



# **Bright Beginnings**

## **Childcare Center**

**3115 Rt 38, Ste 400**

**Mt Laurel, NJ**

*"Your Child's First Steps to a  
Bright Beginning"*

# **Parent Handbook**

**Bright Beginnings Childcare Center** is a quality childcare program that is licensed by the State of New Jersey.

Bright Beginnings Childcare Center can be summed up in one sentence: ***Your child's First steps to a Bright Beginning.*** When the children enter our facility, they are greeted by a staff member, and then given the freedom to explore the various learning activities that have been prepared before their arrival. Each day is a special day! There is enough learning and activities' going on at one time that the child is motivated by knowing that they are there. Always something new or someway that is new for them to explore their interest. But always, enough things remain the same to provide the securities and comfort of familiarity. Our center for learning and care are not arranged for convenience of use, but rather for maximum challenge to the body and mind.

We will always be there to lend support when needed to help children when they momentarily lose control of materials, equipment or even their emotions. We will always be there to answer a question, or make a suggestion in keeping with each particular child's current level of achievement, interest, ability, and needs. Our up close and personal setting allows for each child to be given personal attention. Here at

**At Bright Beginnings Childcare Center, it is time to grow, time to explore, to experiment and discover, time to play, and most of all, time to be a child!!**

**Welcome!!**

Bright Beginnings Childcare Center does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, national origin, age or sex. We offer subsidized assistance and have a beautiful handicap facility to suit your needs. Thanks for choosing us to be a part of your child's future.

## PRIMARY GOALS OF THE CENTER

- To create a setting in which children will find warmth, comfort, and gentleness as well as an abundance of opportunities for movement, exploration, and self-discovery according to individual needs, interests, and abilities.
- To assist each child to grow to his fullest potential by recognizing each stage of development and fashioning an environment (i.e. curriculum, facilities, staff) designed to nurture and facilitate growth during each stage.
- To help children achieve independence, self-discipline, social competence, self-knowledge, enthusiasm for learning, positive attitudes, intellectual growth, and an organized approach to problem solving.
- To assist parents in understanding the developmental stage of their child, enabling them to contribute most effectively to the child's growth and enrichment.

## OUR MISSION

Our mission is to provide high quality education to a wide range of children from all walks of life, in a warm, inviting, and nurturing environment. Our specialized program helps support our mission by developing parent-teacher partnerships, supporting diversity, community awareness, inclusion, parental involvement, applying school readiness, and providing ongoing professional development for all staff.

## OUR PHILOSOPHY

*Bright Beginnings Childcare Center philosophy is "Children grow by teaching them what they should know, here we do it every day, by having children learn through play".* We believe that all children are different and have different learning styles. No matter how different, play is the most important process through which children learn. Play provides opportunities for children to learn and grow. Therefore, the environment must be stimulating so that children can master many skills as they evolve through the cognitive stages of development. In order for this to happen, teachers must be highly qualified, dedicated, caring, nurturing, and knowledgeable. Teachers play a vital role in modeling, scaffolding, and facilitating. It is the responsibilities of the teachers that the environment is intentionally planned with age appropriate materials so that the children can maximize their learning. **Parental involvement** is also the most vital piece to our philosophy. Parents are a vital part of the learning process and a valuable tool to the program. Parents are strongly encouraged to support and participate within the program to build a strong parent-teacher connection in order to build upon their Childs success.

## Bright Beginnings Curriculum

Bright Beginnings Childcare Center assists in helping children to acquire a strong foundation in the knowledge and skills needed for school success. We believe an effective environment is a place where children feel well cared for and safe. Our Childcare Center is a place where children are valued as individuals and where their need for attention, approval, and affection are supported. In this environment, children can discover the world that surrounds them and develop the capacity to connect with others.

We want you to feel that you are a part of your child's life here and to understand more about what we do every day. In our program, we incorporate *The Creative Curriculum*. The curriculum encourages children to be actively involved in the learning process, to experience a variety of activities appropriate to their stage of development, and to pursue their own interests in the context of life in the community and the world. Children learn through play that is planned by adults to teach them language, concepts about the physical world, social skills, problem-solving, motor coordination, and self-confidence.

The most important goal of our early childhood curriculum is to help children become enthusiastic learners. This means encouraging children to be active and creative explorers who are not afraid to try out their ideas and to think their own thoughts. Our goal is to help children become independent, self-confident, inquisitive learners. We are teaching them how to learn, not just in the classroom, but all through their lives. We encourage them to develop good habits and attitudes, particularly a positive sense of themselves, which will make a difference throughout their lives.

**Our curriculum identifies goals in all areas of development:**

**Social** Help children feel comfortable in school, trust their new environment, make friends, and feel they are part of a group.

**Emotional** Help children experience pride and self-confidence, develop independence and self-control, and have a positive attitude toward life.

**Cognitive** help children become confident learners by letting them test their own ideas and experience success, and by helping them acquire learning skills such as the ability to solve problems, ask questions, and use words to describe their thoughts and feelings.

**Physical** Help children increase their large and small muscle skills and feel confident about what their bodies can do.

**Parts of our Curriculum:**

**VARIETY**-A wide variety of materials is available that is geared to young children's interests, such as picture books, records, puppets, blocks, puzzles, paints, climbing equipment, and props for make-believe play.

**INVOLVEMENT**-Hands-on activity is encouraged. Materials are readily accessible to the children: For example, toys are on low shelves, not in toy boxes; children are busy and actively involved with the materials, rather than passively watching or following rote instructions.

**CHILD-DIRECTED ACTIVITIES**-The planned, daily schedule balances indoor and outdoor activities, quiet time and active time, periods when individual children choose their own activities and periods for group activities, and child-initiated and adult-initiated activities.

**TEACHER-GUIDED ACTIVITIES**-The teachers' role is to plan and arrange the learning environment. It is important to see adults asking questions of children, reading to children, making suggestions for "next steps," setting up new experiences such as a special visitor or holiday celebration, adding new

materials as children master familiar tasks, and observing and recording children's progress in acquiring new skills and interests.

**CULTURAL DIVERSITY**-Multi-racial, multi-cultural, non-sexist, non-stereotyping pictures, dolls, books, and materials are fully part of the classroom to teach children the value of diversity and to ensure that all children's backgrounds are respected.

**RESPONSIBILITIES**-Daily, routine activities are part of the learning process. For example, children are given responsibility for setting tables at mealtime and helping with clean-up during the day.

The activities we plan for children, the way we organize the environment, select toys and materials, plan the daily schedule, interact and talk with children, are all designed to accomplish the goals of our curriculum and give your child a successful start.

The classrooms have been arranged to make it a safe place for children to explore and to learn. Children's toys and materials are placed on low shelves and in low, easy-to-open drawers. This makes it easy for children to select the items that they enjoy. It also helps them learn how to make choices and be independent. All children have a place to keep their personal belongings such as coats, blankets, and school work to bring home. This lets them know they are a valued part of our classroom community.

When you visit, you will notice that we have a schedule that we follow. This lets the children know what comes when. It also helps them feel secure when they know that every day the teacher will read to them before naptime or that after snack we go outside. The schedule also allows for the times when we all do things together, such as Circle Time and Story Time, and times when the children are doing things on their own, such as coloring or writing and playing in the Learning Centers. We plan many activities for the children to assist in the development of these goals.

We build with blocks, dress up and make-believe, put puzzles together, read books, tell stories, play with sand and water, draw and paint, cook, dance to music, and play outdoors. All of these activities are aimed at helping the children to do things on their own and to be curious and interested in all that's going on around them. We talk with them, ask questions, and answer their questions to help them learn new words and to express their ideas and feelings. Special learning such as music Lessons,

Regularly Scheduled Library days, Field Trips, and Nutritious Snacks are offered to enhance the curriculum we offer to your child.

### **Pick up and Drop OFF**

Children should be brought to Center no more than 10 minutes before their scheduled drop off times and picked up no more than five minutes after their scheduled pick up time. For safety reasons, we require that parents bring the children into the center and sign in/out and not discharge them from the car to find their way into the center alone. A parent **MUST** give written permission if someone other than the parent is going to take your child home from the Center. A "take home" note must be signed by you and on file with the director. Please inform the person that they will be asked to show their driver's license or state ID. At pick up, feel free to look around the room and ask about that day's activities.

Please drop off and pick up your child at your scheduled time. Late charges will be enforced. \$10 per child once your pick up time has passed, plus \$1 per additional minute

If you are running late to the Childcare and have past the cut off time please make sure that your child has a healthy breakfast prior to coming to the Childcare. The cut off time for entry into the center is 9:00am (unless advanced notice is given such as Dr/Dentist appt, etc.).

***\*\*Please understand that Bright Beginnings Childcare would like to adhere to its daily schedule; it is impossible to do this if we are interrupted\*\****

**Birthdays-** are very special days! Your child will be allowed a birthday celebration in the class. Parents are allowed to bring cake, snacks, etc for the entire class (Please notify the Director in advance) Birthday invitations for parties held outside of Center can be given out in Center only if all children are invited. If you are only inviting some members of the class you must mail the invitations so that no hurt feelings will occur.

**Holiday celebrations-** will be held during the Center year to give emphasis and meaning to particular holidays. The following is the party schedule:

**Pumpkin Party-October**

**Thanksgiving Feast- November**

**Christmas Party-December**

**Valentine Party-February**

**Easter Party-April**

(Parents will be asked to sign up to provide simple snacks, favors, and prizes.)

**Weekly/Monthly Themes-** The children are asked to bring an item that illustrates the theme of the week. Please help your child prepare for our sharing time by discussing the item. Discuss the item's color, size, shape, its use, where it comes from, etc. This will help your child to be ready to share this information.

### **Parent Involvement:**

It is very important for the parent to be involved in their child's education. Children will receive homework on a daily basis, please make sure that it is checked and returned the next day. We will also be scheduling a one-on-one meeting with each parent and child to discuss a child development plan (any suggestions and /or concerns will also be discussed at this time). Parent/Teacher conferences will be held three times per year to discuss the child's progress. Daily reports are also given. Parents feel free at any time to address any problems, questions or any concerns you may have.

### **Field trips**

Field trips will be planned throughout the year. Each child must also have a signed and completed permission slip to be able to participate in each field trip.

### **Clothing**

Children should be dressed in comfortable clothing. Please make sure that your child dresses for the weather. Shorts are appropriate for warmer days. Hats and mittens are necessary for cold weather. When snow boots are worn to Center, a pair of shoes should also be sent. Sandals, jelly shoes, and flip-flops are not to be worn to Center for safety reasons. **All items should be clearly marked with your child's name.**

## **Health and Safety**

Each enrolled child must be up- to-date on ALL shots and have current Health Assessments. The child must also maintain shots, and well visits while enrolled at the center. Please do not send your child to Center if he or she is not feeling well, vomiting, diarrhea or has a fever. A child should be kept home the first two days of a cold and should not return to Center for 24 hours after a fever. We MUST be notified if your child has been exposed to any communicable disease, for example, chicken pox, strep throat, conjunctivitis ("pink eye"), etc., so that other parents can be made aware. If your child is going to be absent, please call the office and leave a message.

## **Sickness & Illness:**

Parents we ask if your child has fever, runny nose or cough that you keep your child home. The children are in very close contact with one another therefore it is easy for another child to be exposed to the symptoms your child has. **\*\*NO EXCEPTIONS\*\***

## **Return to Center After Illness**

- Chicken Pox- One week after onset of rash
- Measles One week plus all of rash gone
- Strep Throat- after 24 hours on medication
- Fever- "Fever-free" for 24 hours
- Ring Worms-2 days of administered Medication
- Common Cold- Three days after first symptoms and nose is running clear. We will not accept any children with a mucous running nose.

Each child MUST have a Public Health Form on file at the Center before entering. THIS IS A STATE LAW. Two emergency cards must also be filled out completely and on file. If a child is under medical supervision and needs to be given medication during Center hours, we must have written instructions. A form is required with written authorization from the parents, as well as a physician, to administer the medication. Medications must be labeled and in the original container. Forms are available for this purpose. No medication can be administered without a form signed by the doctor.

## **Supplies and Materials**

The children MUST have a book bag to carry daily papers and projects and a change of clothes. All items should be labeled with child's name. Supplies must be maintained when running low. Please check their book bags daily because notes, monthly calendars, and other important information from the Director as well as permission slips and parent notices will be placed in these folders.

The supply list is as follows:

**Infants:** Please make sure that you maintain your supplies/ essentials at the Childcare (such as wipes, diapers, pull-ups, etc) also please make sure your child have a change of clothes. We will inform you when your supplies are running low. Please make sure your child has a blanket for nap time. Blankets will be returned to you every Friday for cleaning. Also please label each article with your child's name or initials.

## **Toddlers and Pre-school Group**

Please make sure your child has a blanket for nap time. Blankets will be returned to you every Friday for cleaning. Also please label each article with your child's name or initials.

- Sharpened pencils
- One large eraser
- Glue stick
- Scissors( round edge only)
- Crayons (24 count)
- Colored pencils
- Markers (washable)
- Composition book
- (1) two pocket folders with side pockets
- 2 boxes of tissue
- One art smock
- One box " baby wipes"

## Tuition

See attached Tuition Agreement

## Snow Days

We will follow State mandated school closings. If the Public and Parochial Schools are closed, Bright Beginnings Childcare Center is closed. A message will be posted on the voicemail system informing parents of such closings.

## Holidays/Time off

- Martin Luther King Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Columbus Day
- Veteran's Day
- November 26, 27-Thanksgiving Holiday
- December 24-Jan 1-Winter Break-Christmas Holiday

*\*Please see monthly calendar for exact dates\**

*\*\*Full tuition is due regardless of holidays, absences, or if center is closed\*\**

This handbook has been prepared to provide guidelines that should be helpful during the year. Please keep it in a convenient place. Please bring any information you feel will benefit our work with your child to our attention. Thanks in advance and I look forward to giving your child the attention and pre-education that they deserve.