

Welcome to Bracken United Methodist Preschool! Parent Handbook 2018-2019

The following policies are designed to assist us in ensuring an organized operation and a satisfying experience for you and your child.

Purpose: To provide a safe and nurturing educational experience in a Christian environment.

Mission Statement: To be a place where children and families feel welcome; where children grow spiritually, emotionally, and intellectually; where God's presence can be felt.

Goals:

1. To support families by making them feel welcome; providing a safe, nurturing environment for their children; providing support through literature, training, and community resources; and including them as active participants.
2. To support children by providing a high quality educational early childhood program; to provide experienced and trained staff; and create the foundation for success in school and life.

School Committee

The school has a committee, which meets quarterly to set policy and review the finances of the school. The committee consists of a Board Chair (church member), two parent representatives, a staff member, the Program Director and the church Pastor. If you are interested in being on this committee, please let the Director know or check the appropriate box on the Parent Organization Form.

Licensing

Bracken Preschool is licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and exceeds the minimum standards of care. Parents are entitled to see the following information:

- the Minimum Standards available on the web at www.txdfps.state.tx.us or your local licensing office. We also keep a copy in the office.
- the most recent Department of Family and Protective Services Inspection or Investigation Report. Also available on the web at www.txdfps.state.tx.us or from the local licensing office. A copy is always posted near the entrance of the school.

Parents may also contact the local Licensing office at:

Child Care Licensing
3635 S.E. Military Drive
PO Box 239900
San Antonio, TX 78223 – (210)-337-3399

The Department of Family and Protective Services, City Health, and fire officials routinely inspect our school.

Important Telephone Numbers

School Office	(830)624-1429
Church Office	(830)606-6717
PRS Child Abuse Hotline	(800)-252-5400

Program Evaluation

On an annual basis, parents will be asked to evaluate the effectiveness of the overall program, the administrators, and their child's teachers in meeting the needs of the children and parents. Parental feedback provides valuable information on the strengths and weaknesses as well as recognition for a job well done. Evaluation results with plans for growth and improvement are shared with families.

GENERAL POLICIES

Enrollment Procedures

All children must be enrolled before attending BUMP. The following must be completed and submitted to the center:

1. Enrollment Form;
2. Health Statement;
3. Child Assessment Form;
4. School Policies Form

Any changes in address, telephone number, or work location should be reported promptly in writing to the school office. Telephone numbers of emergency contacts and individuals authorized to pick up the child should also be current. **Parents will be notified in writing 30 days in advance of any policy changes.**

BUMP's first commitment is to the rights and interests of children. In that regard, we believe that children should be enrolled and provided for without bias and not on the basis of their sex, race, national origin, religious beliefs, age, disability, or sexual orientation. Materials and equipment reflect the diversity that exists in society and avoids stereotyping of any group.

Parent Handbook

You will receive a Parent Handbook via the school's website when your child starts school. If you need a hard copy of the handbook, let the office staff know. Please keep the handbook through all of your child's years at BUMP. It is not revised annually. It contains information that should answer all your questions about all aspects of the program. Any revisions or updates during the school year will be addressed in the director's newsletter and posted on the school's website.

Group Placement and Transition

The placement of children in a classroom is determined by his/her age as of the first day of that school year. Once placed, children will remain in that classroom for the duration

of the school year. The continuity of care is important to your child's development so every effort is made to minimize disruptions. However, when necessary, the Director may move a child, after discussion with parents and teachers in order to find his or her best placement.

Disenrollment

Complete Withdrawal: A thirty-day written notice, given to the Director, is required for complete withdrawal from the program. The parent is responsible for 30 days of tuition after such date. As the budget and staff decisions are greatly impacted by enrollment changes, we would very much appreciate the notice of complete withdrawal as early as possible so we can attempt to fill the slot. You must pay a registration fee in order to re-enroll.

Termination of Enrollment

In extreme situations, a child's enrollment may be terminated by the Director after informing the parents of the problem through conferences, trying to work with the family to resolve the issue through various efforts, and giving adequate notice and suggestions for other arrangements or referrals. A child's enrollment may also be terminated if the parent's account is delinquent. BUMP will only initiate an enrollment termination under the following circumstances:

1. The child does not appear to be adjusting to the school environment and termination is in his/her best interest;
2. The health and safety of other children are at risk.

Any refunds will be at the discretion of the Director.

Hours and days of operation

BUMP is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Office 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Preschool Classes 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Extended Care 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. and/or 2:00 – 4:30 p.m.

Please do not drop your child off before 9:00 a.m. or pick them up after 2:00 p.m. unless they are enrolled in extended care.

A school year and summer calendar is available upon enrollment.

BUMP follows the inclement weather reports of the Schertz, Cibolo, Universal City ISD. If the district has a delayed opening, we will open at 9:00 a.m. If we close for one day due to weather, that day will not be made up. If the school closes for more than one day, those days following the first day will be made up.

Late morning arrivals in our younger classrooms are sometimes difficult on the other children. The sight of another parent can evoke a separation reaction to the child adjusting to being away from home. Additionally, late arrivals in our older classrooms make maintaining the classroom routine difficult. Activities begin promptly and a late arriving child may feel uncomfortable walking into a setting in which all the other children are busily involved in their morning activity. We ask that you please consider

this and make the necessary arrangements to have you child at school on time. If your child is going to be late or absent please call the school by 9:30 a.m. If your child is sick, please keep us informed so we can alert other parents to possible communicable diseases.

Drop-ins

We take children as drop-ins, on a space available basis for currently enrolled children. Children may drop-in for the day school hours (9-2) for \$30.00. Payment for a drop-in is to be paid that day. We do not allow substitutions for days missed. You may drop your child(ren) in before or after school care for \$8.00 an hour with a one hour payment minimum.

Fees

There are no discounts for holidays or absences for both the day school hours (9-2) and the Extended Care hours (2:00 – 4:30).

Late Fees

- Any child who has not been picked up by 2:10 pm will be automatically enrolled in the extended care program for the day and charged the drop-in rate of \$8.00 an hour.
- A late pick up fee is charged when a child is not picked up by 3:00 or 4:30. You will be charged \$15.00 per child for any part of the 10 minutes past closing that they remain in care. Additional late time will be billed at \$1/minute plus a staffing charge of \$13.00/half-hour for any part of the half-hour. Chronic late pick-up may result in dismissal. If you have to pick up your child from the office, it is considered late. You will be given a notice the following day letting you know the fee was charged to your account.

Tuition and fees are due on the first school day of each month. A late fee of \$15.00 will be assessed after the fifteenth of the month. Special circumstances may be discussed with the Director. Non-payment after 45 days will result in immediate expulsion if a payment plan has not been arranged with the Director.

Arrival and Dismissal

Sign In / Sign Out

Children must be brought into the center and released to the assigned staff member. Parents must mark their arrival time and must provide a signature on the sign-in/out sheet. It is a requirement of the **Texas Department of Family and Protective Services**.

Make sure that your child's teacher is aware that you are taking your child from the school and check for any artwork, soiled clothing, and notes to parents. Once you have signed your child out, they are your responsibility. Please do not allow them to enter other classrooms or remain unsupervised.

For early morning and extended care your child needs to be signed in with a teacher and signed out to the parent.

Visitors

Parents are welcomed visitors at Bracken Preschool at all times to observe, to eat lunch with their child, to volunteer to help in the classroom, or to share a special talent with the children. In addition, parents may visit the center any time during the centers hours of operation to observe program activities, the building, the grounds, and the equipment without prior approval. Check in the office when visiting so we may be aware of who is on campus. Long term volunteers will be required to have a background check.

Release of Children

Children are released only to persons authorized by written permission from the parents. Before the child is released, the designated person will be required to show a picture I.D. to the office. No child will be released to an unauthorized person. If a parent calls to authorize the release of a child when a written note is not possible, the center will verify that the caller is actually the parent by calling one or both parents back. BUMP will not release children to older siblings under the age of sixteen. Any person picking up a child in an impaired condition (ill or under the influence of drugs or alcohol) will be asked to find alternative transportation.

Child Custody Issues

It is BUMP's intent to meet the needs of children especially when the parents may be experiencing difficult situations such as divorce, separation, or remarriage. Sharing information about such situations may be helpful to the staff and will be held in the strictest of confidentiality. BUMP cannot legally restrict the non-custodial parent from visiting the child, reviewing the child's records, or picking the child up unless we have been furnished with legally filed, executed, and current documents. Copies of all court documents must be submitted to BUMP. In case of conflicts, the proper authorities will be contacted.

PROGRAM

Clothing and Individual Supplies

Dress your child in clothing that is comfortable. Keep in mind that many of your child's favorite activities may tend to be messy, like finger painting and digging in the dirt. Clothing and shoes should be easy for children to take off and put on during toileting and napping. **Children should wear sneakers or rubber-soled shoes that are best for climbing and running.** The children will go out every day unless it is raining so dress them accordingly. To protect against cold, heat, sun injury, and insect-borne disease, we encourage wearing clothing that is dry and layered for warmth in cold weather and sun-protective for the sun. Protective sunscreen and insect repellent can be applied by the parent prior to school. Jewelry, except earrings that do not dangle, is prohibited for safety reasons.

We require that all children have a change of clothing at school. Please put seasonally appropriate clothes in a gallon zipper lock bag, mark the bag with your child's name, and include outerwear, underwear, and socks.

Diapering and Potty Training

Children not yet potty-trained must provide wipes and disposable diapers. If your child is in the process of potty training, please send him/her in clothing that is easy to take off and put on. **Pants with an elastic waist without buttons or zippers are very appropriate** and helps with your child feeling very successful with potty training. Diaper rash ointment may be applied with parental permission and a medicine form filled out. For children who require cloth diapers, the diaper must have an absorbent inner lining completely contained within an outer covering made of plastic. Our potty training guidelines will be provided at the beginning of the year for children who are or may enter this stage of development.

Nap/Rest Time

Each classroom, except Kinder, will offer a time for nap or resting after lunch. It is important, and a licensing requirement, for children to be offered a time to quiet down and rest from all the activities of the day. Please send your child to school with a sheet or blanket to cover up your child. The bedding should go home weekly for cleaning. Please do not include bulky or oversized covers and pillows.

Children are not required to sleep during this time. Staff must allow each child who is awake after resting or sleeping for one hour to participate in an alternative, quiet activity until the nap/rest time is over for the other children.

Infants will nap according to their own (on demand) schedule. The health and safety of infants is one of the most important considerations in the infant and mobile infant classrooms. To prevent Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, we follow the best practice of always positioning babies on their backs to sleep. All infants will be placed on their backs to sleep on a firm surface manufactured for sale as infant sleeping equipment that meets the standards of the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission, unless otherwise ordered by a physician. Soft or loose bedding such as blankets, sleep positioning devices, stuffed toys, quilts, pillows, bumper pads, and comforters must not be used in cribs for children younger than 12 months of age. If your baby has reached the developmental level where they can turn over by themselves, we will allow them to sleep in that position. Equipment and crib sheets meet safety guidelines and are cleaned and sanitized regularly.

Nutrition, Meals, Snacks

Parents are required to provide their child's daily lunch and beverage. We request sensible, wholesome foods. Please limit lunch items to finger foods and foods that do not require refrigeration or heating. Each lunch should be labeled and include a drink, napkin, eating utensil, and coolant if necessary. Encouraging self-help skills is an important part of our preschool day. It helps your child if their lunch has containers they can open on their own.

Any time a child needs a special diet, the parent/guardian must provide a licensed medical authority's signed statement that includes the following: the medical or special

dietary need that restricts the child's diet; the major life activity affected by the disability; the foods that must not be served to the child; and the foods that must be substituted. As our school does not have kitchen facilities to prepare food, parents/guardians must provide the foods needed by their child on the special diet. We will work with parents/guardians to assist and support their need and ask for parent's/guardian's help in compliance with TDFPS/USDA requirements.

The school prepares written menus of snacks, posts them where families can see them, and has copies available for families.

A snack will be provided by the school during After School Care. Snacks served will be nutritious foods, e.g., fruits, vegetables, cereals, and crackers. Water, juice or milk will be served with the snack. The school will make every attempt to purchase 100% juices for snack and when serving fruit juice will limit the amount of juice to no more than 4 ounces per child daily. Staff do not offer children younger than four years these foods: hot dogs, whole or sliced into rounds; whole grapes; nuts; popcorn; raw peas and hard pretzels; or chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole. Substitutions will be noted on days when they occur.

Infants

Infants under 12 months are never fed cow's milk. We ask that you bring breast milk or formula for your infant. We cannot feed your infant cow's milk. Mobile infants, toddlers and twos will only be fed whole milk here at school. As you prepare your child's bottles and sippy cups, please remember that 2% milk does not have enough fat content for their brain development. Except for human milk, we recommend that parents send formula and infant food in factory-sealed containers to be prepared according to the manufacturer's instructions. Infants unable to sit are held for bottle-feeding. Infants and toddler/twos do not have bottles while in a crib or bed and do not eat from propped bottles at any time. Teaching staff will offer children fluids from a cup as soon as the families and teachers decide together that a child is developmentally ready to use a cup. Infants and toddlers/twos do not carry bottles, sippy cups, or regular cups with them while crawling, or walking. Bottle feedings do not contain solid foods unless the child's health care provider supplies written instructions and a medical reason for this practice. Staff must discard after one hour any formula or human milk that is served but not completely consumed or is not refrigerated. No milk and no other infant foods are warmed in the microwave. Teaching staff do not offer solid foods and fruit juices to infants younger than six months of age, unless that practice is recommended by the child's health care provider and approved by families. The program supports breastfeeding by accepting, storing, and serving expressed human milk for feedings. We also provide a comfortable place for breastfeeding and coordinate feedings with the mother. The infants are fed according to their "on demand" schedule. Parents/guardians complete an Infant's Feeding Schedule form and give it to the infant's teachers. We ask parents/guardians to update this feeding schedule each month and as changes occur in the child's development. Parents/guardians are required to bring all bottles of milk, milk substitute, and juice as well as lunch for infants. Parents/guardians should cut food into pieces no larger than ¼ - inch square for infants and ½ -inch square for toddlers and twos, according to each

child's chewing and swallowing capabilities. As infants grow into eating table food, the school may provide snacks. Parents/guardians are requested to consult with teachers as this occurs. Please label all bottles, bottle caps, food containers, and foods with your child's name and the date. Feeding is not used in lieu of other forms of comfort.

Toys

Children frequently want to share their treasures from home. We discourage children from bringing toys from home, although we do allow items of comfort, such as a soft cuddly stuffed animal, to be brought to school to help your child sleep more comfortably. Bringing toys from home makes it difficult to share and they could get lost, stolen, or broken. The staff will not be responsible if they are lost or damaged. BUMP does not allow toys of violence like guns, swords, or violent action figures. Children may not bring cosmetics, gum, candy, or money to school.

Please label all children's personal belongings with their name. The school will not be responsible for lost items. A lost and found box is located on the shelf at the entrance of the school.

Chapel

On Tuesdays and Wednesdays your child will attend Chapel. Classes sit with their teachers and participate by singing songs and sharing in short, developmentally appropriate "Bible lessons." More information will be available prior to starting Chapel.

Birthday Celebrations

Birthdays are special at Bracken Preschool. They are celebrated in the individual classrooms. You may bring a birthday treat for each person in your child's class. Please discuss the details with your child's teacher. No gifts will be exchanged. Birthday invitations for parties away from BUMP may be distributed only if all children in the class are invited.

The Health Department guidelines require all snacks brought in for consumption by others must be pre-packaged or foods prepared from a grocery store, bakery, deli, or restaurant. This is to guarantee that foods we serve come from kitchens that has been inspected and are regulated by the Health Department. See your teacher for a suggested snack list and allergies that may be in your child's classroom. **No large cupcakes** – mini cupcakes are allowed.

Curriculum Enhancement

Bracken Preschool will schedule special activities and events throughout the year. Some activities will take place on days that children are not in attendance. In these cases, the children are welcome to participate in the special event if accompanied by their parent or other adult. Parents are always welcome to join us.

Field Trips

Our Pre-K/Kinder classes will celebrate the end of the year with a field trip to Morgan's Wonderland. These trips require an additional fee. Parents will be notified of any field trip by posted notice. Parents are encouraged to participate in the field trip with their children. You must sign a permission slip in order for your child to participate.

Guidance

The development of pro-social behaviors is a major goal of a good quality early childhood program. Modeling the expected behavior, redirecting children to an acceptable activity, and setting clear limits are methods of positive guidance that are used here at Bracken Preschool. Children are given opportunities to develop social skills such as cooperating, negotiation, and talking with others to solve interpersonal problems. When dangerous or disruptive behavior persists, the child will be removed from the activity and other children for a brief time. Corporal punishment, and other humiliating or frightening discipline techniques, is never used. Discipline will never be associated with the natural developmental progress such as toilet training or by withholding food or drink. All staff expectations of children's behavior are developmentally appropriate

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health Forms

BUMP is required to have a current annual medical statement from each child enrolled. All immunizations must be kept up-to-date and the statement signed by a physician. Please provide a copy of any immunizations that occur during the school year. All 4- and 5- year olds are required by the Department of Human Services to have vision and hearing screenings. For more information on immunization, please visit: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize>

Staff Immunizations: Bracken Preschool follows the guidelines of the Comal Health Department regarding personnel immunizations. The department recommends but does not require the staff to be immunized.

Special Needs and/or Allergies

Health records should include any of the child's special health needs such as allergies or chronic illness (e.g., asthma, hearing or vision impairments, feeding needs, neuromuscular or urinary conditions, diabetes, seizures, or other ongoing health problems); and supporting evidence for cases in which a child is under-immunized because of a medical condition (document by a health professional) or the family's beliefs. A medical and/or allergy form must be filled out and signed by a physician.

Emergency Medical Authorization

BUMP is required to have a current emergency medical authorization on file for each child enrolled. This form must be kept up-to-date and signed by the child's parents or

legal guardian. In the event of sudden injury or illness, the parent will be contacted. A staff member will give the child first aid treatment or CPR when needed and contact the physician or other health care professional identified in the child's record. If a parent cannot be reached, the child will be taken to the hospital. The medical personnel will determine the most appropriate course of action. The school will continue to attempt to notify parents or other emergency contacts as listed on the form. Parents will be notified of all injuries or incidents that occur.

Medication

Bracken Preschool prefers not to administer medication to children and will not give the first dose of any medication. Bracken Preschool will not give fever-reducing medications to reduce or mask a child's fever. When absolutely necessary for a child to receive medication during the day, the staff will strictly adhere to the following guidelines for administration of medication set by the Minimum Standards of the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services;

- Prescription and non-prescription medications will be administered only when it is in the original container labeled with the child's name, date, directions, physician's name, and expiration date. The medication will be administered only as stated on the label that details the name and strength of the medication as well as directions on administering and storing.
- As- needed medication requires a medical alert form with proper documentation.

If your child needs to receive medication during the school day you must leave it at the office and complete a release form to allow the Director to administer that medication. Please do not leave over the counter or prescribed medication in your child's diaper bag or backpack as this can be a safety issue if another child was to come in contact with that medication. This includes diaper rash ointment, sunscreen, and ChapStick. Parents will be called to notify them if medicine was administered with an as- needed medication form.

Illness Guideline

We ask that you not bring your child to school if you suspect he/she might be ill. Please do not send your child to school if he/she is ill or has been given medicine to control a fever over 100. Your child must be free of symptoms (fever, vomiting, and diarrhea) for at least 24 hours. If a child becomes ill while at school, the parents will be notified and the child will be in the office until a parent or designated person on the child's emergency card arrives. Any child that has had a fever or has been sent home from school having a fever must be free of fever for 24 hours before returning to school. BUMP reserves the right to require a physician's statement to return to school. Children sent to school are expected to play and be active. Please do not send your child if he/she "must remain quiet" and cannot go outdoors.

Accidents/Emergencies

The staff maintains current certifications in First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR). The teachers will follow basic first-aid procedures for injuries and notify parents of any accidents requiring first aid at school through a written accident report. Should

further emergency action be needed beyond basic first aid, teachers will provide immediate care, and call the parent, the child's physician, and/or EMS as needed. Children will be transported to North Central Baptist located at 520 Madison Oak Drive, San Antonio, TX 78258, (210) 297-4000 in the Stone Oak area unless otherwise stated on the child's health form. The center is not able to transport an injured child. Our program has comprehensive procedures to prepare for and respond to medical and dental emergencies for children. The procedures include individual emergency care plans for children with known medical or developmental problems or other conditions that might require special care in an emergency (allergy, asthma, seizures, orthopedic or sensory problems, and other chronic conditions; conditions that require regular medication or technology support).

Emergency Preparedness Plan

Our emergency preparedness plan is designed to ensure the safety of children during an emergency by addressing staff responsibility and facility readiness with respect to emergency evacuation, relocation and sheltering/lock-down. The plan addresses the types of responses to emergencies most likely to occur:

1. An evacuation of the children and teachers to a designated safe area in an emergency such as a fire or gas leak.

In the event the center must be evacuated due to an environmental emergency (gas leak, toxic fumes, or chemical release) or natural disasters, the staff will do one of the following depending on the location of and type of problem;

- Bomb Threat or Gas Leak Evacuation – In case of a bomb threat or gas leak we will evacuate to the furthest end of the upper blacktop and wait for further instructions from the Fire Department
- **Building Evacuation** – If an emergency situation arises and the school needs to evacuate the building, the children will be walked over to the Fellowship Hall;
- **Area Evacuation** – If an emergency arises and the school needs to evacuate the area, the children will be driven by employee vehicles to Northeast Bible Church at 19185 FM 2252, Garden Ridge, TX 78266. In case of an area evacuation, please listen to local radio and television stations for important emergency information

Evacuation of children under the age of 24 months and children with limited mobility and/or those who need additional assistance will be transported using strollers, emergency cribs and/or held by a staff member when the relocation is on property. Relocation off site will be in staff vehicles or using the assistance of law enforcement.

Teachers will take attendance and account for all children in their care. Teachers will supervise and remain with children until the evacuation is lifted and they return to class or are picked up by a parent. Teachers will sing and read to children during evacuation. They may also use evacuation boxes that contain simple activities for children.

Emergency communication telephone numbers are: Michelle DeLeo 210-912-1725 and Mandy Pelletier 210-425-2778 and Pastor Chris Bistline 512-743-9587

Administrators will communicate via phone to appropriate authorities as necessary. Fire, law enforcement, emergency medical services, health department. The administrator and teachers will take the emergency folder with contact information to include telephone numbers and emails, authorization for emergency care for each child in care and will contact families via phone, text and/or email.

Teachers and staff will stay with designated children until each child is released. Reunification with parents will occur once parents are notified and they arrive to the designated location and pick up their child.

2. A relocation of the children and teachers to a designated, alternate shelter in an emergency such as a flood, a hurricane, medical emergency, or communicable disease or outbreak

Children will **shelter** in the building (classroom, hall or restroom) during a serious storm, loss of power or other emergency that necessitates sheltering, unless we are notified to evacuate. The teachers will walk children quickly and in an orderly manner to their pre-designated emergency location within the classroom and/or building. This would be a location away from the windows and near an interior wall. Teachers will take attendance and account for all children in their care. Teachers will supervise and remain with children until the sheltering is lifted and they return to class or are picked up by a parent

3. The sheltering and lock-down of children and teachers within the center to temporarily protect them from situations such as a tornado, volatile person on the premises, or an endangering person in the area.

Lock-down – When there is a dangerous person inside the building the following will occur. The administrator on duty will blow a horn to alert the staff of the danger. The administrator will call 911. Teachers will remain in their classroom and lock the doors. The teachers will take attendance and account for all children in their care. They will secure windows, close all window coverings and move away from windows when possible. They will stay quiet and turn off any light or sound that may indicate their presence. Teachers and children will stay in their secure locations until an announcement is made confirming the threat is clear.

Lock-down – When there is a dangerous person in the school area, the following will occur. The administrator on duty will inform the staff of the danger. The administrator will lock all entrances to the school. The teachers will remain or return to their classrooms and lock the doors. The teachers will take attendance and account for all children in their care. Teachers will secure windows, close all window coverings and move away from windows when possible. Teachers will stay with children in their secure locations and continue normal activity until an announcement is made confirming the treat is clear.

Lock-down drills are practiced four times a calendar year.

Emergency Evacuation

Bracken Preschool conducts monthly fire drills and severe weather drills quarterly with the children.

Emergency Procedures

Fire and **evacuation** drills are held monthly to acquaint your child with evacuation procedures. Evacuation routes are posted in each classroom. Parents or emergency persons listed on the enrollment form will be contacted. If your child is injured, a trained staff member will provide first aid and you will be contacted. If necessary, your physician will be notified and 911 emergency personnel will also be called. If your child needs to be transported by an ambulance, a staff member will accompany your child.

The designated person in charge is Michelle DeLeo, Director of Bracken Preschool. In her absence, Mandy Pelletier or Jennifer Read, Office Administrators, would assume authority.

Building and Room Sanitation

The classrooms and bathrooms are cleaned and sanitized on a daily basis by a custodian. Toys and mouthed items in the young toddler rooms are washed daily with a diluted bleach solution. Washable toys, pillows, etc. are washed on a regular basis. A licensed exterminating company treats the school with pesticides for common household pests on a quarterly basis. The treatment is always done after school hours. Bracken Preschool allows no smoking on the premises.

Building Security

The front entrance to Bracken School will remain locked except between the hours of 9:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m. and 1:45 p.m. – 2:15p.m. for day school. Please ring the doorbell and a staff member will let you in if it is locked. All guests must sign in at the office. We have several cameras installed at the entrances for added security. Video will be kept for one week. Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1,000 feet of a child-care center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalties.

Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

In an effort to protect the well-being and safety of children, Texas requires anyone who suspects child abuse and neglect to report it to the proper authorities. BUMP staff has been trained to identify the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect and participate in annual training sponsored by appropriate community organizations. Parents will be given, at enrollment, information that will increase awareness of issues regarding child abuse and neglect, including warning signs that a child may be a victim of abuse or neglect, prevention techniques and actions that they may take if their child is a victim of

abuse or neglect. All suspect indicators will be documented and reported. BUMP is required by law to cooperate with any investigation of child abuse and neglect.

If a staff member has been accused of child abuse and/or neglect, the staff person will be placed on leave/work with pay until the Child Protective Services (CPS) representative has completed their investigation and presented their findings. Further action to the employee will be taken in accordance with the findings of CPS.

Criminal Background and Finger Print Checks

We perform criminal background checks on all teachers, staff and volunteers.

Alcohol, Drugs and Controlled Substances

The use, sale, transfer, possession or being “under the influence” of alcohol, drugs or controlled substances on school/church property is prohibited. “Under the influence” for the purpose of this policy, is defined as being in a physical or mental condition that creates a risk to the safety and well being to the children, staff, the public, or school/church property.

Smoking

Smoking and use of tobacco products will not be permitted inside school/church buildings, on the playground, or anywhere on the school/church premises, in transportation vehicles, or during field trips.

Firearms

The possession of guns will not be allowed on school/church property.

Parking Lot

Parents are urged to hold their child’s hand as they walk through the parking lot to ensure safety. Parents are reminded that it is against the law to leave a child under the age of 10 unattended in a parked car. Please drive slowly in the parking lot and be aware of children.

Animals at School

Some of the classrooms may have small animals for the children to observe and learn from. Bracken Preschool meets the guidelines for animals set forth by the Health Department.

Campus Walks

Please be advised that sometimes the teachers will take the children for a walk on campus. This includes walking from The Connection Center to the Sanctuary for Chapel.

Water Play

At times, the children may participate in water table play and sprinkler activities. The enrollment form includes parental permission.

COMMUNICATION AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

We believe that direct, effective communications is at the heart of a stimulating, safe, caring program for young children. Parents are encouraged to discuss any concerns about day-to-day operations, the program, or their child's care with the teachers or the Director. **We ask, however, that you do not text or call your child's teacher during classroom hours.** It is against licensing and school policy for them to be on the phone while in their classroom.

Information Sources:

Please check your child's folder and message board daily, as notes, newsletters and general announcement will be given to you in this way. In addition, you may receive information via email, text, or phone. The message boards are for school use only. Anything sent out by parents through the school must first be cleared with the office. The dry erase boards found outside of each classroom will have a message for you about the day's activities. Additionally, each classroom will have a parent bulletin board with lesson plans, daily schedules, and other pertinent information.

Daily Notes:

Children enrolled in the Younger Toddler classroom will receive a daily note from the teachers containing information on eating, sleeping, and toileting. All other classrooms will provide information on their dry erase board. Please make sure you schedule a time to visit with your child's teacher if there is a problem that needs to be discussed.

Newsletters:

A class newsletter and a school newsletter will be sent home on a monthly basis. We highly encourage parents to read both newsletters as they contain information pertinent to what is going on in individual classrooms as well as the school. We feel that it is very important for each parent to stay informed. You will also receive email reminders or updates periodically.

Parent/Director Communication

Newsletters and the parent bulletin board outside the office will inform parents of events and general information about BUMP's operations. Please feel free to call, drop in, or make an appointment to speak with the Director about any praises or concerns.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

BUMP will have two scheduled conferences for the three- and four- year old classrooms; one in October and again in April. The first conference is to discuss your child's adjustment to preschool and assist with your child's educational plan. The spring conference consists of presenting the parent with the formal assessment results, as well as work samples. The teacher will also discuss the child's transition into Pre-K or Kindergarten. Any learning problems would have been brought to your attention before this conference. Toddler and non-scheduled conferences are upon request.

Specialist

BUMP helps families connect with needed services. However, it is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to arrange for such services. BUMP requests that parents/guardians inform the school of any special needs regarding their child. If the child is already receiving intervention services such as speech therapy or counseling, then the parents/guardians need to give the school a copy of their IFSP or IEP to review. If the parent/guardian chooses for the child to receive services at BUMP, then the parent shall make arrangements at the school office. Specialists need to verify their credentials as well as that of their program to the school office staff. At that time, the specialist will be introduced to the child's teachers. The specialists, together with the teachers and school, arrange for the follow-up visits.

Parent Concerns

If you have a concern about your child, you may direct that concern to the Lead Teacher before or after school or via a phone call during school hours. Please do not direct your concerns to the teaching assistants. If you are not satisfied after speaking to the teacher, you may contact the Director. We ask that you contact us at the earliest point that you have a concern. If that is not found to be satisfactory, concerns may then be directed to the Preschool Committee. Staff will never discuss a child with other parents or non-essential personnel. We ask that you not discuss the behavior of any child with other parents.

Community Resources

Bracken Preschool has knowledge about the use of other professionals in the community both as a supplement to the program's resources and as a referral source for parents. We maintain a current list of child and family support services such as health, mental health, oral health, nutrition, child welfare, parenting programs, educational and early intervention services. Our staff is available to assist with linkages to other early education programs, local elementary schools or special education programs to help families communicate and/or prepare for and manage their children's transitions.

Parent Organization

The goals for the Parent Organization are:

1. Social – providing fellowship at meetings and functions.
2. Parent Education and Resources
3. School and staff Support

Having your child enrolled at Bracken Preschool makes you a member! The PO will meet quarterly or as needed prior to upcoming activities. The Director newsletter will contain Parent Organization information on a monthly basis. Your involvement benefits both you and your child and helps the school.