

Bethany Lutheran Preschool

where it all begins

Handbook of Policies & Procedures (Parent Edition)

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Founded in 1965

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BETHANY LUTHERAN NURSERY SCHOOL IS A PLACE WHERE CHILDREN CAN GROW AND LEARN THROUGH A VARIETY OF SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, PHYSICAL, AND INTELLECTUAL ACTIVITIES. WE ARE COMMITTED TO THE CHILDREN’S NEEDS AS INDIVIDUALS AND AS PEERS WITHIN A GROUP. AT BETHANY, WE EMPHASIZE LOVE, NURTURING AND DEVELOPMENT THROUGH APPROPRIATE ACTIVITIES WITHIN A CHRISTIAN ENVIRONMENT. WE TEACH VALUES SUCH AS CARING AND SHARING, HAVE DAILY PRAYERS AND BLESSINGS, AND CELEBRATE SOME OF THE CHRISTIAN HOLIDAYS.

OUR LEGAL NAME IS *BETHANY LUTHERAN NURSERY SCHOOL* BUT WE ARE ALSO KNOWN AS BETHANY LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL. WE HAVE BEEN IN EXISTENCE SINCE 1965.

MISSION STATEMENT

BETHANY LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL IS AN INTENTIONAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN AGES 3 AND 4. IT IS AN OUTREACH MINISTRY OF BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH. WE PROVIDE A WELCOMING INTRODUCTION TO THE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT THROUGH PLAY.

OUR CORE VALUES:

- CHILDREN ARE SOCIAL BEINGS; WE ENCOURAGE GROUP LEARNING BY TEACHING THEM TO PLAY WITH ONE ANOTHER AND SHARE.
- CHILDREN ARE PROBLEM SOLVERS; WE STIMULATE LEARNING THROUGH ENCOURAGEMENT OF THEIR DESIRES TO EXPLORE FOR THEMSELVES.
- CHILDREN ARE INDEPENDENT LEARNERS; WE PROVIDE INTERACTIONAL PROGRAMMING CURRICULUM BASED ON THEIR INTEREST AND DESIRES.
- CHILDREN ARE CURIOUS BEINGS; WE PROVIDE ACTIVITIES THAT CHALLENGE CHILDREN TO THINK, HYPOTHESIZE, PREDICT AND INTERPRET.

OUR OBJECTIVES ARE TO:

- HELP EACH CHILD DEVELOP POSITIVE ATTITUDES TOWARD EDUCATIONAL FULFILLMENT
- PROVIDE PROGRAMS, PLAY MATERIALS AND GUIDANCE AIMED TO ENCOURAGE HEALTHY GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT – MENTALLY, PHYSICALLY, EMOTIONALLY AND SOCIALLY
- HELP EACH CHILD REALIZE HIS/HER FULLEST CAPABILITIES FOR GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT
- PROVIDE FIRST-HAND EXPERIENCES THAT ARE CHALLENGING AND MEANINGFUL
- ADAPT TO GROUP LEARNING BY TEACHING THEM TO SHARE MATERIALS AND SPACE
- STIMULATE LEARNING THROUGH LOVE, CURIOSITY, LANGUAGE SKILL, AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF THEIR DESIRE TO DISCOVER AND EXPLORE FOR THEMSELVES
- HAVE A CURRICULUM BASED ON INDIVIDUAL ABILITIES AND DIFFERENCES

THE BETHANY LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL BOARD HAS OVERSIGHT OF THE BLNS PROGRAM. THE DIRECTOR REPORTS TO THE PASTOR AND SUBMITS MONTHLY REPORTS TO THE BOARD. BETHANY’S PASTOR, THE BLNS DIRECTOR AND THE REGISTRAR ALSO ATTEND THE BOARD MEETINGS. IF A PARENT OR STAFF PERSON HAS A CONCERN OR SUGGESTION THAT HAS NOT BEEN ADDRESSED BY THE STAFF OR ADMINISTRATION, PARENTS OR STAFF ARE ENCOURAGED TO PUT THEIR CONCERN(S) IN WRITING AND SEND IT TO THE PRESCHOOL BOARD.

DIRECTOR:	Terri Camilleri	860-632-0597	tcamilleri19@gmail.com
REGISTRAR/OFFICE MANAGER:	Robin Scotti	860-632-0597	blpscromwell@gmail.com

BLNS HAS **HEALTH, EDUCATION, DENTAL AND SOCIAL SERVICES CONSULTANTS** AS REQUIRED BY STATE LICENSING. THE HEALTH AND EDUCATION CONSULTANTS REGULARLY VISIT THE PRESCHOOL, AS REQUIRED. THE OTHER CONSULTANTS ARE UTILIZED, AS REQUIRED, OR ON AN AS NEED BASIS.

POLICIES, PLANS & PROCEDURES

ADMISSION

BLNS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, nationality, or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, and other school-administered programs.

Children must be three years of age by December 31st and be fully potty-trained [*i.e., no diapers or pull ups*] to be admitted to the three year old class. Potty-trained is defined as those children that are able to use the bathroom alone, without a teacher’s assistance. This includes ensuring children can flush the toilet, wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, dry hands with paper towels, and then dispose of paper towels in the trash can in the bathroom. Students are expected to let the teachers or teacher assistants know that they need to use the bathroom.

Registration for next year’s class begins in January (date to be determined). Parents of returning 4 year old students and the current year’s 3 year old students will receive a letter in the parent mailboxes or by email early in January informing them when they will be able to register their child for the 4 year old classes. For sibling admission, parents are asked to contact the Registrar to let her know that you have a child eligible for preschool. They will be placed on the list to receive a registration packet. There is a non-refundable \$100 registration fee.

REQUIRED FORMS AND CHILD RECORDS

The following forms are required and must be completed **before** your child can attend BLNS.

- Registration Form
 - Health Record Form that includes allergy information and is completed by your child's physician. These confidential forms should include all information pertinent to the health of your child and will be kept in a secured file in the office for reference. *(see ✓ below)*
 - If your child required the use of an Epi-pen, a form must be filled out by the child's physician. An Epi-pen will be kept at the preschool in the child's classroom. If Benadryl is suggested, please provide an unopened bottle. Please bring the form, Epi-pen and Benadryl in a zip lock bag with the child's name on it. *(Your Pediatrician should have the form, if not, please see the Registrar for the Epi-pen form.)*
 - Emergency Information Form including authorized adults for routine dismissal & emergency pick-up. It is the parent's responsibility to keep this form current. Parents should speak to the Registrar to update the form [*i.e., new address, phone number, etc.*].
 - Parents signed acknowledgement form that they have read and understand the BLNS Handbook of Policies and Procedures. If you don't understand something, please see the Director for clarification.
 - Permission Form (includes permission to have child's photo on BLNS Facebook page and the Homeroom app)
 - Flu immunization must be received between September and December of the current year. Form from your pediatrician as proof of having received the flu Immunization prior to December 31st must be submitted to the Registrar as soon as possible, but prior to December 31st.
- ✓ Child's health form must be **NO MORE THAN ONE (1) YEAR OLD** from date of exam. It is the **parent's responsibility** to submit an up to date form prior to the expiration date. Children will not be able to attend preschool until a form is received.

These records are kept on file in accordance with state licensing. The contents of children's file are kept confidential and secured in locked files. Copies are also kept with the teachers' emergency notebooks, which are kept in the teachers' locked cabinets. Parents are **required** to keep the child's teacher and/or the Director informed of any changes or events that may affect the child's well-being or behavior. Please be sure to inform the registrar **immediately** of any changes in information (e.g., address, phone numbers, employers, pick-up people).

EDUCATIONAL/CURRICULUM

Children at BLNS will follow a flexible daily schedule that meets the individual needs of the diverse population of children and families served by our program, including those with cultural, language and developmental differences. The curriculum is based on the requirements from the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood (OEC), the state standard framework for early childhood education, as well as guidance from NAEYC. NAEYC has taken a leadership role in adopting guidance for developmentally appropriate practices. Our Director of BLNS is a member of the CT Early Learning & Development Standards and the NAEYC organization. For more information on NAEYC, go to <http://www.naeyc.org>.

3 Year Old's Preschool Schedule

9:00 a.m.	9:15 a.m.	Arrival, Table Toys
9:15 a.m.	9:30 a.m.	Circle Time, Attendance
9:30 a.m.	10:25 a.m.	Free Play / Art / Learning Centers
10:25 a.m.	10:40 a.m.	Story Time
10:40 a.m.	11:00 a.m.	Prayer, Snack, Library
11:00 a.m.	11:25 a.m.	Outside or Gym
11:25 a.m.	11:30 a.m.	Dismissal

4 Year Old's Preschool Schedule

5 Day Class - AM		
9:00 a.m.	9:15 a.m.	Arrival, Write Names
9:15 a.m.	9:30 a.m.	Circle Time
9:30 a.m.	10:30 a.m.	Art, Letter of the Week, Craft
10:35 a.m.	10:50 a.m.	Story Time
10:50 a.m.	11:20 a.m.	Outside or Gym
11:20 a.m.	11:30 a.m.	Wash Hands
11:30 a.m.	12:00 p.m.	Lunch
12:00 p.m.		Dismissal

3 Day Class - PM		
12:30 p.m.	12:45 p.m.	Arrival, Write Names, Table Toys
12:45 p.m.	1:05 p.m.	Circle Time
1:05 p.m.	1:55 p.m.	Activity, Letter of the Week, Craft
1:55 p.m.	2:10 p.m.	Clean-up, Story Time
2:10 p.m.	2:25 p.m.	Wash Hands, Snack
2:25 p.m.	2:55 p.m.	Outside or Gym
2:55 p.m.	3:00 p.m.	Dismissal

EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM *[Subject to change]*

An extended day option may be offered at a later date to be determined.

LUNCH AT PRESCHOOL *[for the 4 Year Old M-F Class]*

Students will start to have lunch at BLPS approximately two (2) weeks after the first day of school.

HOME-SCHOOL TRANSITION/SEPARATIONS

Because children are individuals, they tend to respond differently to the first days and weeks of school. Many children will quickly become acclimated to BLNS and will not be concerned about saying good-bye to Mom or Dad. Other children may be apprehensive initially but will soon adjust to the new environment. A few children will take longer to adjust.

Our staff is committed to making this transition as smooth as possible. At BLNS, we do the following to promote a smooth transition:

- Before enrollment, families can visit the school so that the child can see the environment. Visits can be scheduled prior to the beginning of the school day, in between classes or at the end of the school day. All visits should be scheduled with the Registrar.

- In addition to visiting, parents should begin talking about going to school as soon as possible. Talk about the things the child will be doing, such as playing with blocks, painting, or going out to the playground. Also, parents should talk to your child about what you will be doing while you are apart.
- The first day of school is a one (1) hour visiting day for the child. Parents will leave their child in the classroom and then pick up at the end of the hour. The next scheduled class will be a full session class.
- With the initial few separations, parents are encouraged to let their child know when they will be returning. Due to the developmental characteristics of children, it works best if parents use a concrete marker of time such as “I’ll be back to pick you up after you sing your goodbye song”.
- In the case where the child is upset at the separation, teachers or assistant teachers will comfort the child and encourage the parent to complete the separation routine and promptly leave. In the rare instance when a child cannot be comforted, we will call the parents to come and pick the child up.
- If a child is still having a hard time with separation, the parents will be contacted, and an assessment will be made as to how to make the transition better for the child.

INSPECTION REPORTS

Current inspection reports and compliance letters are available at BLNS or by contacting the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood (OEC).

PET CARE POLICY

There are no pets at BLNS at this time.

ALLERGIES

It is not unusual for children with allergies to food or other substances to be enrolled. Parents should provide allergy information on the enrollment forms and should notify the staff if there are changes during the year. Adjustments will be made to ensure the safety of the child. **PLEASE NOTE:** BLNS is a “**nut free preschool**”. If you bring any type of food (i.e., cupcakes, candy) to preschool, it must be without any nut or nut products and not made in a facility that produces nuts products. Speak to the Teacher if you have a question regarding something you would like to bring in.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

Under most circumstances, medication (prescription or non-prescription) will not be administered to a child by a staff member. The preschool will only administer emergency medications which include prescribed inhalers and premeasured commercially prepared injectable medication (i.e., Epi-pens, Auvi-Q, etc.), non-prescription topical medication and EMERGENCY oral medications (i.e., Benadryl). The parental responsibilities include providing the center the proper medication authorization form, and the medication. The medication administration form must be signed by the authorized prescriber and parent/guardian giving the preschool authorization to administer the medication. This form is available at your pediatrician and/or the preschool. The Registrar and/or the Director will be in touch with any parent/guardian whose child needs such medication as described above to explain what is required per State Regulations.

The medication authorization form must include information, such as:

- The child’s name, address, and birthdate
- The date the medication order was written
- Medication name, dose, and method of administration

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

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

All medications must be in their original child resistant safety container and clearly labeled with child's name, name of prescription, date of prescription, and directions for use. Except for non-prescription medications, premeasured commercially prepared injectable medications (i.e., Epi-pens), glucagon and asthma inhalant medications, all medications will be stored in a container inaccessible to children and, if directed by a manufacturer, refrigerated. Controlled medications will be stored in accordance with 21a-262-10 of the RCSA. Non-prescription topical medications will be stored away from food and inaccessible to children.

Staff responsibilities include, but are not limited to, ensuring the medication administration form is complete and that the medication being received matches the medication orders and stored as directed. The center staff will keep accurate documentation of all medications administered. Included, but not limited in the documentation are:

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

Parents will be notified by telephone and/or text when/if a child has been administered any prescription medication. Staff are trained in the administration of Oral, Topical & Inhalant medication by a physician, physician assistant, APRN, or RN and renewed every three years. Training for premeasured commercially prepared injectable medications (Epi-Pen) is renewed each year. At no time is an untrained staff allowed to administer prescription medications.

All unused or expired medication shall be returned to the parent/ guardian or disposed of if it is not picked up within one week following the termination or the order, in the presence of at least one witness. BLNS shall keep a written record of the medications destroyed when shall be signed by both parties.

ILLNESS

Our staff is dedicated to maintaining a healthy environment for children and staff. It is requested that if you are keeping your child home, you call the office to let us know. We expect that parents observe the following guidelines:

- Children should be kept home if they have had a fever, vomiting, or diarrhea. The child must be “symptom free” for **at least 24 hours**.
- If your child has a bad cough, stuffy nose with visible mucus draining from it or a temperature, we ask that you keep him/her at home.
- Please notify us immediately if your child contracts a communicable disease or develops any allergies or food restrictions.
- If a child becomes ill at school, parents will be notified and must be prepared to pick up the child. If parents are not available, we must be able to reach someone at one of your emergency numbers.
- If the teacher or assistant suspects a child is mildly ill, has diarrhea, severe coughing, pink eye, a temperature, unusual spots or rashes, vomiting, or has lice, the child will be immediately isolated in the isolation room under the supervision of a BLNS staff member. A parent or guardian will be called to pick up the child. If needed, the sick child will be brought to the isolation room and will be provided with a cot and blanket for use until he/she is discharged to a parent or guardian. After the ill child is discharged, the cot is sanitized with an appropriate germicidal detergent and the blanket is properly laundered before either is used again for another child.
- If the illness turns out to be a communicable disease (e.g., pink eye, chicken pox, lice, fifth disease), BLNS is required to inform all parents of a potential outbreak. The infected child(ren)’s identity is kept confidential. If the communicable disease is chicken pox (varicella), BLNS submits a form to the Department of Public Health.

SNACKS

Snacks will be provided by parents and should be a quick pick me up snack. Examples are: yogurt, fruit, cheese & crackers, goldfish, pretzels, etc. **All snacks must be nut-free.** **Please note:** Teachers may amend the snack list due to a child with a specific allergy in a classroom.

FUNDRAISERS

If parents are interested in volunteering to sponsor a fundraiser for the benefit of the Preschool, please speak with the Director. All fundraising must have prior approval.

PARENT/GUARDIAN AND CHILD RELATED

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is important for children to receive the maximum benefit from the program. It is requested that parents call the office, 860-632-0597, to let the preschool know when a child will be late, out for the day or if a child is to be picked up early. Head counts will be taken periodically throughout the

day. They will occur at the beginning of the day, at snack time and before and after the children go outside or to the gym.

TUITION PAYMENTS AND FEES

Tuition payments are calculated for the entire school year (September thru June) taking into consideration scheduled classes, vacations, and days off. The total annual tuition is divided into ten (10) equal monthly payments, which are due the **1st of each month for August thru May**. Discounts are available for siblings registered in the **same** school year and Bethany Church members in good standing. Payments can be made by check, cash, money order or an online payment source, such as through your bank. If you need more information, please contact the Registrar. Check payments can be placed in the "Lockbox" located on the wall outside of the preschool office door or can be mailed to BLNS - Attention: Registrar, 50 Court Street, Cromwell, CT 06416. **There is a \$15 late fee for tuition not received by the 10th of the month.**

ARRIVAL PROCEDURE

A parent or responsible adult must accompany children inside the building. Under no circumstances is a child to be left unattended. Parents are required to sign their child in each day on the form on the bulletin board. Do not leave until your child is greeted by a teacher or teacher assistant and is safely inside the classroom. Please check the parent mailbox before you leave and take any items with you as you leave the building.

DISMISSAL / LATE PICK-UP POLICY

Children will be released one at a time from the preschool door. Please sign your child out on the form on the bulletin board, collect your child, check the parent mailbox before you leave and take any items with you as you leave the building.

BLNS is required to have appropriate supervision during late pick up times. Two staff members will always remain at the program with the child. If the child has not been picked up within 5 to 10 minutes of the child's scheduled pick up time, a staff person will attempt to call the child's parents/guardians using the numbers provided. If they cannot be reached, the staff person will attempt to call the emergency and authorized, alternate adults provided by the parent/ guardians at the time of enrollment. The police will be called after 30 minutes, if parents or other adults specified on the permission to release forms cannot be reached. At that time the child may be released to the police. The non-emergency number for our local police department is **(860) 635-2256**.

Compensation to the teachers for waiting with a child(ren) are as follows:

Late fees will be imposed as follows: **Up to 15 minutes late** - \$5 per teacher; **15 to 30 minutes late** - \$10 per teacher; **30 to 45 minutes late** - \$15 per teacher; **45 to 60 minutes late** - \$20 per teacher.

WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURE

If a parent decides to terminate their child's enrollment for whatever reason, we **must have two weeks' written notice**. This gives us time to help adjust both the child leaving and his/her classmates to the change. **Please note:** You are responsible for the tuition for the month that you withdraw your child from preschool.

CLOTHING

BLNS provides a variety of experiences for young children that may involve clothing getting soiled. Parents should send children to school in casual clothing that is easily laundered and shoes with non-skid soles. Children dressed inappropriately may feel inhibited about becoming involved in some messy activities.

Children are encouraged to wear a smock provided by the school when they are involved in painting or other messy activities.

It is extremely important that the child is dressed according to weather conditions as we will be utilizing the playground on most days in the Fall and Spring, weather-permitting. In the winter, we use the “gym.” It is much cooler than our classroom. Parents may want to leave an extra sweater or sweatshirt at school for their child to wear in the gym. Parents are asked to please label the clothing with their child’s name.

Although children should be potty-trained before they begin at BLNS, occasionally, young children do have accidents. In such a case, the child will be changed into dry clothes provided by the parent. The soiled clothing will be placed into a plastic bag and sent home with the child. If a child has diarrhea while at school, a parent/guardian will be called to take the child home.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Integral to our philosophy is the belief that parents are the primary educators of their children. It is the function of teachers and assistant teachers to support and facilitate the parent/child relationship because parents are the “expert” when it comes to knowing their own child. BLNS functions best when it understands a parent’s perceptions, feelings, and observations about their own children. It is critical that our staff form a partnership with parents to best meet the needs of the children and families.

We welcome parent involvement in the program as an important way to build this partnership. There are a variety of ways in which parents can participate in our program.

BIRTHDAYS

To celebrate the child’s birthday at school:



Parents should select a date that is convenient for the class and close to their child’s birthday.



Parents are encouraged to provide an individual snack for each classmate, i.e. cupcakes, brownies, cookies, donut holes, ice cream cups, etc. **BLNS is a nut-free school.**

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Each class will receive a monthly newsletter from their teacher. These newsletters are provided for each parent and contain important information designed to keep the parent/guardians informed of what is going on in their child’s classroom and to reinforce important upcoming dates and events scheduled. The newsletters be in parent mailboxes in the hallway and/or emailed to the parents/guardians. They will also be posted on the website on the preschool tab. (www.bethanylutheranchurchcromwell.org)

NOTICES

Important notices, etc. will be placed in parent mailboxes in the hallway. Please check mailboxes on a **DAILY** basis. Parents should also check the class bulletin board, located in the hallway by the classrooms, **DAILY**.

HOLIDAYS

Parties will be held for most major holidays at the teacher’s discretion. Parents may also be asked to assist in the classroom on those special occasions. We may ask for volunteers to provide snacks and to help in the classroom. A sign-up sheet will be posted on the bulletin board. **BLNS is a nut-free school.**

PARENT-TEACHER INTERACTION

Parents are welcome to BLNS at any time. The teachers and teacher assistants welcome the opportunity to talk informally with parents for a few minutes each day, but please try not to interfere with class time. Parents and teachers are encouraged to request conferences when they seem necessary. For the 4's, a phone conference will be scheduled in the fall and an in-person conference will take place prior to kindergarten registration.

The 3-year old class Teacher will hold a very short telephone conference in the Fall to let parents know how their child is doing in the preschool environment. Another lengthier conference will be held in the Spring with all parents of 3's.

You may come to observe our program or may be invited to assist with activities periodically. We also encourage parents to come into the classroom to share their career, hobby, or a special talent. Please prearrange a time with the teachers.

PARENT SUGGESTIONS OR COMPLAINTS

Should a parent have a concern, we encourage parents to discuss the issue in the following order to work out a resolution: first the classroom Teacher, then the Director of BLNS. If the concern cannot be resolved at that level, parents should send their concern in writing to Bethany Lutheran Church, 50 Court Street, Cromwell, CT 06416. You will be contacted by the Pastor or a representative from the Preschool Board in an effort to resolve your concern. Situations that will determine that a resolution is not possible include but are not limited to the following:

- Any person involved displays inappropriate behavior such as shouting, accusing, name-calling, swearing or physical assault.
- Any person involved refuses to follow the prescribed process.
- Any person involved jeopardizes the process by spreading information concerning the conflict to those outside the immediate conflict or those involved in the resolution process.

FIELD TRIPS / SPECIAL VISITORS

We believe that field trips are an important part of a young child's learning experience. Off-site field trips will be available to our classes. Each student **must** be accompanied by a parent/guardian or carpool with someone who is responsible to watch the student. At the beginning of the school year, parents/guardians should have completed and signed the Permission Form, which includes field trip permission for their child to attend a field trip.

The first aid kit, children's health records, attendance, driver and rider list **must** accompany teachers on the field trips. Parents/guardians are required to drive their own child, which includes car seats for every child and seat belts for every adult in the vehicle.

An array of professionals may visit the 3 and 4 year old classes at BLNS during the school year within the classroom setting. Also, special visitors such as firemen and musicians are invited to BLNS to share their experiences with the children and teachers. Parents are also invited to come and share a talent or their family tradition with the classes. Please speak to the teacher to schedule a date.

SCHEDULED HOLIDAYS AND VACATIONS

Parents receive a calendar by September outlining BLNS holidays and vacations. The calendar is also up on our website under the Preschool tab (www.bethanylutheranchurchcromwell.org). Regular attendance is important for children to receive the maximum benefit from the program. Attendance is recorded every

day. We reserve the right to modify the calendar at any time due to inclement weather or other emergency situations that may warrant the closing of school. BLNS has two (2) vacations listed on the school calendar, with numerous days off. Should you and your family plan a vacation at a different time, you are still responsible to pay the tuition for the time you are away.

PRESCHOOL AT NIGHT

Family Fun Night: It is a fun night where the BLNS family gathers to celebrate the successes of the school year.

4-YEAR OLD GRADUATION

Graduation ceremony will be held on the last scheduled day of school.

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE, SAFETY & MANAGEMENT

The health and safety of all children is of utmost importance. Thus, there are many policies related to health and safety at BLNS. The following sections represent the BLNS philosophy regarding discipline, family involvement and health and safety. Staff should adhere to this philosophy.

Please Note: Bethany maintains a smoke free environment in and around the preschool/church building. Per state law, smoking is prohibited within 25' of any public building. Bethany's policy is that smoking on church/preschool property is prohibited.

GUIDANCE

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

- Positive guidance -- When disputes arise among children or between a child and staff, the staff will encourage a "talking out" process where the goal is to acknowledge feelings and find solutions using the children's ideas wherever possible.
- Setting clear limits -- Staff will encourage and model positive behavior, positive reinforcement, the use of peer support and clearly defined rules.
- Redirection -- A child who may be aggressive or who is disruptive or destructive of other children's work may be asked to make an activity choice in another area.

Staff will continuously supervise children during disciplinary actions.

Staff shall not be abusive, neglectful, or use corporal, humiliating or frightening punishment under any circumstances. No child will be physically restrained unless it is necessary to protect the safety or health of the child or others, using least restrictive methods, as appropriate.

Becoming self-disciplined is a long-term process. One of the major tasks in an early childhood program is assisting children with this process. At BLNS we are committed to supporting each child's progress toward becoming independent and self-disciplined. We provide an environment that encourages children to make choices and decisions with a limited number of rules. We promote freedom within our environment as long as children do not disrupt the classroom or disregard the few rules that we do have. We do not allow children to hurt themselves, to hurt others, or to damage property.

Generally, children need guidance in using materials and interacting with others. If after an initial reminder, a child continues to use materials inappropriately the child is redirected to another activity. If two children are in conflict, they are encouraged to negotiate and discuss alternatives to solve the conflict peacefully. In some cases, this requires a great deal of teacher support and modeling. A teacher or teacher assistant will intervene in instances where children are repeatedly disruptive, out of control, or injuring themselves or others. They will be removed from the group for the short time it takes for them to be calm enough to discuss alternative behaviors. They will then be assisted in rejoining the group.

In the event a child is biting, striking, or kicking, an adult for their own and other's protection, may gently restrain the child. At this time, the child's energy will be redirected in a positive way. If behavior does not change and the child is out of control, parents will be notified and will have to make alternative arrangements to have their child picked up.

Regarding excessive behavioral conditions, an assessment program at the local elementary school will be suggested to determine the child's needs so that a plan can be developed, implemented, and monitored. Our staff is committed to working with parents in a positive way to help eliminate inappropriate behaviors.

If, after all efforts have been exhausted, the child's behavior remains inconsistent with a safe environment for all, the child will be required to withdraw from BLNS.

HAND WASHING

Hand washing has been identified as the major way to prevent the spread of all communicable diseases. When entering school, all children will wash their hands for 20 seconds (or use hand sanitizer). Children will also be utilizing a safe hand-washing product prior to and after snacks. In addition, all children will be required to wash their hands after toileting, before eating snacks, after blowing/sneezing, after water or sensory play, after playground use/outdoor play, after handling animals/animal cages (if on premises) and whenever hands are visibly soiled, and after messy activities for 20 seconds. Staff will also follow these practices to prevent the spread of disease and to model proper health practices for the children.

Proper hand washing techniques are as follows: 1) wet the hands and apply a small amount of liquid soap; 2) rub hands together vigorously with soap and water for at least 20 seconds; 3) wash all surfaces of the hands, including the back, palms, wrists, between fingers and fingernails; 4) rinse hands thoroughly to remove the soap lather; 5) dry hands with a single use disposable towel; 6) turn faucet off with the towel.

IMPORTANT / PARKING

For the safety of all the children, please follow these guidelines:

- **ONLY PARK IN A DESIGNATED PARKING SPOT.** Do not park near the curb in front of the Preschool entrance. **This is a safety hazard!**
- **Do not** leave your motor running.
- **Do not** leave other children unattended in your car. *See Pledge Flyer (in your mailboxes)* This is considered neglect and will have to be reported, as mandated, to DCF if our childcare givers observe or become aware that it is occurring. Please ask another parent to temporarily watch your other children while you are dropping off or picking up your child.

USE OF THE BATHROOM

When a child needs to use the bathroom, teachers and teacher assistants **must always** leave the bathroom door **open** and the curtain closed while the child is in the bathroom. The teacher or teacher assistant will assist the child when necessary. The bathroom door will be closed – only when all children have returned to the classroom.

DAILY SUPERVISION

Headcounts are taken at the beginning of the day, at snack time, and before and after children go outside or to the gym. The 4-year old classes each have a maximum of 18 attending children and the 3-year old classes each have a maximum of 16 attending children. There will be always one (1) teacher and one (1) teacher assistant per class. OEC State ratios will be followed at all times.

During the playground or gym time, the teacher and assistant take the class either outside to play on the playground or down to the indoor gym. Staff will take a cell phone with them in case of an emergency. A first aid fanny-pack will also be brought with the staff. Should the class be split up (example: to go outside to the playground), the ratio of 1 to 10 will continue to be kept. In the instance where a child needs to come inside to use the bathroom, the 1 to 10 ratio will also be kept. The teacher or teacher assistant who brings the child in to use the bathroom will bring enough children with her/him to keep the above noted ratio.

SECURE ENVIRONMENT

Our school doors are locked at all times when the children are in attendance. Ring Cameras are located inside and outside the preschool and playground. While parents are welcome at any time, you will need to ring the doorbell to gain access to the preschool at times other than arrival or dismissal. All visitors will be required to sign in and out in the office if they are staying in the building longer than five (5) minutes.

HOT DRINKS

Any hot liquids (e.g., coffee) brought into the classroom must be covered with lid that a child cannot open and must be kept out of reach of the children.

DISINFECTING

In addition to hand washing, a disinfectant product is used daily on tables, toilets, sinks and other surfaces.

ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

All electrical outlets must have a childproof cover on it. If using the outlet to vacuum or for any other reason, the electrical outlet cover must be put back immediately. If an outlet is missing a cover, the Registrar or Director is to be made aware of the missing cover and it is to be replaced immediately.

BIOHAZARD MATERIALS

A **red covered trash pail** is located in the children's bathroom under the sink for disposing any paper towels, rubber gloves, etc. This includes items containing blood, urine, vomit, etc. The Staff disposes of biohazard materials and all garbage on a daily basis.

BULLETIN BOARDS

Staples are to be used on the bulletin boards inside the classroom. For the bulletin boards outside of the classroom, staples or thumb tacks may be used. **NO PUSH PINS** are to be used at any time.

USE OF THE PLAYGROUND

Students line up at the back doors in the classrooms. All gates are kept latched.

The public will not be allowed to use the BLNS playground during school hours. If this occurs, they will be asked to leave before the BLNS children go out to the playground.

We explain the following safety rules to the children for using the playground equipment and parents are expected to assist in assuring children obey them:

- Only walk up the stairs of the slide and only slide down on their buttocks. Children are not to slide down on their stomachs, sides, or knees.
- Children are to wait at the top of the slide until the child ahead has completely slid down and moved off the slide.
- Sand is not to be thrown in the air. Sand must be kept low to the ground and in the sandbox.

IF PARENTS PERMIT THEIR CHILD(REN) TO USE THE PLAYGROUND BEFORE OR AFTER SCHOOL HOURS, IT IS AT THEIR OWN RISK AND BLNS/BLC IS NOT LIABLE FOR ANY INJURY. IN ADDITION, PARENTS ARE REQUIRED TO SUPERVISE THEIR OWN CHILD AND MUST COMPLY WITH THE PLAYGROUND SAFETY RULES LISTED ABOVE AND ALSO POSTED ON THE PLAYGROUND GATE. IF WE SEE THAT THE PLAYGROUND RULES ARE NOT BEING FOLLOWED, WE WILL NEED TO DEEM THE PLAYGROUND AS “OFF LIMITS” OUTSIDE OF CLASS TIME. PLEASE HELP KEEP EVERYONE SAFE AND REVIEW THE RULES WITH YOUR CHILD.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN (*Medical, Fire, Weather, Evacuation*)

Primary Goal: The safety and well-being of all children and staff at Bethany Lutheran Nursery School.

BLNS has established guidelines to limit and manage emergencies; however, accidents, natural disasters and fires do occur. Therefore, we have taken or will take the following safety precautions. In addition, our emergency plans are kept posted by the BLNS emergency exits at all times. Ring cameras have been installed in the Preschool hallways and on the playground and will be monitored at all times.

MEDICAL

The staff has received training in CPR and First Aid. First aid supplies are kept in the cabinets marked with the Red Cross symbol located in each classroom and the church kitchen. The first aid fanny-pack is also accessible whenever the class goes to the gym, outside or on field trips. Each staff member is familiar with these locations and the supplies.

In the case of a minor accident that requires simple first aid procedures, the child’s injury will be cleaned and treated as necessary. Staff will then complete an Injury Report Form that must be signed by the parent during pick-up time. If this minor accident involved injury to the head, a parent will be notified immediately to inform them of the incident.

In the case of a serious accident where the child requires immediate, professional medical treatment (i.e. severe bleeding, stopped breathing, broken limb, head injury, poisoning, electric shock, severe allergic reaction to insect bite or sting, etc.) the staff will:

- Call 911 immediately and request an ambulance for child to be taken to the nearest hospital.

- A first aid certified staff person will attend to the child's needs in the interim period. The remaining students will be supervised by the other classroom teachers or office manager, keeping the 1 to 10 ratio.
- The Parent of the child will be called and told what hospital child is being transported to.
- One of the teachers is to accompany child in the ambulance. (If the parent has not arrived in the meantime, the registrar or other teacher will immediately call a substitute, the director, or another parent to replace the absent teacher.)
- An Injury Report is to be filled out, signed by the parent, and filed in the office.
- The Teacher should make follow up calls to see how the child is recovering.
- If the head teacher or assistant becomes ill or has a personal emergency during the school day, a substitute will be called in to cover the interim. (The registrar, Pastor, or another parent may also be used as the second adult in the classroom.)

FIRE / FIRE DRILLS / LOCKDOWN

The Fire Marshall inspects our facility regularly for safety. Fire drills are performed two (2) per class session during the first four weeks of school and then ten (10) more per class session per school year. Approximately, once a month, we practice walking all the way to the east side lawn by the large tree.

In case of a fire, the assistant takes the first aid kit and any medications, and then leads the children in or near the classroom out the emergency door to the back fence of the playground. The teacher brings the emergency book, the attendance book, cell phone, and will then take attendance. In case of an actual fire, the teachers and assistants will lead the children out of the playground (near 3 year old room) and across the parking lot to the east side lawn, by the large tree.

If the class is split up, students in the classroom will follow the above guideline. Students at the gym end of the building are to be led by the assistant to exit through the side door (*near 52 Court Street*). Attendance is taken by the teacher and/or assistant. All students, teachers, and assistants will meet at the east side lawn by the large tree. The teachers will immediately take attendance again. All parent contact information is in the emergency book. The teachers will call parents for immediate pick-up.

In the instance where we are notified of a credible threat and the Preschool needs to lockdown in place, the Director will first assess the threat. Once the threat is assessed, the staff will either:

- a) Lead the children into the hallway between the offices. The children and staff will sit against the inside wall, or
- b) The children and staff will remain in the classroom with shades closed.

The children and staff will lockdown in place until there is no longer a threat.

Should there be a threat of someone trying to break into the Preschool, 911 will be called immediately and, if possible, the children and staff will leave the Preschool through whatever door is available to safely exit the building to avoid danger.

WEATHER

Should a weather emergency occur, staff and students will all go into the hallway without windows, near the offices, shutting all doors to wait out the weather emergency (e.g., hurricane, tornado, hail).

SCHOOL DELAY AND/OR CANCELLATIONS

During inclement weather, safety should be the prime consideration. Please use your own best judgment. If you feel that road conditions warrant, bring your child late or pick him/her up early. Be prompt when

there is a closing, but remember, that teachers will always remain with your child until a parent or their designee arrives. If Cromwell Public Schools announces a delay or closing, BLNS will adjust its schedule as follows:

Cancellations: If Cromwell Public Schools ❄️ cancels school, BLNS sessions will also be **cancelled**.

Delays: When Cromwell Public Schools ❄️ have a delay, the morning sessions will be **cancelled**.

Early Dismissals: When Cromwell Public Schools ❄️ close early, our afternoon session is cancelled.

**BLNS posts its schedule changes on WFSB, Channel 3, WTNH, Channel 30
and on the Preschool Facebook page.**

Parents can also sign up for text alerts from Channel 3 by going to:

<http://my.textcaster.com/asa/Default.aspx?ID=c1616077-39d9-4682-b0ca-63alee174441>.

❄️ Cromwell Public Schools place delay and closing announcements on:

TV: WFSB Channel 3, WVIT Channel 30, WTNH Channel 8. FOX Channel 6

Radio: WTIC 1080, KISS 95.7, WHCN 106, WDRC 103, WRCH 105.

EVACUATION

In the event of an evacuation of the building, students and staff leave the building through the back doors as outlined above in the event there was a fire. Parents will be called for immediate pickup. Town evacuation procedures are determined on a case by case basis. In the event of a town-wide disaster, BLNS will call town officials for next steps from the Civil Preparedness Office (860-632-3422), which is Cromwell's Planning & Zoning office. If an evacuation were to occur, phone lines will be overloaded and potentially not in service. Therefore, we ask for patience. Should an event occur which involves leaving BLNS, we will proceed to **Edna C. Stevens Elementary School, Court Street**, utilizing the sidewalks, as our place of refuge. Parents will be instructed to pick their children up at ECS.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT POLICY

INFORMING PARENTS

At the beginning of the school year, all parents will receive a copy of the Connecticut DCF's *Recognizing Child Abuse and Neglect* sheet, along with the Hotline telephone numbers (see Child Abuse flyer), which are also posted on the Bulletin Board in the preschool hallway. Parents are made aware that if they suspect any type of abuse toward their child or any child attending BLNS, they should report such abuse or neglect to the BLNS director or staff member immediately.

BLNS HAS A ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY FOR ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The BLNS staff are all aware of the Preschool's policy regarding child abuse and neglect reporting and that they, as mandated reporters, are required to report any such incidents to DCF. We encourage parents to discuss any accidents that occurred at home with their child's teacher.

There are four (4) types of child abuse and neglect. (*Abuse is defined as: a physical injury or injuries inflicted upon him other than by accidental means, has injuries which are at variance with the history given of them, or is in a condition which is the result of maltreatment such as, but not limited to, malnutrition, sexual molestation, deprivation of necessities, emotional maltreatment, or cruel punishment.*) The types of abuse are:

- physical abuse

- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse
- neglect (*Neglect is defined as a child who has been abandoned or is being denied proper care and attention, physically, educationally, emotionally or morally, or one who is being permitted to live under conditions, circumstances or associations injurious to his well-being.*)

The employees of BLNS are responsible for the safety, well-being, and protection of the children attending this school. State law in Connecticut states that if any type of child abuse or neglect is suspected by or of any staff member, the suspected abuse or neglect is to be reported to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) within 12 hours using the hotline telephone number (1-800-842-2288, open 24 hours a day). The suspected abuse is then submitted in writing on a DCF 136 Form (copies of form are available in the office) within 48 hours of the initial telephone call. The Director of BLNS, the Pastor and the Church Council will also be made aware of the abuse, along with a copy of the written report. Once an allegation of abuse or neglect has been made to DCF and has been reported to the Director, they must immediately notify the child's parent, guardian, or person responsible for the child's care that a report has been made.

It may be necessary for the Director of BLNS to, depending on the situation, a) contact the schools Nursing Consultant to come to BLNS to assess the situation, b) take the child to Middlesex Hospital Emergency Room for an assessment, or c) contact the child's Pediatrician/Doctor to assess the cause of a child's injuries. It also may be advisable, depending on the situation, to have mental health professionals or members of the clergy (possibly the Pastor at Bethany Lutheran Church) talk with parents to offer support and guidance.

However, in cases of serious physical abuse or sexual abuse, it may not be wise to talk with parents before reporting the case to DCF. This may put the child at a greater risk and interfere with a possible criminal investigation. This will be decided after speaking with DCF.

BLNS supports a **ZERO** tolerance policy for abuse and neglect. Therefore, should such abuse occur from any staff member of BLNS, if after an investigation, DCF has reasonable cause to believe that a staff member of a public or private institution has abused a child or a facility providing child care, DCF shall notify the institution, school or facility and provide records concerning the investigation to the Pastor and Preschool Board. If the facility is licensed by the state for the caring of children, DCF shall notify the state agency that licenses it and provide records concerning the investigation.

DOCUMENTATION

Any documentation regarding child abuse and neglect should be copied and be kept on file in the office before the paperwork is sent to DCF. All telephone calls are to be documented with dates, times of calls, person spoken with, and a summary of conversations.

By law, it is DCF's responsibility to determine whether or not to investigate based on their findings.

COVID POLICIES *(IF POLICIES CHANGE, AN ADDENDUM WILL BE GIVEN TO PARENTS)*

- ◆ BLPS follows guidelines per CDC, OEC, DPH and Cromwell School System for mask wearing, hand washing, isolation, quarantining and social distancing (*see page 21*).
- ◆ If your child is not feeling well or has a temperature, they should take an At Home Covid Test.
- ◆ If they are negative, but are not feeling well or have a temperature, please keep them home until they are symptom free for 24 hours.

- ◆ If your child is diagnosed with Covid-19 please inform the Director immediately. Your child will need to isolate for 5 days and will need to wear a mask at BLPS for 5 days upon their return.
- ◆ We will continue to disinfect the space we use, along with the toys, daily.
- ◆ We will continue to wash hands using soap and water or hand sanitizer after entering the building, before and after eating, using bathroom, sneezing, coughing, blowing their nose or playing in the sand box.
- ◆ We will continue to monitor the Covid pandemic and adjust protocols, as needed.

TEST-MASK-GO *(effective August 1, 2022, subject to change per DPH, CSDE, CDC)*

This is an optional strategy designed to increase the number of days of in-person learning and care available to children, both to improve the social/emotional/physical wellbeing of students, staff, and their families and to enhance learning recovery. The fall and spring allergy seasons combined with New England winters present a challenge for schools, childcare, and youth camp facilities that were advised in previous years to exclude individuals from in-person attendance if they had any of a long list of symptoms associated with COVID-19. Schools, childcare programs, and camp operators choosing to utilize a Test-Mask-Go strategy can give children and staff with mild respiratory disease symptoms (e.g., infrequent cough, congestion, runny nose, sore throat, etc.) the option to continue participating in-person provided:

- they are fever-free (< 100°F) and feel well enough to participate,
- they do not live with anyone who has had COVID-19 in the past 2 weeks,
- they can wear a mask consistently and correctly (if facility operators require them to do so), and
- they test negative for COVID-19 prior to reporting in-person on every day they have symptoms, as well as one final test on the morning their symptoms have completely resolved.

Individuals who have any respiratory disease symptoms should not use the Test-Mask-Go strategy if:

- they have a fever ($\geq 100^{\circ}\text{F}$) or feel feverish (they should not report in-person until their fever has resolved for at least 24 hours without the use of medication)
- they live with a person who recently tested positive for COVID-19 (within the past 2 weeks)

Instead, these individuals should stay home until their symptoms resolve and test for COVID-19. Anyone testing positive for COVID-19 should complete isolation according to the CDC Q/I Calculator. School, childcare, or youth camp administrators or health staff who have questions regarding Test-Mask-Go should contact DPH.EPI@ct.gov.



COVID POLICIES

Close contact	Symptomatic	Tested Positive
<p>You do not need to quarantine if you are asymptomatic. It is recommended to test between day 3-5</p> <p>Exposure Living in the same Household: You do not need to quarantine as long as you are asymptomatic; test between day 3-5 of date of contact. Stay home if you become symptomatic, test and wear a mask.</p>	<p>If you have mild respiratory disease symptoms and no fever, test prior to coming to school each day symptoms are present and the day after symptoms have resolved. If the test is negative, you can attend school, it is recommended to wear a mask until symptoms have resolved.</p> <p><u>Mild Covid Symptoms</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrequent cough • Congestion • Runny Nose • Sore throat • Headache • Muscle or body ache <p>If you have a fever above 100 degrees Fahrenheit do not report to school until the fever has been resolved for 24 hours without the use of medication (Tylenol or Ibuprofen) and test daily until all symptoms have resolved</p>	<p>If you test positive for Covid-19, please stay home. Isolate for 5 days from the start of symptoms or positive test date if asymptomatic. After 5 days, when symptoms resolve and you have been fever free for 24 hours without the use of medication, you can return to school. You must wear a mask for days 6-10. Use the CDC calculator to calculate dates. www.Cdc.gov</p> <p>If you test positive, please call the school and let us know the date you started symptoms.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>January, 2023</i></p>