



# Ben Franklin Academy Preschool Handbook

Handbook updated: August 2024

## Mission

At Ben Franklin Academy, our mission is to encourage the qualities of young adults significant of America's respected Renaissance figure, Benjamin Franklin—individuals who are well-read, scientifically curious, and actively engaged in civic matters.

Our dedicated staff is committed to addressing the holistic needs of children, encompassing the social, emotional, physical, and developmental aspects, all within a nurturing, positive, and secure environment. We aspire to foster an atmosphere that not only promotes academic excellence but also instills enduring values, preparing our students to thrive as knowledgeable, compassionate, and socially responsible members of society. We believe in helping our students become life-long learners, and leaders of tomorrow.

## Vision

At Ben Franklin Academy Preschool, we envision laying the foundation for a child's academic journey within a nurturing environment that cultivates not just knowledge, but also self-esteem and a genuine love for learning.

Guided by the Core Knowledge Preschool Sequence, we recognize that preschoolers thrive through engaging, hands-on activities built upon their prior learning experiences. Embracing the belief that children are naturally inclined to learn, we go beyond by incorporating additional academic focus in science, math, and literacy, fostering a well-rounded educational experience.

Our approach is centered on creating classrooms that work on a balance between self-autonomy, academic exploration, and creative play. We understand that an encouraging environment is essential for full development, and we actively work towards providing that for all of our children.

Furthermore, we value and actively encourage parent/guardian involvement, recognizing it as a vital component of a child's educational journey. By fostering a collaborative partnership between educators and families, we aim to create an educational community where each child can flourish and reach their fullest potential.

### **Program Objectives**

- Children will learn how to get along with their peers through problem solving.
- Children will develop large and small motor skills.
- Children will be allowed to share ideas and feelings
- Children will be allowed to make choices and feel they have a decision in what they do.
- Children will learn to accept their peers feeling and opinions.
- Children will develop the necessary cognitive skills needed for school age learning.
- Children will develop an understanding of the diverse community around them.

### **Leadership Team and Teaching Staff**

The dedicated team at Ben Franklin Academy Preschool includes a qualified Director, Early Childhood Teachers, and Teacher Assistants, each of whom plays a crucial role in fostering a nurturing learning environment. Our commitment to transparency and building a sense of community is evident through our Meet and Greet sessions we provide for families prior to the beginning of school, families are able get acquainted with our staff members, the classroom, and the school. They are also welcomed to join in the school wide “Back to School” picnic to foster relationships with other BFA families.

Our educators not only meet but exceed the requirements set by the state of Colorado for teaching in a Preschool. Devoted to the well-being and education of each child, they approach their roles with a combination of knowledge, love, and a focus on individual needs.

Ensuring the safety of our children is utmost. Background checks and fingerprinting are conducted for all staff members. In addition, each team member holds current CPR/First Aid and Medication Administration certificates, emphasizing our commitment to a secure and healthy environment. Recognizing the dynamic nature of education, our staff engages in continuous professional development. They are required to complete 15 hours of continuing education annually, a commitment supported by the preschool itself. This dedication ensures that our educators stay up-to-date of the latest advancements in early childhood education, improving the quality of learning experiences for our preschoolers.

Please visit the Ben Franklin Preschool Staff Directory on the Ben Franklin Website. [Ben Franklin Preschool Staff](#)

## Schedules/Hours of Operation

### 7.702.41 (D)

BFA Preschool offers a five different classroom options for children ages 3 through 4 years of age. Please refer to the preschool section of the Ben Franklin Academy website for specifics regarding available programs and hours of operation. <https://www.bfacademy.org/preschool-enrollment-2/>

The preschool follows the Ben Franklin school calendar regarding school holidays and weather-related school closures. The [school calendar](#) can be found for each school term on the Ben Franklin Academy website.

## Admission/ Non-Discrimination Policy

Ben Franklin Academy Preschool admits children without regard to race, color, nationality, or religious background. Children are grouped in classes based on their age as of October 1st, aligning with Douglas County School District requirements for the current school year. Ben Franklin Academy is considered a school of choice; parents must request enrollment into the school by completing an “Intent to Enroll form” during the open enrollment window for each priority enrollment status.

To prioritize our current preschool students and BFA staff, they are granted first preference for Preschool 3’s and Pre-K openings and are the first on any waitlist of their choice. Open enrollment for all current BFA families takes place in December, followed by public enrollment in January. Once the classroom seats are full, only students that are currently enrolled in a classroom can be moved to a different classroom if a seat becomes available in a desired class. If a child exits the school and relinquishes their seat, it will then be offered to the next child on the waitlist.

At Ben Franklin Academy Preschool, our commitment is to ensure that every child receives the best possible placement. It is important to note that children requiring supportive educational services should explore district preschool options. BFA is not a funded district program and does not have access to district intervention services provided by the state. Our preschool staff does not have the resources to meet the needs of children with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or other supportive educational requirements. The goals that are set on your child’s IEP might not be met without the proper services provided. Our staff will do their best to support each student and help them succeed. We aim to provide a transparent and supportive environment for all families as they navigate the enrollment process.

## Enrollment Acceptance

Seats will be offered by an acceptance email from the Preschool Director. This acceptance email will contain hours, tuition rate, and class in which the child has been placed. Guardians will have 24 hours to respond directly to the acceptance email to decline or accept the seat. Students are not guaranteed acceptance into the class of their first choice indicated on the intent to enroll form. Parents are requested to indicate on the form all classes that would work for their child. In the event that a child is not placed in the first-choice class, they will be offered a second or third option if it is available; in addition, they will stay on the waitlist for the class of first choice in the event that there is movement in the class list. When the Guardian has accepted the seat, a student is offered, the Director will email an agreement form for the upcoming school year. To formally reserve a preschool seat, a nonrefundable \$150 registration fee, along with agreement form will be collected by the Director. If the registration fee is not collected by the deadline, the seat will be released to the next student on the waitlist. Reminder emails will not be sent out.

## Preschool Priority for Preschool Enrollment

Enrollment priority for preschool follows this order:

1. Current preschool families... Students continuing on from the Preschool 3-year-old program to the Pre-K 4-year-old program will have priority in receiving a seat before students new to BFA.
2. Children of full-time BFA staff who are currently employed by BFA
3. Siblings of currently enrolled preschool students
4. Siblings of currently enrolled K-8 families

Submitting an "Intent to Enroll" form does not guarantee enrollment. Notification emails about class placement or waitlist status will be sent.

## Preschool Priority for BFA Kindergarten Enrollment

### OPEN ENROLLMENT PERIOD

The open enrollment period is dictated by DCSD's timeline and BFA complies with this timeline. If circumstances drive a modification to this timeline, it will be approved by BFA's Principal or designated representative. If open enrollment is completed during the First Round, priority for enrollment will be given in the following order to the following groups of students, prior to the Lottery:

1. Currently enrolled students (being retained)
2. Siblings of currently enrolled K-8 students.
3. Children in the household of Founding Families.
4. Children of full-time teachers; and
5. Preschool priority students identified through the Preschool Lottery described below.

## **PRESCHOOL PRIORITY**

Currently enrolled preschool students shall be given priority to fill no more than eighty percent (80%) of the open kindergarten spots in a given year, only if they have completed the open enrollment process with DCSD during the First Round and must have attended BFA preschool for at least half of the preschool current school term. The number of open kindergarten spots is the total of all kindergarten spots less those given priority based on the first four (4) priority categories listed above who completed open enrollment during First Round. If the number of children from the preschool exceeds eighty percent (80%) of the open kindergarten slots, then a separate preschool lottery shall be held to fill eighty percent (80%) of the open kindergarten slots. The preschool lottery shall follow the procedures below. Once open enrollment for the First Round is complete, preschool students are given one (1) lottery “ticket” per year of preschool attendance. The Preschool Lottery is performed by the preschool director and the registrar. Preschool students are listed and given a random number based on a random number generator website. If the student was in attendance for more than one-year of a preschool term their name will be listed to reflect the number of years they attended preschool. The selection begins with number one (1) and continues until all openings from the eighty percent (80%) are filled. If a preschool student accepts kindergarten enrollment and subsequently leaves the preschool prior to the end of the academic year, the preschool student shall lose his/her spot and the school may then extend an “invitation to enroll” to another child to fill this spot. If a preschool student who was open enrolled during First Round is not enrolled through the preschool lottery, the preschool student shall remain on the general, non-priority open enrollment wait list.

## **ADMISSION/REGISTRATION/FEEES**

### **7.702.41 (F)(G)**

**Classes offered and tuition is as follows for the 2024-25 school year.**

### **Preschool 3’s Little Campers Option**

\*\*\*Must be 3 years old by 10/1/of current school year

\*\*\* **Fully toilet trained. NO EXEMPTIONS**

Teacher to student ratio: 1:6

Classroom maximum: 12 students

**M/W/F AM**

8:15-12:15

10 Payments of \$400.00

**T/TH AM**

8:15-12: 15

10 Payments of \$265.00

## Pre-K 4's Bumblebee Option. \*\*\*Full Day\*\*\*

\*\*\*Must be 4 years old by 10/1/of current school year

\*\*\* **Fully toilet trained. NO EXEMPTIONS**

Teacher to student ratio: 1:8. Teacher to student ratio at rest time: 1:16

Classroom maximum capacity: 16 students

### M/W/F Full Day

8:15-3:15

10 Payments \$635.00

### T/TH Full Day

8:00-3:30

10 Payments of \$450.00

### M/W/F Full Day UPK Students

8:15-3:15

One time payment of \$524.18 Due on August 15<sup>th</sup>

### T/TH Full Day UPK Students

8:00-3:30

Fully funded by the state

## Pre-K PM 4's Happy Camper Option

\*\*\*Must be 4 years old by 10/1/of current school year

\*\*\* **Fully toilet trained. NO EXEMPTIONS**

Teacher to student ratio: 1:8

Classroom maximum capacity: 16 students

### M-F PM

12: 15-3:15

10 Payments of \$ 485.00

### M-F PM UPK Students

12:15-3:15

Fully funded by the state Tuition

### Monthly Due Date:

- Tuition is due on the 15th of every month.

### No Refunds:

- Tuition will not be refunded, nor will school days be made up, for missed days due to illness, family vacations, mandatory school closures, emergencies, or inclement weather.

### Payment Process:

- Tuition fees will be managed through Infinite Campus (IC) via MySchoolBucks.
- Fees for the school year will be applied in early August, with the first payment due on August 15th.
- Refer to your payment agreement for the specific tuition fee for this school year.

### Payment Notifications:

- You will receive an email from MySchoolBucks when your tuition fee has been posted for the school year.

- MySchoolBucks provides options to either pay the full amount upfront or set up a payment plan.
- Throughout the year, you will receive reminder emails about your tuition balance.

**Late Fees:**

- If tuition is not paid on time, a \$25.00 late fee will be added to your monthly invoice.
- Automatic payments can be set up to avoid late fees.
- If not using automatic payments, you must log into MySchoolBucks each month to make your payment by the 15th.
- Reminder emails will be sent to notify you of upcoming due dates.

### **Registration/Supply Fee**

Upon confirming your child's enrollment for the upcoming school year, a registration fee of \$150 for new students and \$125 for returning students is applicable. This one-time annual fee is nonrefundable and is required to secure your child's spot for the following school year. This fee is applicable to all new and returning students at BFA Preschool. ***\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE: When we use the term 'nonrefundable,' it means that under any circumstance, the payment is non-reversible, and no refunds will be issued.*** It's important to note that this registration fee does not apply to tuition payments in August. The purpose of this fee is to ensure the reservation of your child's place within our program, contributing to the overall planning and organization for the upcoming academic year. Your prompt payment of this plays a vital role in the successful enrollment process at Ben Franklin Academy Preschool.

### **Withdrawals/Refunds**

#### **7.701.41 (Z)**

If disenrollment is necessary prior to the end of the school year, a **30-day written notice** is required. If notice is provided on or before the 5th of the exiting month, the parent will not be charged for the following month through the end of the school year. Tuition through the end of the exiting month is nonrefundable. All tuition payments must be paid in full prior to withdrawing. Preschool 3's students that withdraw before the end of the school year are not eligible for priority enrollment into Pre-K programs the following school year (the family must complete another "intent to enroll" form for public enrollment.)

If Ben Franklin Academy Preschool needs to withdraw students due to lack of payment, parents/guardians will be notified in writing to make arrangements to fulfill your financial responsibility. In the event, that we determine BFA preschool is not a good fit for your child or your

family, we may request that you withdraw your child from our program. However, BFA preschool will give you two-week's notice so that you and your family may have the time to find alternative care.

### **Family Dismissal Policy**

Ben Franklin Academy Preschool reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of a child for the following reasons:

1. Non-payment of tuition and any other fees.
2. Not observing the rules, policies and regulations of the preschool as outlined in the Parent Handbook.
3. Physical and/or verbal abuse of any staff or children, by parent.
4. Regular occurrence (3 or more times), of late pick-ups after dismissal

### **Attendance Procedures**

- To report an absence due to illness or injury, please email the Director, and your student's teacher.
- If the student is absent due to vacation or travel, please give the BFA director and teacher two weeks' notice of the expected absence.

### **Touch-Free Sign-In/Sign-Out**

Parents and all authorized pick-ups are responsible to download the PikMyKid app associated with the school's carpool system to their phone. Parents will be responsible to delegate those individuals that will be dropping off or picking their child up for the day. This app allows them to sign their student(s) in and out of the school. Attendance will also be taken each morning from the PikMyKid app to indicate which students are present or absent for the day. This is a state licensing requirement each school day your child attends. Staff members are accountable for children in their care and head counts are done during transition times and periodically throughout the day to account for each child.

### **Arrival and Attendance Policy**

**7.702.41 (P)**

#### **Arrival Times:**

- **Morning Session:** Please ensure that your child arrives no later than 8:20 AM.
- **Afternoon Session:** Please ensure that your child arrives no later than 12:20 PM.
- **Punctuality:**
- It is important to be prompt as children may feel uncomfortable arriving after class activities have started.



- Morning routines help set a healthy pace for the day.

**Late Arrivals:**

- If you arrive after the specified time, please check your child in at the office, you will need to wait for a preschool staff member to come down and check your child in and walk to the classroom.
- We understand occasional difficulties in arriving on time but request that late arrivals do not become a habit.
- These early years are crucial for teaching children the importance of education and respect for others' time.

**Pre-Class Playground Use:**

- Please refrain from allowing your child to play on the playground before school begins as it makes transitioning to class more challenging. This only pertains to our Preschool 3's and full day Pre-K classes. Our afternoon Pre-K class will begin their day on the preschool playground.

**Sign-In/Sign-Out Procedure:**

- Children must be signed in and out each day using the attendance app.
- This is a state licensing requirement and ensures staff members are accountable for children in their care.
- Head counts are conducted during transitions and periodically throughout the day to account for every child.

**After School Playground Use:**

- If your children are playing on the playground after preschool dismissal, all parents MUST be supervising your children at all times.
- You must exit the playground at 4:00 pm for BASE camp to access. Only children registered in BASE camp will be allowed to occupy the playground at that time.
- Your vehicle must be in either the upper parking lot or the preschool parking lot to be on the playground. You may not be parked along the side of the school; this is the carpool lane.

## **Late Pick-Up Policy**

### **7.702.41 (Q)**

**Designated Pick-Up Times:**

- Children must be picked up at the designated class end time. Late pick-ups from BFA preschool are strongly discouraged! Please plan to arrive on time every day. In the case of late pick-ups, our first priority is your student's safety and reassurance.

**Late Fees:**

- If a child is not picked up within 10 minutes after dismissal, the parent and/or guardian will be called.
- A late fee of \$10 will be charged after the first 10 minutes.
- An additional fee of \$3 per minute will be charged after the first 10 minutes until the child is picked up.

**Unforeseen Circumstances:**

- We understand that unforeseen circumstances may occur.
- Please email the director immediately at [lhafner@bfacademy.org](mailto:lhafner@bfacademy.org) to inform us of any such circumstances.
- Parents who arrive late will be responsible to pay the late fee charge.

**Repeated Late Pick-Ups:**

- If late pick-ups become a regular occurrence (3 or more times), the director will speak with the family to develop a plan.
- Continued late pick-ups may result in dismissal from the program.

**Emergency Contact Procedure:**

- If preschool staff cannot contact a parent and/or guardian or the child's emergency contact within a reasonable amount of time (approximately 20 minutes after class dismissal), the preschool director will notify BFA administration.
- Appropriate steps, including contacting the Douglas County Sheriff and our School Resource officer, will be taken.

## School Closures and Delays

Ben Franklin Academy Preschool will follow the Douglas County School District for school closures and delays. Closure information can be found at the district website or any local news source. Please use your discretion regarding late starts to ensure the safety of your family. Please email the Director if your child will be tardy or absent on these days. Please note that Douglas County preschools will cancel all morning classes if they are running on a delay start. **That does not pertain to BFA, we do have morning preschool even with a delayed starting time.** If the school closes due to inclement weather, there is NO refund in tuition for those days.

## PERSONS AUTHORIZED TO PICK UP STUDENTS/VEHICLE PROCEDURES

### 7.702.41 (O) (N)

Parents/guardians are required to complete an "Authorization to Transport" form during their child's registration at BFA Preschool. This form must be reviewed and updated at the beginning of each school year and is the parents' responsibility to inform changes that occur throughout the year. Preschool students will only be released to individuals listed on this authorization form. It is the responsibility of parents to inform preschool staff in writing of any changes to authorized pickup persons.

Children must be signed out using the designated app and visually confirmed with the child's teacher at dismissal. No child will be released to anyone not listed on the authorization form. If a person unfamiliar to the teacher arrives for pickup, they must be identified on the registration form and provide photo identification.

Parents/guardians must notify the school in advance of any changes to persons authorized to pick up their child. If there are legal restrictions (such as custody agreements or restraining orders) regarding who may drop off or pick up the child, copies of these documents must be on file with the preschool. Please note:

- BFA Preschool does not provide transportation for students.
- Staff members are not authorized to secure children into vehicle safety restraint systems. Parents/guardians are responsible for complying with Colorado laws regarding child seat safety requirements and ensuring proper seating and supervision of children in private vehicles.
- It is essential to follow proper traffic and emergency procedures while transporting children to and from school.

### **Safety and Protection of Children** **Identifying Where Children Are at All Times** **7.702.41 (H) (K)**

Safety is our number one priority. All parents/guardians are required to check their child in on the PikMyKid app when they drop off and pick up their child. The teacher will also have an attendance record in the room that lists all students present. The attendance sheets will be checked periodically throughout your child's time at preschool. Children are counted when going out to the playground and coming in from the playground.

In the event a child cannot be located, preschool staff will advise other team members of the situation and re-check the preschool facility. If the child still cannot be located, preschool staff will advise the front office of the situation and follow school and local law enforcement guidelines for locating a missing child on the BFA campus or in the surrounding off-campus area. Our on-campus deputy will be notified.

All BFA preschool students are under the direct care of qualified BFA preschool teachers at all times. Students are counted throughout the day and during transitions to ensure that all children are accounted for at all times.

### **Crisis and Emergency Response Plan** **7.702.41 (K)**

At Ben Franklin Academy Preschool, we prioritize the safety and well-being of your child(ren). Monthly fire, tornado, and other incident drills are conducted in accordance with State Rules and Regulations. The administration and staff have developed a comprehensive School Crisis and Emergency Plan, aligned with the Douglas County School District guidelines and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) This plan addresses a variety of potential situations that could arise within our school or neighborhood.

### Emergency Procedures:

- In the event of an emergency, parents/guardians will be contacted via text, email, and/or phone by the School Messenger system used for enrollment paperwork, or by the Preschool Director.
- Please avoid coming to the school until instructed to do so. During a neighborhood crisis, entry to the school may be restricted to ensure the safety of the children.
- Do NOT call the school directly during an emergency, as this can tie up phone lines needed for urgent communications.
- **Reporting Child Abuse:**
- Per regulations 7.701.41 (Y) and 7.701.5, all BFA Preschool staff members are legally obligated to report any incidents of child abuse or neglect to the Department of Human Services or local law enforcement agencies.
- **For Parents/Guardians:** If you suspect child abuse or neglect, you may also report it to the Department of Human Services or local law enforcement agencies.
- To make a report, contact: **Colorado Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline: 1-844-CO-4-KIDS**

## Health Care

### Illnesses, Accidents, and Injuries

#### 7.702.41 (J) (R)

### Health and Attendance Policy

To attend school, children must be able to participate in all daily activities, including outdoor play. Please be considerate and keep your child at home if they are ill.

### Illness Guidelines:

- If your child becomes ill, they must be symptom-free for 24 hours (48 hours for vomiting or diarrhea) before returning to school. (See Medical Policy)
- Inform staff of any illnesses or communicable diseases (e.g., Flu, strep, COVID-19, pinkeye, ringworm, lice).
- If a child is going to be absent from the preschool for any reason, please notify the director via [email](#).

### If a Child Becomes Ill at School:

- The parent/guardian or emergency contact will be called to take the child home. An ill child will be kept isolated until they are picked up.
- Children who verbalize symptoms of illness are sent to the BFA front office. BFA policy requires sending children home if they have a temperature of 100°F or more, have vomited, or had diarrhea. They **must** be picked up within one hour of the call.
- If your child's temperature is below 100°F but they appear unable to participate in classroom activities, you will be contacted.

**Returning to School After Illness:**

- Fever-free without medication for 24 hours.
- No vomiting for 48 hours.
- No diarrhea for 48 hours.

Please note, no tuition refund will be given if your child is sick and cannot attend school.

**Allergies or Other Health Issues**

Please ensure that any allergies or serious health issues your student has are noted on the BFA Student Registration Form and Health Appraisal Form. It is your responsibility to inform the school office promptly if your student is diagnosed with any additional medical conditions or allergies during the school year. If necessary, the BFA nurse, BFA Director, and your child's teacher(s) will meet with you to develop a plan based on the physician's written orders.

**Contagious Disease Policy**

Many communicable diseases are contagious before and after symptoms appear. Therefore, guardians should keep their children home whenever they appear to be ill, even with a common cold. Guardians are urged to consult a medical provider for professional advice in such matters. All communicable illnesses will be reported to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

**When Guardians Will Be Contacted:**

- Temperature of 100°F or more
- Vomiting
- Serious injury
- Other concerns from clinic staff

**Returning to School After Illness:**

- Fever: Wait a minimum of 24 hours after the fever has subsided without medication.
- Vomiting/Diarrhea: Wait a minimum of 48 hours after the last episode before returning to school.

**Health Services and Nurse Consultants**

Our school nurse consultants work closely with our staff to ensure they are trained and up to date on student health concerns. All staff are certified in CPR, First Aid, and Medication Administration.

**Health Support Provided:**

- Collaborating with parents of children with health needs during school hours • Monitoring all medication kept at the school.
- Ensuring school protocols are followed to keep children safe with allergies and other health challenges.

**Contact Information:**

- **Registered Nurse:** Peggy Brown - pbrown@bfacademy.org
- **Health Assistant:** 720-383-4519 (ask for health room)

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact them.

### **Immunization/Health Records Policy**

To comply with Colorado Department of Human Services regulations for preschool licensing, all children must have complete immunization and health records on file at the preschool before the first day of school. Parents opting to exempt their child from required immunizations must obtain a physician's signature or complete an online course to submit the exempt form. Please note, these regulations are mandated at the state licensing level and not by BFA. Parents will receive the necessary forms in their enrollment packets. These forms are valid for one year from the child's last physician visit date. You will receive an email notification when your forms are due for renewal, with a 30-day grace period for compliance.

### **Medication Policy**

To administer medicine at school, we require **written permission from your child's physician**. The medication must be in its original container with the original pharmacy label, including the following information:

- Pharmacy number
- Name of medication
- Date of medication filled
- Physician's name
- Child's name
- Directions for dosage

Parents must provide all necessary medications and medical documentation before their child's first day of school. Children missing medication or accurate medical documentation will not be allowed to start school until everything is in order. Our primary concern is the health and safety of every child. Only staff with Medication Administration training will administer medication. Our nurse consultant will review all medications.

#### **Storage of Medication:**

- Medication will be kept in a locked cabinet inaccessible to children.
- All medication is returned at the end of the school year.
- Emergency medication (e.g., inhaler for asthma, Epi-Pen for severe allergies) will be placed in a backpack, inaccessible to children, and will travel with the class wherever they go.
- All staff members are trained to administer emergency medication.

#### **Procedure for Administering Medication:**

- Parents must fill out the Medication Authorization Form.
- Medication will only be given by order or prescription of a physician. Over-the-counter medication also requires a written physician's order.
- Medication must be in its original container with the original pharmacy label attached.

#### **Important Notes:**

- We cannot administer any medications without proper documentation, per state licensing.
- Medication will be stored in a locked cabinet in the child's respective classroom and will be administered by BFA preschool staff who have completed the required medication administration training.

- A record of medications administered to your child will be kept on file.
- All emergency medications will be stored in the classroom out of reach of children.
- No medications may be kept in the child's bag or cubby.

If you have any further questions, please [contact](#) our registered nurse, Peggy Brown, at or our Health Assistant, Lisa Childs, at 720-383-4519 (ask for health room).

### **Accidents and Injuries Policy**

If a child receives an injury or has an accident while in our care, trained staff will administer first aid if the injury is not serious (e.g., cleaning, band aids, ice). An accident report will be completed to document the incident, and both staff and the parent/guardian will sign this form.

If the injury is more serious, parents/guardians or emergency contacts will be called and are required to pick up the child for any necessary treatment. If school staff cannot reach a parent/guardian or emergency contacts, the child will be transported to the hospital of choice listed on the emergency contact form by ambulance, with all costs assumed by parents/guardians.

Most injuries that occur at school require minimal assistance administered in the BFA preschool staff or nurse consultant. In the event of more serious illness or accidents, staff will first attempt to reach the parents at home or work using the information provided in the student's registration forms. If staff is unable to reach a parent, they will call the emergency numbers listed on the student's registration forms. If neither the parents nor the emergency contacts can be reached within a reasonable amount of time, school authorities will take the necessary steps to ensure the welfare of the student. Parents will receive a written injury report if an injury occurs at school.

### **Inclement and Excessively Hot Weather Policy.**

#### 2.240.B.2.(B)

Outdoor recess will be scheduled daily, except during snow, lightning, rain, excessive wetness, or when temperatures fall below 30 degrees Fahrenheit. In cases where temperatures exceed 90 degrees, or as determined by the Preschool Director, outdoor time will be shortened for the children's comfort and safety. Students should arrive prepared with appropriate coats, hats, and gloves to accommodate Colorado's varying weather conditions. Children should be adequately and appropriately dressed to go outside every day. **All children must arrive at preschool with sunscreen already applied. Sunscreen will be re-applied to only our full day Pre-K students when they have their afternoon recess at 3:00.**

### **Toilet Training and Extra Clothes Policy**

#### 2.222.B.2

Toilet training is expected from the first day of enrollment at BFA Preschool. We encourage children to use the bathroom at home before class to minimize accidents. Adult supervision and support will be provided to prevent and manage classroom accidents. All BFA preschool students are required to be fully capable of independent bathroom use, including wiping themselves. Our facility is not licensed for diapering, this requirement is strictly enforced by state licensing.

Parents may be contacted to pick up their child if a bathroom accident occurs or if cleaning assistance is required. Please note, our preschool bathrooms are not equipped with changing tables and are not licensed by the state to provide that care. Pull-ups are not permitted; however, we understand occasional accidents can happen. Therefore, each child should have a complete change of clothing in their backpack, including socks, underwear, pants, and a shirt. Please ensure clothing is updated for each season.

If a child has more than three toileting accidents within a two-week period, discussions will begin between preschool staff and parents/guardians regarding continued enrollment in the current class or postponing enrollment until proper toilet training is achieved. Hand washing is required daily upon arrival, after using the bathroom, before and after meals, after outdoor activities, and whenever a staff member observes hands in the mouth. Staff will frequently remind children to wash their hands.

Accidents happen, especially with young children aged 3 to 5, and BFA is prepared to handle them sensitively. No child will ever be shamed or disciplined for having a bathroom accident. In the event of an accident at school, if parents have provided spare clothing, the child will be assisted through the changing and cleaning process following Colorado Division of Childcare guidelines. Parents will be notified at the end of the day about any accidents that occur. If spare clothing has not been provided, BFA staff will contact parents to bring a change of clothing.

- Please label items with your child's first and last name. We reserve the right to label anything that comes to school without a name.

## **Parent/Staff Communication**

### **Staff Communication**

7.701.41 (W)

Parents/guardians are regularly informed about classroom activities through periodic class email updates from each classroom teacher. Additionally, preschool staff may communicate with parents/guardians regarding their child's behavior, progress, and social and physical needs via email or oral communication during drop-off or pick-up times.

The school director sends out weekly emails to ensure parents are well-informed about classroom happenings and upcoming events.

This communication approach aims to keep parents actively involved in their child's preschool experience and informed about their development and school activities.

### **Parent Communication Procedure**

All communication between BFA parents and teachers or staff members should be conducted in a civil and respectful manner. If the school receives communication (in person or electronically) that is deemed inappropriate and/or threatening by the administration, the school reserves the right to



request redirected communication or to restrict access accordingly. This may include limiting physical and/or electronic access to school staff.

Parents are encouraged to consider the volume of emails teachers receive daily and to be mindful of not overwhelming them. Teachers and staff will make every effort to respond to emails within **two business** days. Please note that teachers do not check their emails over weekends or during school breaks.

### **Meet and Greet Event**

The Meet and Greet event is designed for parents and children to meet their teacher and explore their classroom before the first day of school. Please refer to the school calendar for the exact date, emails will also be sent out with this information. Detailed information, including specific attendance times for each classroom, will be provided by the Director the week preceding.

Prior to the Meet and Greet, a PowerPoint presentation will be sent out outlining our curriculum, classroom requirements, and other important information. We encourage parents to review the PowerPoint beforehand and prepare any questions they may have for the teacher.

During the Meet and Greet, all parents will complete state licensing paperwork necessary for their child's enrollment in preschool. If you are new to the school or if your child's records have expired, please bring their immunization records and statement of health at that time. All paperwork must be completed before your child's first day of school.

If you are unable to attend the Meet and Greet, the required paperwork will be sent to you via email afterwards. It must be completed before your child can start school. Please be review the PowerPoint before the start of school.

### **Parent Feedback and Survey**

Every April, we conduct a yearly parent survey to gather your feedback on how we are performing as a school and how we can better meet your needs through new or existing programs. Your input is invaluable in helping us enhance the quality of our program, and we greatly appreciate your participation.

However, you are never required to wait for the survey to share your thoughts with us. We encourage open communication at any time regarding how we can improve and better serve you and your child. We are committed to listening and learning alongside you to create the best possible preschool experience.

## **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

### **7.701.41 (W)**

Formal parent-teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year in October and February for all students. Parents/guardians are welcome to request additional conferences at any time during the school year. Each teacher conducts a simple early assessment at the beginning of the school year to evaluate each child's social and emotional readiness for school.

Conferences serve as a vital opportunity for effective parent/teacher communication and are essential in building a strong partnership in your child's educational journey. In August, a set of questions will be sent home via newsletter to help teachers understand the goals you have for your child at school. The first conference, held in early October, focuses on goal setting and your child's social experiences at school. This provides an opportunity for the teacher to share curriculum goals and discuss your child's progress. Parents will be notified when sign-ups genius are available for scheduling conferences.

Throughout the school year, our teachers utilize a reflective assessment process to gather developmental information on your child's progress. This ongoing assessment informs the curriculum, ensuring it is developmentally appropriate and supports your child's social, emotional, physical, and cognitive growth.

The second conference, held in the spring, focuses on your child's learning progress. Formal assessments will be shared with parents during this conference. If you are unable to attend a scheduled conference, please inform your child's teacher, who will arrange an alternative time that suits both parties.

Please refer to the school calendar for exact dates that school conferences are held.

## **Observation/Volunteer Policy**

### **7.702.42 (v)**

We welcome parents to volunteer in the classroom to enhance the preschool experience. To ensure a smooth transition and foster trust between children and their teachers, we kindly request that parents refrain from classroom visits during the first month of school. However, volunteering in the classroom is encouraged and permitted throughout the year, provided it does not disrupt school operations or the educational process. Parents can reach out to each individual teacher to see how they can best assist each teacher as a volunteer.

If a child experiences difficulty when a parent leaves during a visit, we ask that the parent take their child with them. For the safety of all, parent volunteers will not be left alone in the classroom or with any child other than their own.

All volunteers and visitors, including family and friends, must sign in and out at the front office and wear a BFA Visitor Badge during their stay. This security measure helps maintain the safety of our school, students, parents, and staff.

Prospective parents will be escorted by the Director during their visit to ensure a smooth and informative experience.

### **Classroom Parties/Room Parent**

Throughout the school year, we host two classroom parties and our annual Luau field day, which offer opportunities for parent volunteers to participate. Refer back to the preschool events calendar for exact dates of these parties. Our designated room parent will email information to class parents before each event to coordinate volunteers to help with the classroom activities and ask for party donations.

If you volunteer to be a classroom parent, you will receive further instructions from the PTO Room Parent Coordinator regarding party logistics and responsibilities.

There are numerous volunteer opportunities available throughout the school year. **\*\*\*Please note, due to state licensing regulations, siblings who are not currently enrolled in our school cannot attend classroom parties. This policy ensures compliance with required student/teacher ratios and age restrictions outlined in our licensing.**

## **Classroom Policies**

### **Dress Code**

While attending Ben Franklin Academy Preschool, children are not required to wear the Ben Franklin Academy uniform. Instead, we encourage preschoolers to come dressed in comfortable, well-maintained attire. Clothing with holes or inappropriate language is not permitted to ensure a positive and respectful environment.

### **Dress-Up Clothes:**

\*\*\*Dress-up clothes or shoes are not allowed unless a specific dress-up day has been assigned.

### **Smart Watches:**

\*\*\*Preschool children may not wear smart watches to school.

### **Personal Belongings and Toy Policy**

#### **7.701.41 (S)**

Each child enrolled in our preschool program will be assigned a cubby to store their personal belongings during school hours. Parents/guardians are kindly requested to label all of their child's belongings, including outerwear, extra clothing, and lunch boxes. At the end of each day, all items will be returned to your child's backpack. Please refrain from sending valuables, as cubbies are not secure. Toys and stuffed animals are **only** permitted on designated show-and-tell days. BFA Preschool cannot be held responsible for lost or stolen items.

For safety and to maintain a focused learning environment, please note the following:

- Bringing toys, jewelry, hair accessories, or money to school is not allowed, as they may pose safety or class disruption concerns.
- Guns and toys that promote violence are strictly prohibited on school premises.

## **Field trips Policy**

### **7.702.41(K)**

There may be occasions when preschool classes will take walking excursions to areas on or immediately surrounding the BFA school grounds. The preschool does not take off-campus field trips requiring transportation and/or parent/guardian permission slips. Preschool staff will maintain established child to adult ratios during all excursions, as well as following child location/lost child procedures in the event a child becomes separated from the group.

## **Television and Video**

### **7.702.41(K)**

On occasion, the preschool may watch educational videos that are age-appropriate and relate to the curriculum or are a storybook read online. All videos used are educational videos (rated G or Educational), no longer than 30 minutes, and pre-approved for use in the classroom. Please do not send videos from home.

## **Birthday Celebration Policy**

Due to numerous allergies, we prefer that parents do not bring food treats to celebrate their child's birthdays.

However, we believe it is important for children to celebrate their special day with their school friends. While we won't have a party, we will ensure your child feels special on their birthday. Please see the teacher to discuss options.

**In lieu of food items, we have instituted a donation policy. We encourage you to participate in one of the following ways:**

### **1. Give a Gift of Literature:**

- Bring a wrapped book for your child's class.
- After the class sings "Happy Birthday," your child will open the book in front of the class, and it will be left for everyone to enjoy.
- Feel free to note your child's name and the date on the item so that the school will always know who it came from and to make it even more special you can volunteer to come in to read in on their special day. Please make arrangements with your child's teacher on a time that would be best for the class.

### **2. Goody Grab Bags:**

- Parents can pack goody bags with non-food items such as pencils, erasers, crayons, and other small treats to share with each child in the classroom.
- Depending on the specific teacher's discretion, children may also get to wear a special crown, have a balloon tied to their chair, or other small gestures to make them feel special.

## **Rest Period Policy**

### **2.223.D.5.(B)**

Children enrolled in our full-day program are required to have a rest period following lunchtime. To ensure your child is comfortable, please bring a crib sheet, a small blanket, and a small stuffed animal. Rest mats will be provided by the school.

Key points about rest time:

- All children, regardless of their usual napping habits, must participate in the rest period as mandated by the Division of Childcare Rules and Regulations.
- A teacher will always monitor the rest period, with soft lighting and gentle meditation music playing to create a calm environment.
- For safety reasons, children are required to keep their shoes on during rest time in case of an emergency evacuation.
- Children are not allowed to cover their heads with blankets to ensure teachers can always see them.
- If your child does not fall asleep after 30 minutes, they will be given a quiet academic activity to engage with.
- We ask that you do not schedule appointments during rest time, if you need to pick up your child early from school on any given day, please pick them before 1:00 or after 2:00. This gives all children the proper rest time.

We appreciate your cooperation in providing the necessary items and supporting our efforts to create a safe and restful environment for all children.

## **Behavior Management and Guidance Policy**

### **7.702.41 (I)**

Our goal at BFA is to provide a positive learning experience for all enrolled children. We emphasize positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior and focus on highlighting children's strengths. Through our Second Step curriculum and teacher intervention, we teach children effective ways to handle challenging situations. When necessary, we use redirection and discussions about making appropriate choices.

If behavior becomes disruptive to the class, the Preschool Director will be notified. The child may be temporarily removed from the room, and parents/guardians will be contacted. If challenging behaviors persist despite efforts in the classroom, the BFA Director may arrange a conference with parents and teachers to explore solutions. Professional guidance may be sought if necessary to support the child's needs effectively.

Children at BFA are never subjected to physical or emotional humiliation or punishment. Guidance is never associated with food, rest, or toileting. Our behavior rules are simple and focused on safety: keeping oneself safe, others safe, and belongings safe. Respectful and appropriate language is expected at all times, with the use of profanity strictly prohibited on school premises, which may result in dismissal from preschool.

Our staff is trained to address the social, emotional, and developmental needs of each child. However, in cases where a child's behavior poses a safety risk to themselves, other children or staff members and requires care beyond what we can provide, we will collaborate with parents to develop a plan of action.

Dismissal may be considered as a temporary measure to ensure safety, with the goal of reintegrating the child into our program after addressing concerns and implementing appropriate strategies.

We are committed to creating a supportive and nurturing environment where every child can thrive, and disciplinary measures are approached with care and consideration for the child's well-being and educational experience.

### **Meal and Snack Policy**

#### **7.701.41 (T)**

Due to a high number of student allergies and special dietary needs, parents/guardians are responsible for providing a healthy lunch (including a protein, vegetable, and fruit) with an ice pack if needed. Lunch containers should be clearly marked with your child's name. We are unable to heat or refrigerate lunches, as they are kept in your child's cubby until lunchtime. Teachers will assist children with their lunches as needed, but self-help containers are encouraged. Children will not be allowed to share food.

Parents are also responsible for providing a nutritious snack. BFA does not provide snacks. Please do not send soft drinks or colored drinks with student lunches or snacks. All students are required to be able to feed themselves.

- **Preschool 3's:** Only need a morning snack.
- **Pre-K All-Day Program:** Need two snacks, one for the morning and one for the afternoon.
- **PM Session Students:** Need only an afternoon snack and should have eaten lunch before arriving at school.

A filled water bottle is required daily. If a child needs their water bottle refilled, staff members will assist. If a child does not bring a water bottle, they will be provided with a disposable cup to fill with water throughout the day. Water bottles will not be supplied by the school.

**Please label all items with your child's first and last name. We reserve the right to label any items that come to school without a name.**

Parents of children in Preschool 3 and full-day Pre-K 4 have the option to either provide a lunch from home or obtain a free lunch through the district's lunch program. Parents are responsible for making lunch selections on the days their child attends preschool and requires lunch.

For children with food allergies, parents must collaborate with the district dietitian to ensure suitable meals are provided. It is the parents' responsibility to email the district dietitian and discuss menu options for their child.

## **PARENT ACKNOWLEDGE**

If you have questions about this handbook, reach out to the director at lhafner@bfacademy.org. During the enrollment process, you will be required to provide a hard copy signature to acknowledge that you have received and read a copy of the BFA Preschool Parent Handbook. By signing, you understand that the handbook provides guidelines and summary information about the school's policies and procedures. It is your responsibility to read, understand, become familiar with, and comply with the handbook. Please refer to this handbook whenever a question arises.

### **FILING A COMPLAINT**

#### **7.701.41(X) AND 7.701.5**

Licensing Complaints

All licensing concerns and complaints should be made to:

Colorado Department of Human Services

Division of Early Care and Learning

Attention: Complaint Intake

1575 Sherman St, 1st Floor

Denver, Colorado 80203

303-866-5948

### **CHANGE OF POLICY**

Ben Franklin Academy Preschool reserves the right to adjust procedures and policies at any time with proper notification to families. All changes that are made will be emailed to the parents, along with a new version of the handbook.

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Accessibility: 10/01/2024