news, school calendar, and information regarding emergency school closings/openings are available through the website.

### **BAGS AND FOLDERS**

Every Bethany Christian Preschool student will receive a Bethany bag and a school folder. To keep things uniform, we ask that your child not use any other type of bag other than the provided BCS one. Please keep the folder in your child's bag at all times and check it daily as important notes, flyers, classroom newsletters, and paper announcements will be sent home in your child's school folder.

### **NEWSLETTERS/DAILY REPORTS**

A monthly preschool newsletter written by the Preschool Facilitator will be sent to all preschool families highlighting upcoming events and other newsworthy items. Preschool teachers will send home weekly or monthly newsletters, or a daily report, depending on the age of the classroom.

### **COMMUNICATION WITH TEACHERS**

Good communication is essential for each child's success! However, the timing of the communication is also important. Please refrain from engaging a teacher in conversation during arrival and dismissal times so that teachers can give their full attention to the safety of their students, as well as to the routines of their classroom. For immediate concerns, you may email the teacher, call the preschool front desk (ext. 409), or ask to schedule a parent/teacher conference.

### **PROGRESS REPORTS**

Progress Reports are written three times a year (October, February, and May/June). These reports will be shared with parents at scheduled Parent/Teacher Conferences (see below), or sent home in the child's folder for review. The Creation Station will use the Ages & Stages Questionnaire twice per year.

### **PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Conferences are held twice during the school year, in October and in February (optional). Progress Reports are written three times a year and shared with parents at the parent conference, or sent home in the child's folder. At the request of a parent, teachers will schedule additional conferences.

Our teachers urge you to discuss any special concerns or questions that you may have about the preschool or your child. Please be sure to inform the teachers if something has happened that may affect your child during his or her school day. Events such as a relative visiting, a new baby expected, an impending move, etc., can change a child's behavior at school. If the teachers are aware of significant events in your child's life, they can better understand your child and the changes in his/her behavior. It is also important that you communicate to teachers any special fears your child may have, such as animals, clowns, etc., because of the

variety of things that may be encountered in the classroom. If the teachers have been alerted to special fears they can avoid the encounter or prepare the child for the event.

### FLYERS AND NOTES

Any communications distributed to students or parents must be approved by the Preschool Facilitator prior to going home. This will help limit inappropriate or incorrect information as well as better coordinate school events.

### EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

On rare occasions the preschool may need to close for an emergency. In the event of a severe storm or a community emergency in the area, Bethany will follow the early dismissal or closing schedule of the Broward County Public Schools. You will receive an automated phone call, or please check our website ([www.bcsftl.org](http://www.bcsftl.org)), local media outlets, or call the school's main office at 954-522-2554.

## Health and Safety

### HEALTH POLICY

The school complies with all health requirements by the Broward County Health Department regarding immunizations and communicable diseases. Each child is required to be in good health, to have an annual physical examination and to be fully immunized or have a plan for immunization or to present written documentation of a religious or medical exemption.

Illness in young children in preschool and child care settings is very difficult to manage. We understand that parents depend on us to provide care for their children, but on the other hand we are not equipped to care for children when they are ill. The well-being of the individual child is our main concern, but the health of other children and the staff is also a concern. Parents may differ in their assessments of what constitutes illness, so this policy attempts to develop a consistent standard of wellness. The teachers and Preschool Facilitator will make final decisions about whether or not a child is well enough to attend the preschool.

Please observe your child carefully and remember that your child has the potential for infecting many other children, staff, and parents. The day at preschool is demanding on children's stamina and children who are not feeling well will have a difficult time enjoying the day. Sometimes a day at home to rest will be a great help for a child who is not quite him/herself. **If a student will be absent due to illness, please notify the preschool by 8:30 am with a reason for the absence.** You may call the school at (954) 522-2554 ext. 409, or email the teacher or the Preschool Facilitator.

Should your child become ill while at Bethany Christian Preschool, we will remove him/her from the classroom setting and bring him/her to the preschool reception area. We will then contact the parents and if unsuccessful, we will contact those that have been listed on the child's emergency consent form. Children who are ill should be picked up as soon as possible.

**If a child is vomiting, has diarrhea, rash, persistent cough, upset stomach, discharge from eyes, fever of 100 degrees or higher, or colored mucous, the child must remain at home, or will be sent home from school.**

**Students must be without symptoms or fever-reducing medicine for 24 hours before returning to school.**

Having been diagnosed with any of the following diseases or conditions, a child must have written consent from a physician to return to school or be subject to school office approval for re-admittance: chicken pox, lice, measles, mumps, pneumonia, whooping cough, pinworms, scabies, ringworm, impetigo, pink eye (at least 24 hours after beginning drops), or other such communicable diseases and conditions.

Parents will be notified whenever there is an infectious disease at the preschool. An exposure notice which details the symptoms of the disease, recommended treatment, and when a child may return to school will be sent home. In some cases of more virulent diseases, a memo will be sent to all parents and staff in the preschool with details about symptoms and treatment.

Please do not medicate your child with aspirin, cough syrup, etc. before sending them to school. We find that when the meds wear off in 2-3 hours, we have an ill and unhappy child on our hands. A child who is ill enough to need these medications should probably be at home.

Hand washing is the first line of defense against disease. Bethany Christian Preschool is vigilant with both children and adults that hands are washed before eating, after toileting, handling body secretions, and after cleaning.

If your child has a chronic illness or condition, we ask that you and your child's doctor share as much information as possible to ensure that we can do our best to monitor your child's health needs while in school.

### **STATE OF FLORIDA MEDICAL ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS**

Florida Statute 232.032 states that students enrolling in a Florida school must present tangible documentation that immunization and health requirements have been met. Documentation includes HRS FORM 3040 and HRS FORM 680. These forms

must be provided and completed by a Florida physician within 12 months prior to entry date. They are transferable in Florida counties and include:

- HRS FORM 3040 - Health Examination and Tuberculin Skin Test (including date and result)
- HRS FORM 680 - Certificate of Immunization (Part A, B, or C)

No student will be allowed in school without up-to-date documentation.

## **MEDICATIONS**

Bethany Christian Preschool is not able to administer medication, including non-prescription drugs, ointments and diaper rash creams, to any child without a parent's written consent. Parent authorization must be on file for each medication. Medical Release Forms may be obtained at the preschool reception desk.

Prescription medication must meet the following conditions:

- ✓ Medication has been prescribed by a physician and is in its original container.
- ✓ Label contains: Name of Student, Medication, Dose and Instructions, Pharmacy, Date of Prescription, and Name of Prescribing Physician.
- ✓ Parents must complete and sign the Medication Release Form for each medication.
- ✓ We are not able to administer the first dose of any prescribed medication.

If the above requirements are met, preschool staff may apply diaper creams/powders/lotions in the classrooms, but any other medication will be administered in the privacy of the preschool reception area. Parents are permitted to come and administer a medication, if they desire. However, students are not permitted to possess or self-administer any medication, including cough drops.

## **ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES**

We are committed to providing your child with a safe environment, but accidents do occur on occasion. In the event your child suffers an injury, we will provide you with a written accident report and attempt to contact you immediately, when appropriate. Please sign and return the accident report within 48 hours. Please know that our staff will do everything they can to comfort and care for your child during these tender circumstances.

## **TOILETING**

Staff guidelines: No child shall be punished, humiliated, or verbally abused for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet. All children and staff wash their hands with soap and running water after going to the bathroom and before snacks, meals, or handling food.

Clothing soiled by feces, urine, vomit, or blood is double bagged in sealed plastic bags and stored apart from other items for the parent to take home to launder. If

the clothing is heavily soiled, we reserve the right to dispose of the clothing at our discretion.

In addition to each child's extra change of clothing, the preschool has spare clothing available for changing purposes. Borrowed preschool clothing must be laundered after being worn by a child and returned to school.

### **CREATION STATION AND PK2 POTTY-TRAINING**

The Creation Station and PK2 staff will work in cooperation with parents who are beginning to potty-train their child. During this training time, we ask that parents provide 1-2 extra sets of bottoms in addition to the full set of extra clothing requested of all students. In the event that a child is not ready for potty-training, Pull-Ups or diapers will be required until they are ready to begin the process again.

### **PK3 AND PK4 POTTY POLICY**

Children are expected to be fully potty-trained before entering the PK3 and PK4 programs. By the term "fully potty-trained", we mean that the child will need to be able to express their need to go to the restroom, be able to pull their clothing down, wipe, and be able to pull their clothing back up with minimal assistance. We ask that all students keep a change of clothing in their Bethany bag in case of the occasional accident. These accidents are a part of the growing process and will be handled in a kind and gentle way, with respect for the child's feelings. We realize that accidents will happen. Accidents by definition are unusual incidents and should only happen infrequently.

\*If there are daily or multiple accidents within the course of a week, the parents will be asked to pick up their child from school.

\*If there are multiple accidents over the course of two weeks, a conference may be called to discuss how to complete potty-training.

\*If it is determined that the child is not fully potty-trained, the family may be asked to complete potty-training at home before returning to school.

### **BITING**

While biting is never acceptable, it is within the range of normal behavior in children 12-36 months of age. The preschool has many practices in place that are known to help prevent incidences of biting in small children such as quality relationships, consistent routines, and engaging classroom lessons and activities. At the same time, biting may occasionally occur in the nursery and preschool setting. If so, the preschool has a Response to Biting Action Plan that we will follow. You may see this Action Plan by request to the Preschool Facilitator. If a child shows a pattern of biting, it may become necessary to remove the child from school for a period of time.

## **SNACKS AND LUNCHES**

Families have the option to purchase a lunch, bring a lunch from home, or a combination of the two. Food for purchase must be ordered in advance from the authorized outside vendor. Menus are available on a monthly basis and parents may preorder their selections online via a link on our school website ([www.bcsftl.org](http://www.bcsftl.org)). A pizza day, which serves as a school fundraiser, is available once a week and must be ordered in advance through the same authorized vendor online.

We request that parents provide one healthy snack and lunch each day (placed in separate, labeled containers), as well as adequate fluids. Creation Station Families must provide a lunch and 2 snacks for their child, and/or the necessary bottles/supplies needed to feed their baby. Ideally, children's snacks and lunches will include only healthy choices. Sending special treats and desserts can make it difficult for children to eat healthy food and puts teachers in a position of having to negotiate with children. Please save special treats for home.

Please include appropriate cooling packs in your child's lunch to keep food safe. Microwaves are available in a few, select classrooms, but we ask that you limit microwave use for the sake of time.

## **ANIMALS/PETS**

For the safety and well-being of all, please do not bring pets to the school. This includes inside and outside the building during pick-up and drop-off times. Students are welcome to bring in pictures of pets to share during Show and Tell or Student of the Week activities. Animals are not permitted inside the school facilities, unless they are an on-duty working dog. There are occasional special school events when the children are allowed to interact with animals.

## **EMERGENCY DRILLS**

Monthly fire drills, quarterly lockdown drills, and biannual tornado drills are conducted at Bethany Christian Preschool so as to have all staff and children prepared for an emergency situation while in our care.

## **SCHOOL LOCKDOWNS**

In the event of a school lockdown, students will be secured in their classrooms with the doors locked. They will remain in the classrooms until the lockdown is lifted. Please do not call the school office. The phone lines must be left open for communication with law enforcement. Lockdowns are rare and may be required as a precautionary measure.

## **VISITORS**

In general, Bethany Christian Preschool is a closed campus during the school day. Friends and relatives of the students are not permitted to visit the classrooms during school hours unless authorized. Special circumstances include prospective

students and families that may be touring and visiting the school at various times throughout the year. We will also occasionally have parent volunteers on campus. All visitors must sign in and obtain a visitor's badge at the preschool reception desk. Visitors are asked to sign out before leaving the preschool. If an unauthorized individual is observed on the school premises, staff will escort the person to the preschool reception area.

### **TEACHER/STUDENT RATIOS**

Bethany Christian Preschool exceeds the state's minimum caregiver/child ratios which are:

- Infants from 12 weeks to 12 months - 1 caregiver for every 4 infants
- Toddlers from 12 months to 24 months - 1 caregiver for every 6 toddlers
- 2-year-olds - 1 caregiver for every 11 students
- 3-year-olds - 1 caregiver for every 15 students
- 4-year-olds - 1 caregiver for every 20 students
- Preschool classes have a teacher and teacher's assistant. Maximum enrollment in the classes is as follows: PK2 - 12 students; PK3 - 16 students; PK4 - 18 students.

### **NO SOLICITATION**

The preschool may not be used as a setting for solicitation. Any fundraisers designed to assist charitable organizations must be approved by the administration before being allowed at school.

### **PRIVATE PROPERTY**

Bethany Christian School is not responsible for damage or loss of private property brought to school by students or adults. Securing private property is the sole responsibility of the owner. We highly encourage everyone to lock their car and remove any valuables.

## **Business and Finance**

### **TUITION CONTRACT**

All families enrolling students at Bethany Christian School are required to sign a tuition contract each year. This contract is a legally binding agreement between BCS and the family. Student enrollment is not complete until the tuition contract is signed and the deposit is paid.

### **TUITION DEPOSIT**

A non-refundable tuition deposit is required to secure a class space for every student entering Bethany Christian School. This deposit will be equal to two months' tuition payments and will be applied to the last two months' charges for the school year (i.e., April and May).

## **TUITION PAYMENTS & DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS**

Bethany Christian School offers two options for tuition payments:

- Tuition may be paid-in-full prior to June 1<sup>st</sup> – payable by cash or check.
- Monthly payments (June-March) are due through the FACTS Tuition Management Program.

Every effort will be made by the school to keep the cost of activities and materials as low as possible while providing a quality program. Parents are responsible for all fees, tuition, and student expenses incurred. Tuition payments and fees are subject to a \$30.00 returned check charge. If tuition payments are delinquent by more than 60 days, parents may be asked to withdraw their student from Bethany until all accounts are brought up to date. Participation in extracurricular activities is contingent upon prompt payment of bills and fees. Report cards, diplomas, and transcripts will not be released until all debts are satisfied. Please call our Business Manager to discuss a payment plan for any financial setbacks. In hardship situations, arrangements may be made prior to delinquency penalization. Forthrightness and open communication are helpful and appreciated.

## **FACTS TUITION MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

All families wishing to pay in monthly installments must register with FACTS. There is a set-up fee of \$41 per family. Several payment options are available. FACTS flyers are available at the front office and a FACTS link is located on the home page of the BCS website.

## **RE-ENROLLMENT PERIOD**

Information regarding the admission to and re-enrollment at Bethany Christian School is available in the Admissions Office located on the ground floor of the school building near the 8th Street entrance.

## **EARLY ENROLLMENT TUITION DISCOUNT**

Bethany Christian School offers an early enrollment discount. The deadline for the early enrollment discount will be announced via publications, calendars, and email communications. In order to register early and qualify for the early enrollment discounted tuition rate, business accounts must be current and up-to-date.

## **LATE ENROLLMENT**

If a student applies for admission after June 1<sup>st</sup> and before the first day of the school year, all missed payments must be paid before the student is considered officially enrolled. For those students applying for admission after the school year has begun and during the first semester of the school year, the full published tuition rate will be charged. For students applying for admission during the second semester, a prorated tuition will be assessed.

## **WITHDRAWAL OF A STUDENT**

Permanent withdrawal must be conducted through the Admissions and Business Offices. To withdraw a student from Bethany Christian School, the following steps must be taken:

- ✓ Schedule an exit interview with the school Admissions Director to sign a formal withdrawal.
- ✓ Meet with the Business Manager to ensure that all outstanding tuition, fees, and charges are paid in full.
- ✓ All property and textbooks must be returned or the replacement costs must be paid.

Student records and transcripts will be sent to the next school upon request. Student records are the property of Bethany Christian School. Records and transcripts will be held until financial obligations are met.

The administration of Bethany Christian School extends teacher contracts and purchases supplies based upon the reliability of our enrollment contracts. If a student withdraws from Bethany for any reason, tuition is due and payable through the end of that semester. A semester constitutes the first two quarters or last two quarters of the school year. Please refer to the school calendar online for semester dates.

## **ADDRESS CHANGES/PHONE/CUSTODY**

Accurate, up-to-date records are essential for the normal processing of school business. Please keep the school informed of any changes in address, phone numbers, place of employment, emergency contact information and custody by notifying our Admission Office so that our database will remain accurate.

## **COLLECTION OF CASH**

All money sent to the school for special activities, pictures, etc., must be sealed in an envelope with the student's name, teacher, amount and activity noted on the front. Parents are encouraged to pay these types of fees by check or money order. Checks are made to "Bethany Christian School" unless a different payee is specified. Please double-check all payments to ensure that the correct information and amount is enclosed.

# **Parent Support**

Parental cooperation and support of our discipline procedures is essential for students to accept, process, and learn from the event and grow in maturity. The school strives to work with parents as partners, not as adversaries. If, however, a situation cannot be resolved amicably, and the parents are unwilling to support the

disciplinary actions of the school, the school reserves the right to require the withdrawal of the student from the school.

### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Bethany Christian School appreciates the support and involvement of our parents! The difference between good and great schools is often determined by the extent to which parents are involved! We want to give our parents the opportunity to participate at school-related activities.

Our Parent Teacher Fellowship (PTF) actively supports the school through many different functions and fundraisers. All parents of Bethany students are considered to be members of the PTF and are encouraged to attend meetings. Scheduled PTF meetings will be announced and posted on the school calendar.

### **GIFTS FOR TEACHERS**

Bethany Christian Preschool is extremely grateful for the generosity of parents toward our teachers and staff members. However, in order to prevent any conflict of interest, the value of gifts from individual parents to teachers must be kept at a value of \$50 or less. If a classroom's parents choose to present the teacher with a "group gift", these donations are not to be considered mandatory to all parents. In addition, please keep the collection of funds and the amount of individual donations strictly confidential.

### **NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS**

The following guidelines have been adopted to assist in situations where a non-custodial parent wishes to become involved in the school activities.

- Unless the school is presented with a court order, the school will not interfere with a non-custodial parent's involvement in school related activities. The school is not "choosing sides."
- If the actions of parents, custodial or non-custodial, become disruptive to the operations of the school, the school has the right to restrict access to the parent and take other reasonable and necessary actions.
- For student activities requiring parental consent, the school will accept consent only from the custodial parent, unless authority to grant consent is given to the non-custodial parent by a court order or comparable legal document.

### **PARENTAL CODE OF ETHICS**

The following code of ethics was adopted by Bethany Christian School and requires parents:

- To support the school and its philosophy, objectives, teachings, and discipline, to conduct themselves in a manner which does not interfere with the school's educational mission or harm its reputation and good name, and otherwise to adhere at all times to customary standards of Christian conduct;

- To support and act with deference and respect with regard to: the school, its teachers, assistants, staff members, students, and other parents; and to encourage their children to do likewise;
- To refrain from engaging in dissemination of rumors, gossip, and innuendo with respect to the school, its teachers and staff, students, and other school parents;
- To support, and to refrain from interfering with, the performance of duties of any teacher or staff member;
- To refrain from interfering or encouraging interference with any school classes, activities or functions.

In the event that the school administration concludes that there has been a willful, serious, and/or harmful violation of the Parental Code of Ethics by a parent, the school reserves the right to take any of the following actions: (A) Issue a verbal or written reprimand; (B) Allow the parent's student(s) to continue being enrolled on a probationary basis; (C) Request that an offending parent withdraw the parent's enrolled student(s); or (D) Suspend or expel an offending parent's enrolled student(s).

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE PREROGATIVE**

This handbook provides general guidelines for students and parents. These are guidelines only. The handbook is not designed to restrict administrators from doing their job, and thus, the administration reserves the right to exercise its administrative prerogative in responding to situations or circumstances that may occur within the course of the school year.

## **YOU DID IT!**

Praise God that you made it to the end of this extremely long, but super important handbook! 😊  
Please sign and return the next page acknowledging that you have read and understand our school's procedures and policies. Thank you!



Thank you for following our guidelines and for choosing Bethany Christian Preschool.

Federal law prohibits discrimination in admission practices because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin or handicap. Bethany Christian School is classified as a religious corporation and, therefore, may discriminate because of religion.

*\*\*\* Please remove, sign, and return this form to the office by Friday, September 8, 2017. One form per preschool family is sufficient.\*\*\**

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I have read this 2017-2018 Parent/Student Handbook and agree to the terms, policies, and information contained within.

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Student's Name (please print)      Grade      Teacher

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Student's Name (please print)      Grade      Teacher

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Student's Name (please print)      Grade      Teacher

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Parent/Guardian's Signature      Date