

Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church Nursery School



Parent Handbook

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BHPCNS is licensed by the Maryland Department of Education, Office of Child Care and the Montgomery County Health & Human Services Licensure & Regulatory Services.

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A nursery school of excellence . . . where children play, grow, and learn!



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Dear Parents,

Welcome to Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church Nursery School, aka, BHCNS! The upcoming school year promises to have many fun and exciting adventures for you and your child(ren). At BHCNS your child's days will be filled with opportunities to play, grow, and learn. I want to thank you for sharing your child(ren) with us. Whether you are a returning family or new to our program, we are excited to have you be part of our school community!

This handbook contains essential information about BHCNS' policies, procedures, and expectations you need to know before committing to sending your child to BHCNS. These policies and procedures allow for the safe and orderly operation of our school. We ask that all school policies be shared with every person who will be interacting with BHCNS staff in the care of your child(ren), including parents, grandparents, nannies, au pairs, neighbors, and friends. Save this handbook to reference in the weeks and months to come. The answers to many routine school questions can be easily found in the handbook.

Between the handbook, Brightwheel messages and photos, newsletters from the office, informational flyers, the school website, classroom calendars, and more the school will provide you with loads of information about your child's day, what to expect throughout the upcoming school year, events to attend, volunteer opportunities and more. Please read and keep these documents readily available. I highly recommend creating a folder to store school documents to make them easily accessible when needed.

Just as we will be busy sharing information with you throughout the year, we ask that you share any changes in your child's day or routines with the school. It's important for our teachers to know when a child has lost a beloved pet, or family member, when a child has started speech or other developmental therapy, when a parent is traveling, a medical procedure is scheduled for your child or a family member, as all these life events may potentially cause a change in your child's enjoyment of school. Should you need materials, books, or other resources, I am always available to help navigate change or difficult life events.

Also, if there is a change in your contact information, in your childcare or home situation, authorized pick-up caregivers, please share this new information with the school office as soon as possible.

Most importantly, we must have up-to-date emergency contact information for your child. Should any contact information change, contact the school office at once to update your child's emergency form, and update changes in your child's Brightwheel account.

Thank you for following the policies, procedures, and expectations as outlined in this handbook, and in any future communications. Families are required to sign an acknowledgement stating you have read and understand BHCNS school policies. Please return the acknowledgment to the school with your child's deposit.

I cannot wait to spend time with you and your child(ren).

Liz aka Mrs. Sobrino

Parent Handbook Policy

BHPCNS updates our Parent Handbook annually and when circumstances arise requiring an update. Parents will be informed of any updates when they occur. Parents are responsible for following the policies and procedures outlined in the Parent Handbook. A signed acknowledgement agreeing to abide by the contents of the Parent Handbook is required by families upon acceptance to BHPCNS.

A copy of the Parent Handbook is available to families on Brightwheel and the BHPCNS website.

We recommend saving this handbook in a convenient place to refer to throughout the year. Almost all of your questions can be answered by checking the handbook.

BHPCNS Mission Statement

Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church Nursery School, a mission of Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church, encourages children's growth in a community of inclusion and respect reflecting core values inspired by faith traditions. In this loving and caring community children are encouraged to develop their own talents, uniqueness, and self-esteem.

BHPCNS Philosophy

Play

BHPCNS believes that young children learn best through play. Our play-based early childhood education program provides hands-on, multi-sensory experiences both indoors and outdoors to foster a lifelong love of learning.

Grow

Through our nurturing atmosphere and respect for each child's unique learning style and temperament, our children grow in resilience, confidence, and independence. Our classroom communities provide an environment where children learn to be kind, respectful, empathetic, and develop relationships with both adults and their peers.

Learn

Our program focuses on the whole child through social-emotional, physical, cognitive, and spiritual development tailored to each child's individual needs. Our children learn through free play, arts and crafts, individual and communal projects, dramatic play, literature, music, science, foreign language, and creative movement.

BHPCNS is open to children of all races, faiths, ethnic backgrounds, and nationalities

"Children learn as they play. Most importantly, in play children learn how to learn." O. Fred Donaldson



BHPCNS Programs

BHPCNS' curriculum is designed for children to learn through play and hands-on experiences. Teacher-guided activities encourage children to develop age-appropriate social and emotional skills: to listen, to follow one-step and sequential directions, to share, and to express needs, wants, and emotions. These hands-on experiences will also introduce children to developmentally age-appropriate academic concepts.

Two-Year-Olds (2s)

This loosely structured, play-based program gives children an opportunity to interact with their peers as they explore their natural world through activities which stimulate their cognitive and emotional growth.

- Experiential learning – blocks, dolls, housekeeping, manipulative toys,...
- Cognitive and sensory activities – easel painting, water play, gluing, play dough, sand table, process art, craft projects,...
- Cognitive skills – games, finger plays, songs, books, stories, music, conversation,...
- Large muscle development – outdoor playgrounds, Big Blue Blocks, Rainy Day Room, riding tricycles,...
- Learning basic emotions, exploring group play, and building relationships with adults and peers

Three-Year-Olds (3s)

This program broadens and introduces more formal cognitive experiences. Through creative play-based lessons, children continue to learn about social- emotional skills and other age-appropriate milestones.

- Cognitive experiences – colors, basic shapes, continued exposure to stories and literature, practice with cutting and gluing, counting, classifying, sequencing,...
- Constructive play – building with blocks, Legos, magna tiles, waffle blocks, sand tables...
- Creative, collaborative play – imaginative play, dramatic games, acting out stories,...
- Large muscle development – outdoor playgrounds, Rainy Day Room, blacktop, Big Blue Blocks, nature walks,...
- Guiding children as they move from me-centric to collaborative imaginative play with peers.

Pre-Kindergarten (4s)

This play-based program uses group games and activities which build children's interpersonal relationships and leadership skills while continuing to focus on each individual child's cognitive development in preparation for more structured Kindergarten programs.

- Cognitive learning (a higher emphasis) – counting, name recognition, reading readiness, tracking left to right, more formal letter and number instruction, one to one correspondence,...
- Constructive play – building with blocks, Legos, magna tiles, waffle blocks, bristle blocks, building wheels, Big Blue Blocks, sand tables,...
- Enhancing a child's understanding of their emotions especially as they relate to group play and other activities
- More complex role playing and elaborate games
- Building self-reliance and independence
- Collaborative and imaginative play with peers

Cub Club Recommended for Children Ages 12 to 30 months

Children and their caregivers are welcome to spend the morning playing with peers and enjoying teacher-guided activities, such as story time, music, creative movement, arts & crafts.

Supplemental Classroom Programming

BHPCNS supplements its regular morning programming with enrichment classes which include **American Sign Language, Art, Music, and Science**. In addition to these structured classes, we offer Story Time in our library with the opportunity to borrow books to bring home.

Optional Programs

Breakfast with Bradley (for 2s, 3s, Pre-K)**

This optional program for all age levels begins in late September– see school calendar for exact date. Breakfast with Bradley is offered Monday through Friday beginning at 8:00 am. Your child may attend the “Breakfast Club” on either a drop-in or recurring basis. Registration is required and an additional fee is due. Registration information can be requested from the office at any time and is available outside the office and on the BHPCNS website. Children, especially two-year-olds, need to be acclimated to school before joining this program. Decisions will be made in consultation with your child’s teacher to decide if a child is ready for this additional program.

Lunch Bunch (for 2s only)**

This optional program for two-year-olds begins early October – see school calendar for exact date. Lunch Bunch is offered Monday through Friday from 11:30 to 12:30 pm. Your child may attend Lunch Bunch on a drop-in or recurring basis. The program includes lunch (brought from home), playtime, songs, and stories. Registration is required and an additional fee is due. Registration information can be requested from the office at any time and is available outside the office as well as on the BHPCNS website. Children need to be acclimated to school before joining this program. Decisions will be made in consultation with your child’s teacher to decide if a child is ready for this additional program.

Stay & Play: A Creative Enrichment Program (for 2s, 3s, Pre-K)**

This optional program for students begins early October – see the school calendar for exact date. Stay & Play is offered Monday through Friday from 12:30 to 2:30 pm. For three-year-old and Pre-K classes, each afternoon has a different theme (e.g., Science Tuesdays, Yoga Fridays). Two-year-old classes have fun in our “Twos Rule” program which includes a short rest period. Both programs include a snack (provided by BHPCNS), creative activities, games, songs, indoor and outdoor exploration, and stories. Registration is required and an additional fee is due. Children may be registered for one day a week, two days a week, etc., or may attend on a drop-in basis. Registration information is outside the office at any time and is available on the BHPCNS website. Stay & Play classes are not held the day before certain holidays (see school calendar).

**Breakfast with Bradley, Lunch Bunch, and Stay & Play are flexible programs. Class Enrollment must meet our minimum enrollment requirements or may be cancelled.

BHPCNS Daily Operations

Arrival

- Upon arrival at BHPCNS children are to be taken to the bathroom by their parent/caregiver to use the toilet and wash their hands prior to entering their classroom.
- Bring your child to their assigned classroom or outdoor play area **NO EARLIER** than 8:55 am.
- A parent/caregiver **MUST** sign in their child daily to verify attendance. This daily login is required by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE).
- Never leave a child in a classroom or outdoor play area without an adult present.

Late Arrival

It is very important for your child to arrive on time to school. The teachers have prepared activities for your child which typically begin by 9:15 am. Frequent late arrivals are disruptive to the class and your child's school day. If you know you are going to be late due to extenuating circumstances, please notify the main office.

Dismissal

Pick up your child from their classroom promptly at dismissal time. This is important for their well-being. Refrain from using cell phones during pick up. Your child needs to be the center of your attention.

- Two-Year-Old classes are dismissed at 11:30 am.
- Lunch Bunch classes are dismissed at 12:30 pm.
- Three-Year-Old & Pre-Kindergarten classes are dismissed at 12:30 pm.
- Stay & Play classes are dismissed at 2:30 pm.

Communication with Teachers at Arrival and Dismissal

Arrival and dismissal are periods of time when teachers must devote their full attention to your child and their classmates. If you wish to talk to a teacher at any length, please plan with the teacher to do so outside of the arrival and drop-off timeframes. You may discuss your concerns via a phone call or schedule a conference with your child's teacher. A concern *should not* be discussed in the presence of your child or other parents/caregivers or children.

Change in Person Picking Up Child

If a child is to be picked up by someone other than their parent/legal guardian or authorized person(s) as listed on the child's Emergency Form, written notification must be provided to BHCNS in each instance containing the person's full name and phone number. If this person is unknown to BHCNS proof of identification will be required before releasing your child.

In case of an emergency, a parent/legal guardian may call the office to give verbal permission for their child to go home with someone else. You may be asked to verify the information on your Emergency Form, for us to ensure BHCNS staff is speaking to the parent/legal guardian.

Safety Comes First

BHCNS must ensure each child's safe transition from our program's care to an authorized adult at dismissal time. As per MSDE's guidelines, staff are to observe the state of the adult picking up the child from BHCNS. In the event a BHCNS staff member believes the authorized adult picking up the child is angry/disgruntled, or if the staff member has reasonable cause to suspect any person picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol or is physically impaired in any way and may endanger a child, the staff member may request another adult be called to pick up the child. (*Excerpt taken from the Emergency Preparedness Training and Information for Child Care Providers Maryland State Department of Education training booklet.*)

In the interest of making dismissals run as smoothly as possible, we ask that you adhere to our procedures.

Late Fees

All children must be picked up **promptly** each day. You are considered late when your child is picked up 10 minutes past dismissal time. If you anticipate being late, **please call** the BHCNS to alert the staff. **If you arrive late more than three times in one month**, you will incur the following fees (beginning on the fourth instance):

- First five minutes \$5.00
- Over five minutes \$2.00 **per minute** (i.e., seven minutes = \$9.00)

Late fees will automatically be added to your child's account and must be paid with your next scheduled tuition payment.

Driveways & Parking – Drive Slowly and Cautiously

It is imperative that all drivers drive slowly on the driveways and roads on the BHCNS campus as children may dart into oncoming traffic. Respect areas blocked by traffic cones.

Park in designated parking spaces only. Do not park in the fire lane at any time.

Maintaining a Healthy Environment

Daily Health Screenings for Children

When warranted or required, children may receive a health screening upon arrival following guidelines from the Montgomery County Health Department (MCHD) and Centers for Disease Control (CDC). BHCNS reserves the right to request that a child return home if they are ill.

- Children are not to come to school
 - if they do not feel well and are not able to fully participate in the preschool day.
 - within 24 hours of a fever, vomiting, diarrhea, etc.
- When ill, a child may return to school once they are symptom free for 24 hours without the use of medication.

Face Coverings at BHCNS follows Montgomery County guidance on the use of face coverings. Should the use of face coverings be needed, guidance on the use of face coverings will be shared with families.

Guidelines for Onset of Any Illness at School:

- If a child becomes sick during the school day, a parent or designated caregiver will be contacted to pick up the child as soon as possible.
- Children are not permitted back in school until fever/symptom free for at least 24 hours without the use of medication.
- BHCNS will perform a temperature check on any child that appears ill.
- An ill child may be cared for in the school's infirmary, isolated from classmates, until they can be picked up.

Antibiotics

If prescribed an antibiotic for a communicable disease your child must stay out of school for at least 24 hours. If prescribed an antibiotic for an injury, an infection from an injury, or dental work, etc., your child must be given the medication by their parent or legal guardian and observed for at least one hour, to be certain there is not an allergic reaction, before your child may return to school.

Head Lice

Children with head lice may return to school once they have been successfully treated. For more information regarding head lice, go to: www.cdc.gov/lice/head/treatment

Absences from School

If your child is not well, or if you are taking a holiday, please contact the school office or your child's teacher and let the school know that your child will be absent that day.

A child may not be readmitted to school after an absence of 3 consecutive days or more due to illness without a written statement from the child's physician stating that the child may return to a regular schedule and fully participate in a regular school day.

Guidelines for Onset of Any Illness at Home

- If a child becomes sick while at home with any symptoms, cough, fever, muscle aches, generally not feeling well, we ask that parents/caregivers notify the school office and to remain at home until all symptoms have subsided and the child or staff member is free of any ailments without the use of medication for 24 hours.
- Children are not to have had any fever or symptom reducing medications before coming to school.
- If a child symptoms are consistent with COVID-19, parents/caregivers are to contact the child's pediatrician for guidance.
- BHCNS is to be notified when a child tests positive for Covid, Flu, Strep, and other communicable diseases.

In a school environment, germs can spread very quickly. If your child is sick, please keep them at home where they will be more comfortable and get well faster. We are often asked: "How do you know when to keep a child home?"

Here are some guidelines:

- Do not send your child to school within 24 hours of a fever.
- Do not send your child to school within 24 hours of diarrhea.
- Do not send your child to school within 24 hours of vomiting.
- Do not send your child to school if they are heavily congested and/or coughing excessively.
- Do not send your child to school if they have not been symptom-free for 24 hours without the use of medication(s).

Note the 24 hour rule in the above guidelines.

Injuries at Home and at School:

- If your child sustains an injury while not in school, please advise the teacher. This is especially important in the case of sprains, fractures, cuts, stitches, concussions, etc.
- Should a child become injured at school, the school will notify the parents. Should the injury sustained at school require medical attention, the school must be notified as soon as possible. BHCNS is required to report injuries sustained at school which require medical attention to Maryland's Office of Child Care (OCC).

When to Notify School

Parents or legal guardians **MUST** notify the school if their:

- Child is ill with a communicable disease or condition (i.e., COVID, chicken pox, strep infection, pink eye, head lice, etc.). BHCNS will notify the class regarding a communicable disease, it **WILL NOT RELEASE** the name of the student who is ill. An email will be sent to the class advising that there has been a case of _____ reported and will inform the class of that disease's symptoms.
- OCC and MCHD require that certain diagnoses (e.g., COVID) be reported to their agencies. In these cases, a child's name and contact information is provided and families may be contacted by MCHD for further information and follow up.

- Child has any allergies that could require treatment during the school day.
- Child’s behavior is concerning them.
- Child is taking any medications, prescribed or over the counter, which may affect their behavior. This is especially important with allergy medications.

Application/Registration

New Students

Applications for the enrollment of new students may be received in the BHCNS office on a rolling basis for the following year. A non-refundable application fee must accompany the application form.

Current BHCNS Students

Registration for currently enrolled, in-house families occurs annually in early December. A non-refundable application fee must accompany the application form. Students currently enrolled in the two, three, and Pre-Kindergarten programs, who are not age-eligible for Kindergarten, are guaranteed placement in BHCNS if their application is received before the school deadline. *Please indicate a first and second program choice on your application. **You are not guaranteed to receive your first choice.***

Pre-K Students Applying for an Additional Year of Preschool

Students currently enrolled in the Pre-Kindergarten program who are age eligible for Kindergarten but wish to have a bridge or gap year should discuss repeating the Pre-K program with their child’s teacher and the Director before submitting an application. These applicants will be given priority over applicants who would be new to the school.

Acceptance Policy

1. Children currently enrolled at BHCNS;
2. Children whose parents are members of Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church;
3. Siblings of currently enrolled students;
4. Children enrolled in the Church School of Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church;
5. Previously enrolled students;
6. Siblings of previously enrolled students;
7. Previous applicants to the school;
8. All other applicants.

Within each ranking, priority is given to “earliest received” applications.

Acceptance or Wait List notifications will be mailed in late January for the upcoming school year. **A non-refundable registration fee equal to 1/10 of the annual tuition is due upon acceptance to reserve a student’s space.**

The Director of BHCNS has the final authority to accept a child for admission.

Age Eligibility by Program

2-year-old program: Age 2 on or before September 1

3-year-old program: Age 3 on or before September 1

Pre-Kindergarten program: Age 4 on or before September 1

Young 2-year-olds: Turns 2 between September 1 and December 31

Cub Club: 12 to 24 months by the first day of class

Classroom Requests

Many factors are taken into consideration when deciding classroom assignments, including children’s ages, personalities, maturity levels, gender, teacher recommendations, etc. It is very difficult to accommodate specific requests for teachers and/or classmates (including siblings). Therefore, such requests are not accepted. All classroom assignments are considered final.

Twins and Multiples

The Director, in consultation with parents, will decide the appropriate placements for twins or multiples.

Classroom Differences

Each classroom follows a developmentally age-appropriate, play-based curriculum. However, teachers are free to interpret how they present that curriculum to the children to meet the needs of each individual class. There may be times when children across an age group are all learning about a common theme, but individual class activities will differ.

Inclusion Policy

All children are welcome to attend BHCNS regardless of disabilities, special health care needs, background, culture, religion, gender, and/or economic circumstances. Through inclusive practices, BHCNS aims to reflect our wider community and promote positive attitudes to both the similarities and differences in each other. To achieve this, we actively engage with children, parents, legal guardians, therapists, and other service providers as appropriate, so that children of all abilities may fully take part in a typical BHCNS day.

Toilet/Potty Training

- Children enrolled in the Two-Year-Old program do NOT have to be potty trained.
- For two-year-olds who are ready to be potty trained, BHCNS will work with your family to ensure that your child is successful both at home and at school. Please discuss potty training with your child’s teacher when the time is appropriate.
- Children enrolled in the Three-Year-Old, and Pre-K programs are expected to be independently toilet trained at the beginning of the school year. BHCNS considers a child independently potty trained when the child can articulate their need to go to the bathroom, “make it to the bathroom” in time, can manage their clothing, and does not have recurring accidents at school.
- Consideration is given to children who may not yet be toilet trained if they have documented medical conditions that delay acquisition of this skill. Exceptions for an individual child may be made by the Director after a discussion with the child’s family.
- Children attending the Three-Year-Old or Pre-K programs who wish to enroll in the Stay & Play program must be fully toilet trained.

BHCNS Programs

Two-Year-Old	9:00 - 11:30	Tuesday & Thursday <i>or</i> Monday, Wednesday, & Friday <i>or</i> Monday through Friday
Three-Year-Old	9:00 - 12:30	Monday, Wednesday, & Friday <i>or</i> Tuesday & Thursday <i>or</i> Monday through Friday
Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K)	9:00 - 12:30	Monday, Wednesday, & Friday <i>or</i> Monday through Friday
Cub Club	9:15 to 10:45 <i>or</i> 11:00 to 12:30	TBD

Tuition & School Fees

Tuition is established annually by the BHCNS Board and shall be paid in 10 equal installments. Our tuition structure considers scheduled days off, spring, and winter breaks.

The first payment is the registration fee, which is due upon acceptance and is non-refundable. The remaining nine payments are due on the first day of each month, September through May. Tuition may be pre-paid.

School fees will be posted to students' Brightwheel accounts and may be paid several different ways.

Payment methods include:

- Brightwheel
- Cash
- Personal Checks
- Your Bank's Bill Payer System
- PlastiQ's Payment System for Credit Card & Direct Bank Transfers at <https://request.plastiq.com/pay-bhpcns>

For more information, please contact the office.

Late Payment Fees

If payment is not received by the 15th of the month, a late fee equal to 10% of the payment due will be added to the amount due.

If tuition is one month in arrears without due cause, your child may be dropped from programming.

Tuition Refund Policy:

- Short-Term or Intermittent Closures: No refunds or prorating of tuition payments.
- Long Term Closures:
 - In case of a whole school closure, lasting more than 10 weeks, monthly tuition payments, after the 10-week period, will be reduced by 25% for the remainder of the closure.
 - Stay & Play, Lunch Bunch, and Breakfast with Bradley fees will be charged for the rest of the month of the closure, i.e., school closed on February 19, fees would be collected for the remainder of February. Going forward, no fees would be charged until such a time as the program resumes.
- No refunds are given for Breakfast with Bradley Bear, Lunch Bunch, or Stay & Play due to school closings (scheduled or unscheduled) or absences. Make-up classes are not offered nor are students allowed to swap classes due to an absence.
- No refunds are given for a child's absences due to illness, family vacation, overseas trips, or other short or extended school absences. In extenuating circumstances families may request a refund from the BHCNS Finance Committee.
- Two weeks' notice is required when withdrawing a child from the school. You are responsible for all tuition payments due up to the date of withdrawal.

Changes in Financial Circumstances

It is the responsibility of the parent(s) to contact the BHCNS office at once if they are experiencing financial difficulty. In that case a payment plan may be worked out or a family may apply for financial aid through the Alla Johnson Scholarship Fund.

Returned Check Fee

A \$30.00 return check fee will be added to the amount due for any checks returned because of insufficient funds. As a courtesy, returned checks are automatically re-deposited where allowed.

Absences or Withdrawal

Tuition will not be refunded due to absences resulting from illness or travel.

Tuition Rates

Current and upcoming school year tuition rates may be found on the BHCNS website.

Tuition Increases

The BHCNS Board reviews the tuition and fee schedule annually. Tuition is set for the school year in the preceding January. However, the BHCNS Board reserves the right to amend tuition rates during the school year.

Tuition Assistance/ Alla Johnson Memorial Scholarship Fund

Tuition aid is available through the Alla Johnson Memorial Scholarship Fund. Applications for aid are kept confidential and are approved by the Finance Committee of the BHCNS Board. Applications for assistance should be submitted along with school applications. Financial aid applications may also be submitted at any time during the registration process or mid-school year should unexpected financial hardships arise. Applications are available online on the BHCNS website or may be requested from the office. The BHCNS Finance Committee will review all requests and provide the financial aid package with the applicant's acceptance letter from BHCNS or at the time of request.

Behavior Management Philosophy

Grace Mitchell's definition of discipline is a guiding principle at BHCNS. Ms. Mitchell states, "Discipline is the slow, bit by bit, time consuming task of helping children see the sense in acting a certain way." This definition aligns with the materials and strategies developed by the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning, (CSEFEL). The CSEFEL model identifies key social emotional skills that children need as they enter school. These vital life skills are developed using classroom routines, planned experiences, and include the following:

- Confidence
- Capacity to develop good relationships with peers and adults
- Concentration and persistence on challenging tasks
- Ability to effectively communicate emotions
- Ability to listen to instructions and be attentive
- Ability to solve social problems

When children do not have these skills, they often exhibit challenging behaviors. Staff will intentionally teach these skills and limit behavior problems by:

- Building positive relationships with children
- Designing supportive classroom environments
- Using social emotional teaching strategies
- Using individualized interventions when needed

BHCNS' behavior management policy reflects a philosophy of providing a supportive and healthy emotional climate for all children. Our goal is to help children develop positive self-esteem, social skills, and internal behavior controls that enable them to comfortably engage in all types of activities in the early childhood classroom setting. Age-appropriate expectations, careful planning, and the availability of a rich variety of appropriate play materials and activities help to create an environment where behavior problems may be prevented. When disruptive behaviors do occur positive guidance techniques are used. Positive guidance techniques allow children to develop responsibility for themselves as they grow towards becoming more independent and self-reliant.

Positive guidance techniques include:

- Setting limits and expectations that are clear, consistent, developmentally appropriate, and understandable for all children in a classroom.
- Children take part in the formation of classroom “rules.” Classroom rules are few in number, simple, stated in positive terms, posted in the classroom where children can easily refer to the rules, and review throughout the year.
- Helping children to use words and appropriate behaviors to express their feelings. Encourage children to talk out their frustrations or solve conflicts with each other.
- Planning to avoid conflicting situations.
- Giving children opportunities to choose activities and behaviors.
- Noticing and positively reinforcing appropriate behaviors using attention and verbal encouragement. Child’s efforts are recognized and encouraged, even if the child makes a mistake or is unsuccessful.
- Directing or redirecting children to appropriate behaviors in a positive way.
- Utilizing logical consequences to correct inappropriate behaviors; teachers may also ignore a behavior if a child is “asking/looking” for attention.
- Modeling appropriate behavior.
- Discussing alternative solutions (encourage children to reach their own solutions).
- A child who needs time away from the group may be brought out of the classroom to allow the distancing and time to calm down and regroup.

Parent Collaboration Regarding a Child’s Growth & Development

BHPCNS collaborates with parents, through observations, conversations, and screenings, to learn more about each child’s unique development so it may provide a safe and nurturing first school experience for its students. The school community values parent insight into their child’s growth and development, wanting to learn from parents the effective practices they have implemented at home with their child.

BHPCNS’s open-door policy encourages families to create consistent lines of communication between parents, teachers, and administrators, where each child’s growth and age-appropriate development are first and foremost during the child’s preschool years. These partnerships allow for a collaborative approach between school and home to successfully support and meet each child’s unique talents and traits. By creating a partnership from the time a child enters programming, there is a solid foundation between school and home to support each child and their family throughout the school year. These important relationships allow for an integrated approach should it be necessary to provide added supports for a child who may not be meeting their developmental milestones or having difficulties adjusting to the larger group dynamic of preschool.

If a child causes bodily injury to himself or another child or teacher, the child’s parents will be contacted, and a plan of action will be put into place to prevent future occurrences.

Consultants

Throughout the school year there may be outside consultants working with BHPCNS staff and students. These may include para-educators, speech pathologists, occupational specialists, physical therapists, early childhood educational interns, social and emotional developmental specialists, overall best practice in early childhood education mentors, and such. These specialists may be from Montgomery County Public Schools system, Montgomery County Social Services, or private practitioners hired by families or BHPCNS. It is possible your child may come home one day and share that there was an “extra” teacher in their classroom. These “extra” teachers will be approved by the office prior to working in the school. Please contact the office if you have any questions or concerns.

Outside Resources and/or Therapists

BHPCNS allows specialists from outside the BHPCNS staff to work with or observe a child as needed, provided these services are communicated with the Director in advance, the specialist has the appropriate clearances to be in the building, and the specialist works cooperatively with the BHPCNS staff to meet the needs of the child when attending BHPCNS.

Facilitators to Support a Child

In some circumstances, BHPCNS may use a facilitator to help a child acclimate to their school day. Facilitators are BHPCNS staff members who work one-on-one with a child to help them throughout the school day. In certain situations, parents may be asked to cover the expense of a facilitator to provide this additional level of support to their child.

Termination of Services

On occasion, the BHPCNS program may not be the best fit for a child or family. BHPCNS will make every effort to work collaboratively with families to resolve any challenges that arise. Additional resources, such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, etc., may be needed to support a child's success in the school environment. If it is determined that BHPCNS cannot adequately provide the level of individualized care a child needs, recommendations of alternative programming will be provided, and the child withdrawn from BHPCNS.

Child Abuse Licensing Requirements

BHPCNS is licensed by the Maryland Department of Education and as such we are bound by regulation to report any possible child abuse concerns to the Department of Health and Human Services.

Required Forms to Attend BHPCNS

You will receive several forms in late spring which need to be completed by the parent or legal guardian of each student. Please be sure to complete and return them promptly. Forms include:

- Health Inventory **– No child will be allowed to attend until this form is completed.
- Immunization Certificate**
- Lead Testing Certificate
- Permission Slip for Supplemental Programs
- Emergency Form – Both sides of this form must be **filled** out. If a piece of information does not apply to your family, mark that question N/A. **Print clearly** to avoid a delay in reaching you in the event of an emergency.
 - In case of an emergency, parents or legal guardians are contacted first. If they cannot be reached, we will call those persons listed as emergency contacts on your child's Emergency Form. It is very important that you give careful consideration to the names listed on the form, and that you inform those people that they are listed.
- Welcome to BHPCNS! – This questionnaire is used to assist teachers in getting to know your child before they begin school.
- Parent Handbook Acknowledgement – By signing this document you are agreeing to abide by the policies and procedures set forth within this handbook.
- Photography Policy

****Health Forms**

Health forms provided by the school via email, mailed home or found on the school website, must be completed, and returned to the school **BEFORE** a child may begin attending school. Students who have not completed the required paperwork, or who need certain vaccines, cannot attend school. Please note the BHCNS is regulated by the Maryland State Department of Education and Office of Child Care. Children entering BHCNS must be immunized according to the recommended schedule of the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH). The following doses of vaccines are required:

- Hib (Haemophilus influenzae b) – Four doses
- Chickenpox (varicella) – One dose
- DtaP or DT or Td – Four doses
- Hepatitis B – Three doses
- Polio – Three doses
- MMR – One dose*
 - *An additional dose is required upon the child’s fifth birthday.
- PCV7 – One dose

Note that currently there is no requirement for COVID vaccines.

Allowances are made for medical contraindications and religious objections to vaccines.

Administration of Medication

No medication can be given to a child during school hours by a staff member without a **Medication Administration Authorization** form (available from the school office or on the school website) completed and signed by that child’s parent/legal guardian and physician. In the event medication needs to be administered for allergies and/or asthma, an **Allergy Action Plan** and/or **Asthma Action Plan** needs to be completed as well and kept on file in the office. Medication includes prescription and over the counter, non-prescription medications, except for certain ointments (see section below).

All medications must be in the original, unopened packaging, include a pharmacy prescription label, which includes the child’s name, birthdate, dosing information, not be expired and be updated annually or when a change occurs in the child’s medication plan.

Topical Applications of Sunscreen, Diaper Ointment, etc.

Topical application of diaper rash products, sunscreen, or insect repellent supplied by a child’s parent may be applied without prior approval from a health practitioner. Parent authorization forms are available on the school website.

Ages and Stages Questionnaire 3 (ASQ-3)

The **ASQ-3** is an assessment tool parents complete to provide BHCNS with information about the developmental status of their child across five developmental areas: communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving, and personal-social. Each September, BHCNS asks parents to complete an ASQ-3 questionnaire for their child to serve as a baseline for developing appropriate lesson plans to support their child’s unique learning style.

BHCNS may require other forms depending upon the needs of the student, including sharing of Individual Family Service Plan, IFSP, or an Individualized Education Plan, IEP, as warranted. The more the school knows about your child’s personality and development the better BHCNS will be able to support your child’s growth and development.

BHCNS requests that should any information on the required forms change (e.g., contact information, health history) that this information be given to the school office as soon as possible.

Additional BHCNS Information

Allergies

BHCNS is not a peanut-free or nut-free or allergen-free school.

Allergies and the Classroom

There are always several children in our program who have a variety of different allergies. If one of those children is in your child's class, it is possible we will ask that all children in that class adhere to a request that the allergic food item not be brought to school. These allergies can be nuts, dairy, soy, wheat, etc. Any class in which there is a child with a food allergy will be notified.

When providing a special treat for the class, an ingredient list must be provided alongside whatever treat you provide. If the food being supplied is store bought, ingredients should be on the packaging (please confirm this to be the case). If the food is homemade, we ask that you complete a form (available from the office or website with the ingredients in the food item. If you are in doubt about an allergen, you can review information of the Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis website -

<http://www.foodallergy.org/section/about>.

Parents/legal guardians of children with allergies may be asked to provide a supply of safe snacks/treats to be used when the school cannot verify the ingredients of a special classroom treat brought by a classmate.

All parents/legal guardians should talk with their children and help them understand that food sharing is not allowed. All children's hands and faces must be washed before coming to school and hands must be washed upon entering the school facility. Not only will this prevent the spread of allergens, hand washing prevents the spread of communicable diseases. At BHCNS, we wash down tables after snacks and lunches. We also wash children's hands throughout the day and before and after lunch and snack times.

First Aid Bags

Every class has their own First Aid bag. Should a child need any special medical devices (i.e., an inhaler or epinephrine auto injector), or any medications, they will be transported in the First Aid bag everywhere the child goes throughout the day. If your child's medication is changed at any time, the new medication and Medication Administration Authorization form MUST be delivered to school ASAP.

For children requiring Epinephrine auto injectors, the program must always have two doses of medication at school.

Please note that upon occasion other groups use our classrooms. They have been made aware of our policies, but we cannot monitor all users.

Clothing & Daily Belongings

Play Clothes & Supportive Shoes

It is strongly recommended that children wear play clothes. BHCNS does not take responsibility for any damage/stains to a child's clothing due to painting, playing, etc.

Children are to wear sneakers or other supportive shoes that completely cover the foot and have non-skid soles. No types of "slide" shoes, clogs, or flip-flops are allowed, including "Crocs." Sandals are allowed during warmer months only if they are sturdy, have adequate straps which wrap the foot and heel, and are worn with socks.

Outdoor Play Clothes for Rain, Snow, Sun, etc.

At BHCNS we play outside every day, except in extreme weather. Please dress your child appropriately and **label** all clothing and accessories, including waterproof jackets, hats, mittens, gloves, sweaters, sweatshirts, boots, etc. Snow pants and warm boots are important when there is snow on the ground. Rain boots, jackets, and pants or rain-suits are needed when it is raining.

Tote Bags

Children are to use tote bags, **not backpacks**, at BHCNS. Small hands can easily open tote bags which do not have zippers and have wider openings to put projects, lunches, jackets, etc. into. To help build independence, children will hang their tote bags up each day after removing their lunches and water bottles. (Backpacks are much more difficult for children to zipper open and close, to put on over a jacket, etc.)

Packing Lunches

Children enrolled in Lunch Bunch, Three-Year-Old and Pre-K programs eat a parent-provided lunch at school. Perishable lunch items are to be placed in a stackable rigid container (e.g., Bento box), which will then be refrigerated. Upon arrival at school, children are to remove their “bento box” from their lunch bags and place it in their classroom’s designated lunch bin. Non-perishable items will remain in the child’s lunch bag which will be placed on the shelf above their coat hook or other designated area. There is no need to pack a drink as the school supplies organic milk and filtered water each day as a beverage.

BHCNS Tote & Lunch Bags Available

The Parents’ Group will have BHCNS tote bags and reusable, collapsible, lunch bags available for sale at the September Meet and Greet and throughout the school year.

Extra Clothing and, if needed, Diapers

Each child is to keep one change of season-appropriate clothes in a gallon-sized, zip lock plastic bag labeled with the child’s name and their teacher’s name in their tote bag every day. If your child is in diapers, please also include two diapers.

Toys from Home

Children are not allowed to bring toys from home to play with at BHCNS. Any toy brought from home must be left in the child’s tote bag or given to the teacher for safekeeping. Toys for Show & Tell are to be placed in the classroom bin at drop off each morning.

Water Bottles

Children are to bring water bottles, labeled with their name, from home for use throughout the day. Children will be able to drink from their water bottles throughout the day, in addition to snack and lunch time. Children who forget their water bottles will be given water or milk in disposable cups.

Lovies

For children who are struggling to adjust to school it is permissible to send them to school with a lovie. We consider a lovie to be a pacifier, a blanket, stuffed animal, etc. A word of caution, lovies can be misplaced at school. Parents/caregivers must check a child’s tote bag every day to make sure the lovie makes it home each day.

Learning to Zip, Buckle, Tie, etc.

BHCNS will help teach students to independently managing their outerwear, sweaters, jackets, etc. Encourage your child to zip, buckle, and button at home, too.

All belongings of a child that could be lost or misplaced, MUST be labeled with the child’s name.

Umbrellas are not allowed at any time. Should your child bring an umbrella to school we require the umbrella to be taken home during the school day.

Communication

Communication between home and school is vital to the program's success. BHCNS requests that you inform either your child's teacher or the office of any changes at home or within the family, (e.g., a parent on a trip, a separation, a family member in the hospital, etc.) These changes can affect a child's behavior, and it is therefore useful for staff to be aware of these developments. Please note that BHCNS will always respect your privacy in these instances.

Communication Methods:

There are several ways to stay informed about what is happening at BHCNS. They include:

- Monthly Newsletters and updates as needed from the Office
- Brightwheel Childcare Platform
 - Monthly Calendars
 - Teacher newsletters
 - Classroom photos and videos
- School Folders for Flyers
- Emails
- Connecting in the office or hallways

Brightwheel - Parent Communication Software

BHCNS uses the Brightwheel software platform for student records, billing, and school to family communication via messages and alerts. All families will be required to set up a Brightwheel account for their child.

Email and Phone Communication

Contact your child's teacher or the main office at any time by calling 301-365-2909. Staff email addresses will be shared at the beginning of each school year.

Communication between Parents and School

In addition to receiving communications from BHCNS in the above listed ways, we strongly encourage you to maintain regular channels of communication with the program. Following are some reminders as well as additional information about opportunities to communicate with the program's teachers and administrators.

Child Benchmarks

Students are continually assessed according to age-appropriate milestones via formal and informal observation throughout the school year.

- ASQ-3s results will be shared with parents by early October.
- BHCNS conducts an in-school assessment mid-year using age-appropriate screening tools and are representative of a "snapshot in time" of your child's development.

Screenings

- Vision screenings will be provided for all children annually.
- Hearing screenings will be given to all children enrolled in the Three-Year-Old and Pre-K programs during the school year as scheduling permits.
- Speech and Occupational Therapy screenings will be provided on an as-needed basis. Teachers may recommend a child for screening and/or a parent may request a screening for their child.

- There is no additional charge for any of these screenings.
- For all screenings that occur at BHPCNS, parents/legal guardians will be notified of the dates as well as the results.
- It is important that BHPCNS be kept apprised of any screening results and/or any therapies a child may receive from private providers.

If you have a concern or if the school has a concern about your child's development *at any time throughout the school year*, a conference will be arranged to discuss how to support your child's continued growth and development at BHPCNS.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

- School-wide parent/teacher conferences are conducted in February. However, a meeting with your child's teacher may be scheduled **AT ANY TIME**. Simply contact your child's teacher or the office to make arrangements.
- These brief 15-minute conferences are an opportunity for parents/caregivers and teachers to discuss your child in a school setting.
- Conferences occur while school is in session, so there is no need to make additional child care arrangements.

Grievances

If you are troubled by anything in your child's classroom, please ask for a conference with your child's teacher. If you do not feel that the issue has been resolved in a satisfactory manner, please come to the office to speak with the Director so that other approaches can be investigated and implemented. If the situation is not resolved satisfactorily, you may share your grievance with the BHPCNS Board at board@bhpcns.org.

Back to School Night

For this adult only event, parents are invited to visit their child's classroom to get insight into their child's daily school day. Teachers will review classroom policies, procedures, and routines. This is not the time to ask child-specific questions. You may contact your child's teacher separately with specific questions.

Social Media

Bradley Bear loves to post on several social media platforms. Please consider joining us!

- Facebook: Friend Bradley Bear and like our Business Page
- Instagram: Follow us at [bhpcnsbear](https://www.instagram.com/bhpcnsbear)
- Google Group – groups.google.com/g/bhpcns

Safety & Security

The safety and security of the children and the staff are first and foremost in every decision made at BHPCNS. Security features at BHPCNS include:

- Entry points to the school have secure doors that are accessed via keypad or through the phone system. Doors are kept locked throughout the school day, except for arrival and dismissal times.
- A video camera system that allows the office to always monitor activity indoors and outdoors.
- An intercom system between the office and the school spaces located on the lower level of the building.
- An audio system that allows the office to always communicate with classes outdoors.
- Continued staff training on the best protocols for dangerous situations.
- Monthly fire drills and quarterly weather drills with the children.

Emergency Plans

BHPCNS has an emergency preparedness plan that provides safe and loving care for the children in the event of a weather emergency, natural disaster, or any other dangerous situation in the community.

BHPCNS will supply water and snacks if the children need to be detained at school. Depending on the situation, the children will stay in their classroom or be moved to the hallways.

In case of a whole building evacuation, the children will be taken to either the National Center for Children and Families on Greentree Road, the Woods Academy on Greentree Road, or a private licensed family daycare home on Westland Road.

In case of any emergency, parents/legal guardians will be contacted as soon as possible. It is imperative that your Emergency Form with all contact information is kept up to date. Communication may occur, but not be limited to, alerts, teacher or administrator telephone calls, email blasts, text message blasts, posting on all BHPCNS social media sites.

The school emergency plan is constantly revised and updated. If you would like to see the emergency plan, contact the main office.

Montgomery Alerts

The school administration and staff subscribe to Montgomery Alerts to receive email and text messages when there is an emergency of any type in the area, weather/storms, water main break, brush fire, etc. The school will follow all directions supplied by local authorities and broadcast in case of an emergency. Parents/legal guardians will be notified as soon as possible. We strongly recommend parents and caregivers sign up for Alerts from Montgomery County. You can set up an account to have all alerts sent via email, or text. School delayed opening and any necessary weather related closure information is also sent via Montgomery County alerts: To sign up through their website go to: <https://alert.montgomerycountymd.gov/index.php?CCheck=1>, or, for instant registration you can text MONTGOMERY to 411911.

Miscellaneous Information:

Babysitting/Nannyng

We ask that you keep your relationships with our teachers on a professional basis. Parents and legal guardians are discouraged from using teachers for childcare outside of BHPCNS as the job demands are high and the potential for conflict of interest exists. However, if you ask a BHPCNS staff member to work as a babysitter or a nanny while they are employed at BHPCNS, please know this is an entirely separate arrangement from your child's enrollment. BHPCNS' liability or workers compensation insurance does not cover our staff off-premises. In addition, our criminal background checks and on-the-job observations do not cover any work done outside of BHPCNS.

Birthday Celebrations:

Children enjoy celebrating their birthdays at school. If you would like to provide a birthday treat for the birthday child's class, make it a small, simple treat, and please discuss it with the teacher in advance. We suggest fresh fruit, miniature cupcakes or muffins, small cookies, or donut holes with festive birthday napkins or paper plates. Please do not send in goody bags or excessively large or sugary treats. Be considerate of those children in the class who have known food allergies and or food preferences (e.g., vegetarian, vegan). For all treats, whether store-bought or home-made, please supply an ingredient list. Forms are available outside of the office, on the website, or you may write your own ingredient list.

Carpools

Transportation to and from school is the responsibility of the parents. Carpooling is permissible. Provide a written note to your child's teacher with your carpool arrangements. The name(s) of the drivers should also be listed on your child's emergency card under "Authorized to Pick Up Daily."

Class Lists

Your child will be given a list of names, addresses, and phone numbers of the children in their class. This list will exclude any contacts who request their information be kept private.

Directory (Whole School)

A school directory, including Parents' Group contact information, Room Parents' contact information, class lists, students' names, parents' names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses, will be published in the fall and distributed to all families. This directory will exclude any contacts who request their information remain private.

Field Trips

Field trips may be scheduled during the year for Three-Year-Old and Pre-Kindergarten students.

- Parents/legal guardians will be notified in advance of each trip and will be asked if they would like to volunteer to chaperone and drive children on the trip. It is possible more volunteers will offer their time than can be accommodated. In this instance, we ask you to remember field trips are a time for your child to build their independence by attending fun adventures without Mom or Dad.
- Car safety seats are required for students to ride in passenger cars. Some cars have extra car seats which your child, with your permission, may use. Or, you may provide a safety seat for your child on the day of the field trip. The car seat **MUST** be tagged with your child's name and installed in the driver's car by you. If your child does not have a safety seat they will not be allowed to go on the field trip. **There are no exceptions to this rule.**
- Explicit permission from the parent or legal guardian is required for each field trip.
- Children should wear their red **Bradley Bear T-shirts** on field trips. Bradley Bear T-shirts are distributed to all students in the 3s' program. Students new to BHCNS in the Pre-Kindergarten program year will be given a T-shirt early in the school year.
- Due to insurance coverage, no siblings are allowed to go on field trips.
- Fees – No extra fees are charged for field trips. They are included in your tuition. Any admission fees or parking fees for parents/legal guardians accompanying BHCNS students as chaperones will be covered by the school.

Lunch Time Tips

- Lunches should be nutritional, age-appropriate, and familiar to your child for them to enjoy at school.
- Cut grapes, apples, carrots, hot dogs, etc., into small pieces. Cutting sandwiches into quarters or triangles makes eating a sandwich much easier for small hands.
- Noodles/pasta should be a shape that is easily eaten and fits on a fork or spoon.
- Please limit sugary treats in lunch bags. We will encourage the children to eat healthy foods before they eat desserts and sugary items, but we cannot prevent them from enjoying their cookies first.
- Thermoses to keep food hot are allowed, but we do not have microwaves in the classrooms for heating up lunches, so please pack lunches accordingly.
- Lunch containers should be easily opened by small hands.
- Occasionally, we may need to restrict certain types of food due to allergy concerns in a class. Please take these requests seriously.
- If you have any questions about what to send for lunch, please reach out to your child's teacher or the office.

Lunch is a very social time for children. Little ones tend not to eat all their lunch at the beginning of the school year. Teachers will put all the non-spillable leftovers back in your child's lunch bag to send home.

Maryland State Guidelines recommend the following lunch portion sizes for children ages 3 to 5:

- **Protein:**
 - 1 and ½ ounce per meal
 - ¾ of an egg
 - 6 TBSP cooked beans or peas
 - 3 TBSP peanut butter or substitute
 - 6 ounces of yogurt
- **Grain**
 - ¼ cup (bread, roll, pasta, rice, etc.)
- **Vegetable**
 - ¼ cup
- **Second vegetable or fruit:**
 - ¼ cup
- The state also recommends ¾ cup of low-fat milk. BHPCNS supplies organic 1% milk at lunch.

As a commitment to your child's health:

- Drinking water is available inside and outside for self-service (where age appropriate)
- 1% organic milk is served per state regulations.
- Staff sit and eat with the children as often as possible, providing an opportunity for positive social interaction and role modeling.
- We never force, trick, or coerce a child into eating. We provide; they decide.
- Hands, both big and little, are always washed before and after meals and snacks.

Snacks (mid-morning, and during supplemental programming)

BHPCNS supplies a snack for all children each mid-morning and during supplemental programming. Snacks are planned to include a variety of healthy food including whole grain bread, cereals and crackers, fruits and vegetables, and protein from both animal and vegetable sources.

- We are cautious about foods which present a choking hazard. Foods such as grapes and small tomatoes are cut into small pieces when served by BHPCNS.
- We limit high-fat, high-sugar, and high-sodium foods (like chips and fruit punch).
- Meals and snacks are offered at least every 2 to 3 hours to ensure small tummies do not get too hungry.

The snack schedule will be posted on the bulletin board across from the office and on the school website each month. If your child has a specific food allergy of any sort, or practices a vegetarian or vegan lifestyle, that information **MUST** be communicated to the office before the start of school. If a school planned snack contains items which your child is allergic to or does not adhere to their diet, parents are asked to send in a substitute snack for your child. Substitute "special" snacks may be kept at school if a special snack (e.g., a birthday snack) is brought to school without prior teacher knowledge.

Holidays, Snow Days, and School Closings

Holidays

With a few exceptions, we follow the Montgomery County Public School System in deciding our school holidays. A calendar of BHPCNS holidays is included in the back of this handbook and is posted on the school website.

Snow Days/Emergency Closings

BHPCNS follows Montgomery County Public Schools, MCPS, for all weather related and/or emergency closings.

- To receive alerts directly via email and/or text sign up for Alerts from Montgomery County. To sign up through their website go to: <https://alert.montgomerycountymd.gov/index.php?CCheck=1>, or, for instant registration you can text MONTGOMERY to 411911.
- Late openings and emergency closings are announced on most radio stations after 4:00 am. In case of an unexpected weather-related school closing as determined by MCPS, BHPCNS will be closed or delayed as well.
- Parents should check local newscasts or go to www.mcps.k12.md.us/emergency daily during winter months. It is possible that conditions will appear fine, but that school has been closed or delayed due to weather in another part of the county, black ice, etc.
- When the public schools are **closed** because of weather, BHPCNS will be **closed**.
- When the public schools have a **one or two hour delayed opening**, BHPCNS **will have the same delayed opening**. In case of a one- or two-hour delay, the Two-Year-Old program will dismiss at 12:30 pm instead of 11:30 am. Lunch Bunch will be cancelled for that day and BHPCNS will supply a hearty snack for the children in that program. Children in the 3-Year-Old and Pre-K program should bring lunch as they normally do and will be dismissed at their normal time.
- When the public schools close **early**, BHPCNS will close at its 12:30 pm. **Stay & Play classes will be cancelled. The Lunch Bunch program will go ahead as normal.**
- If dangerous weather occurs when public schools already have a scheduled closing, but BHPCNS is open, emergency scheduling will be announced via email and social media and posted on the school's website.
- In exceptional situations, the Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church reserves the right to close BHPCNS with or without the concurrence of the Director or the Board of BHPCNS.
- BHPCNS reserves the right to close school regardless of MCPS' decision, as local power outages, snow removal from the school grounds, or other circumstances may affect operational abilities during inclement weather. Should such a circumstance occur, BHPCNS will email families and post notices on the school website, social media, regarding the decision to close or modify the school schedule.

Parents' Group

The Parents' Group provides a liaison between the parents/legal guardians, staff, and the BHPCNS Board. Some activities the Group sponsors are:

- School-wide social events
- Coffee for parents on the first days of school
- Organize each classrooms' Room Parents
- Room Parents may organize events for their class
- Organize Parent Volunteers for assisting in the school office/classrooms
- School fundraisers
- Lecture series on topics of interest to parents, including:
 - Potty Training
 - Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About MCPS Kindergarten

Watch the newsletter, website, and the bulletin boards for announcements of upcoming events.

Room Parents

A SignUp Genius link will be shared with families to sign up to be a room parent. Each class typically has 2 to 3 Room Parents. The main objective of a Room Parent is to help the other parents in their child's classroom become better acquainted. This is usually done by organizing a morning coffee for the classroom, which may be held in someone's home, outdoors on the BHCNS campus, a restaurant, or in an available room in the church. Room Parents will help classroom teachers for special parties, Halloween, Christmas, etc. Room Parents may also be asked to assist the teachers and function as liaisons for various committees of the Parents' Group. A Room Parent meeting will be held in the beginning of the school year to guide Room Parents and discuss how they may most benefit their child's class and school. Throughout the year the Parents' Group will communicate with the Room Parents to support their activities.

Parent Visitation

We encourage you to visit your child's classroom to share school life with him/her. Please talk with your child's teacher and arrange for a mutually convenient time for you to come to school, especially if you would like to lead a special project, read a story, prepare a special snack, etc., with the class. Please sign in at the office when you arrive.

Parent Volunteers

BHCNS values its volunteers! To volunteer, reach out to the Parents' Group to learn about all the opportunities they have to offer—from being a Room Parent to coordinating social events to planning galas there are many ways to support the school. And keep an eye out for requests from the school for volunteers to help with screenings, field days, field trips, and more. There are volunteer activities to do in school and opportunities to do support the school by completing tasks at home. These are all terrific ways to get to see your child in action with their peers.

When volunteering at BHCNS, volunteers are asked to sign their names in the volunteer log in the school office and to wear a BHCNS badge.

Philanthropic Giving

BHCNS gratefully receives financial donations to support its daily operations, long-term goals & projects, and the Alla Johnson Memorial Scholarship Fund. In-kind contributions of supplies (e.g., toys, books) are also welcomed. As a 501(c)3 organization, all donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Physical Activity

BHCNS takes physical activity seriously. We promote active play both inside and outside. Outdoor play is especially important, the benefits being better vision, better resistance to disease, increased Vitamin D, less stress, better attention span, better physical fitness & coordination, better self-management in the classroom, better nature literacy and understanding, as well as sparking curiosity and imagination. We go outside every day, except in extreme weather, to play on the playgrounds, the blacktops, the Outdoor Discovery Center, the Big Blue Blocks play area, and to take nature walks, conduct science experiments, and have other outdoor learning experiences. In case of bad weather, we utilize the Rainy Day Room and Memorial Hall for the children to run, climb, ride trikes, and play games such as soccer, tag, etc.

Play Dates

Play dates provide children the opportunity to build independence and bond with another child. Forming a connection with another child outside of school can often ease their transition from caregiver to classroom environment. Play dates teach children how to play appropriately with a friend, how to negotiate, and spur language development. We highly encourage you to arrange play dates for your child. Play dates can be as simple as meeting a friend before or after school on a BHCNS playground or in the Rainy Day Room. It's not the location as much as it's getting your child together with friends outside of school.

Playgrounds

The BHCNS playgrounds are open to the community to use at their own risk when school is not in session and not in use for a Church event. If there is a class on a playground, children who are not part of that class will not be allowed to play. This is to ensure the safety of all the children. We ask that you supervise your children closely on the playground to make sure they play safely. Do not leave your child unsupervised on the playground at any time. **Pets are not allowed on the playgrounds at any time.**

BHCNS asks that you always abide by school rules on the playgrounds. Please read and follow the rules posted on the playground fences. Neither Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church nor BHCNS are liable for any injuries which may occur on Church grounds during non-school hours.

Please tidy up the playground upon leaving (put toys away, close sandboxes, remove trash, etc.).

Screen Time

BHCNS is a play-based program. Televisions, computers, and other media devices are used infrequently and only when related to facilitate a learning experience. Per Maryland Excels guidelines, if used, it is limited to one day per week or less and no more than 30 minutes in duration. It will never be used passively during snack, lunch, or rest times. Exceptions may be made for special occasions, emergencies, or celebrations.

Show & Tell

Many of our Three-Year-Old and Pre-Kindergarten classes conduct “Show & Tell.” This childhood ritual builds confidence and is an important precursor not only to public speaking, but also writing. Should your class have Show & Tell keep in mind that items for showing must fit easily in your child’s tote bag and refrain from allowing your child to bring toy weapons to school.

Transitioning to School

- We have found that the best way to transition your child to school is to simply play on our playgrounds.
- Establish a brief, positive good-bye routine. “See you later” is better to say than “I’m going to miss you.”
- Arrive to school on time. It is important for your child to begin the school day at the same time as their classmates.
- BHCNS’ Transition to School flyer and Welcome to BHCNS social story as well as other resources are available on our school website.
- If you still have questions or concerns, please reach out to your child’s teacher or the school administration.

BHCNS Board

BHCNS is sponsored by the Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church and is responsible to the Session of the Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church through its Christian Education Lay Ministry. The BHCNS Board consists of the following voting members:

- Chair, Member of the Congregation, Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church
- Vice Chair, Member of the Congregation, Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church
- Director, Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church Nursery School
- Current Parent, Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church Nursery School (x2)
- Current or Past Parent, Member of the Congregation, Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church (x2)

Additional Board members in an ex-officio capacity:

- Director of Christian Education, Bradley Hill Presbyterian Church
- Treasurer, Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church BHPCNS
- Current Staff Member, Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church BHPCNS (x2)

The BHPCNS Board is responsible for determining BHPCNS’ mission and vision, approving the annual budget, evaluating the Director, recruiting, and orienting new board members, and establishing policies required for the smooth operation of BHPCNS. Board meetings are open to the public. The meeting calendar will be available on the school website. If you are interested in having an item added to a meeting agenda, you must notify the Board Chair in advance. A copy of the BHPCNS’ bylaws and minutes are available for review upon request in the office. General inquiries may be sent to board@bhpcns.org



2024-2025 BHPCNS School Calendar*

2024	
08/26 (Mon.)	Teachers Report
08/27 (Tues.)	Parent Orientation via Zoom 9:30 am or 7:30 pm
08/28 - 08/29	Playground Meet and Greets
09/03 (Tues.)	1 st Day of Classes
09/21 (Sat.)	Parents' Group Back-to-School Event
9/23 (Mon.)	Supplemental Programming Begins
10/1 (Tues.)	Parents' Night (aka Back-to-School Night)
10/3 (Thurs.)	School Closed, Rosh Hashanah
11/27 - 11/29	School Closed, Thanksgiving Break
12/02 (Mon.)	Classes Resume
12/20 (Fri.)	No Stay & Play Classes Held
12/23– 01/03/25	Winter Break
2025	
01/06/2025	Classes Resume
01/20 (Mon.)	School Closed, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day
02/17 (Mon.)	School Closed, Presidents' Day
03/31 (Mon.)	Teacher Professional Day – School Closed for Students
04/11 (Fri.)	No Stay and Play Classes Held
04/14 - 04/21	School Closed, Spring Break
04/22 (Tues.)	Classes Resume
05/23 (Fri.)	Last Day of School
06/02 - 06/12	Session 1 Camp
06/16 - 06/27	Session 2 Camp – no camp June 19

*Subject to change

For questions, concerns or to file a complaint contact your regional office

Anne Arundel	410-573-9522
Baltimore City	410-554-8315
Baltimore County	410-583-6200
Prince George's	301-333-6940
Montgomery	240-314-1400
Howard	410-750-8771
Western Maryland, Allegany, Garrett & Washington	301-791-4585
Upper Shore, Kent, Dorchester, Talbot, Queen Anne's & Caroline	410-819-5801
Lower Shore, Wicomico, Somerset & Worcester	410-713-3430
Southern Maryland, Calvert, Charles & St. Mary's	301-475-3770
Harford & Cecil	410-569-2879
Frederick	301-696-9766
Carroll	410-549-6489

The OCC Regional Office will investigate your complaint to determine if child care licensing regulations have been violated. All confirmed complaints against child care providers may be viewed at CheckCCMD.org.

For additional help, you may contact the Program Manager of the Licensing Branch at 410-569-8071.

Resources

Child Care Subsidy - Assists parents with cost of childcare

1-866-243-8796

Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) - regulates certain products used in childcare

cpsc.org

Maryland EXCELS - Maryland's Quality Rating System for Childcare Facilities

marylandexcels.org

Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council - May assist with ADA issues

md-council.org

Maryland Family Network - Assists parents in locating childcare

Marylandfamilynetwork.org

PARTNERS Newsletter - What's happening in the Division of Early Childhood Development

Earlychildhood.Marylandpublicschools.org

To this site to check provider inspection violations

checkccmd.org



Larry Hogan, Governor

Mohammed Choudhury

State Superintendent of Schools

OCC 1524 (10/2018)

Guide to Regulated Child Care



Important Information About Child Care Facilities

Who Regulates Child Care?

All child care in Maryland is regulated by the Maryland State Department of Education, Office of Child Care's (OCC), Licensing Branch.

The Licensing Branch's thirteen Regional Offices are responsible for all regulatory activities, including:

- Issuing child care licenses and registrations to child care facilities that meet state standards;
- Inspecting child care facilities annually;
- Providing technical assistance to child care providers;
- Investigating complaints against regulated child care facilities;
- Investigating reports of unlicensed (illegal) child care; and
- Taking enforcement action when necessary.

COMAR Regulations and other information about the Office of Child Care may be found at:

earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/child-care-providers/office-child-care



What are the types of Child Care Facilities?

Family Child Care – care in a provider's home for up to eight (8) children

Large Family Child Care– care in a provider's home for 9-12 children

Child Care Center – non-residential care

Letter of Compliance (LOC) – care in a child care center operated by a religious organization for children who attend their school

All facilities must meet the following requirements:

- Must obtain the approval of OCC, fire department and local agencies;
- Must have qualified staff who have received criminal background checks, child abuse and neglect clearances, and are not on the sex offender registry;
- Family child care providers must maintain certification in First Aid and CPR;
- Child Care Centers must maintain a ratio of one staff certified in first aid and CPR per every twenty (20) children at all times;
- Must offer a daily program of indoor and outdoor activities;
- Must maintain a file with all required documentation for each enrolled child;
- Must post approved evacuation plans, conduct fire drills and emergency preparedness drills; and
- Must report suspected abuse and neglect, and may not subject children to abuse, neglect, mental injury or injurious treatment.

Did You Know?

- Regulations that govern child care facilities may be found at: earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/regulations
- The provider's license or registration must be posted in a conspicuous place in the facility;
- A child care provider must enter into a written agreement, with a parent, that specifies fees, discipline policy, presence of animals, the use of volunteers, and sleeping arrangements for overnight care;
- Parents/guardians may visit the facility without prior notification any time their children are present;
- Written permission from parents/guardians is required for children to participate in any and all off property activities;
- All child care facilities must make reasonable accommodations for children with special needs;
- A "Teacher" qualified person must be assigned to each group of children in a child care center;
- Staff:child ratios must be maintained at all times in child care centers;
- Parents/guardian must be immediately notified if children are injured or have an accident in care;
- Child care facilities may have policies beyond regulatory requirements;
- OCC should be notified if a provider has violated child care regulations;
- Parents/guardians may review the public portion of a licensing file; and
- The provider's compliance history may be reviewed on CheckCCMD.org.