



# **BrightStar Christian Academy Preschool**

## **PARENT HANDBOOK**

**1513 Kooser Road  
San Jose, CA 95118  
(408)266-7600  
admin@mybrightstarca.com  
[www.BrightStarChristianAcademy.org](http://www.BrightStarChristianAcademy.org)**

**Federal Tax ID 77-0324445  
Licensing Tax ID 434413153**

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## WELCOME

We are thrilled that you and your family are a part of BrightStar Christian Academy (BCA) Preschool. The faculty and staff at BCA consider it a privilege and joy to serve you and your families during these early stages of your child's life. Children are a gift from the Lord, and we are happy to have the opportunity to come alongside parents and to enrich each child's life through socialization, circle time, open learning centers and play. It is an added blessing to instill God's Truth, as spoken in the Bible, in the hearts of these children and to present Jesus as their Savior and friend.

At BCA Preschool, we strive to give you and your family the highest quality of care and service. Thank you for entrusting us with your child! Please be assured that you are leaving your child in a safe and loving environment, where he/she is prayed for daily, and that their best interest is always kept in mind.

We look forward to sharing the experience of seeing your children grow spiritually, physically, socially, cognitively, and emotionally this year!

Blessings,

Jacqueline Alkhaseh  
Executive Director

*“Train up a child in the way he should go;  
even when he is old he will not depart from it.”*

*Proverbs 22:6*

## About Us

BrightStar Christian Academy was established in July 2014 as a non-profit 501(c)(3) service to families and children of our community. Over the years BCA has established itself as a school of choice for families based on our quality of care, support for families, and good stewardship of the ministry entrusted to us.

## Our Affiliation

While we accept children and families from all religions and denominations, BrightStar Christian Academy (BCA) is a ministry of the Assyrian Evangelical Church of San Jose and Bay Area (AEC SJ). You may request a copy of AEC SJ statement of faith from our office or online at [www.AECSJ.com](http://www.AECSJ.com). Under the guidance of the BCA School Board, the preschool Administrative team oversees the staff and the operation of the preschool, ensuring excellence in every area of our program.

## Our Vision

BrightStar Christian Academy shall be a place that will know, grow, show and share God's love for all, preserving the experience of childhood, planting the seeds of faith.

## Our Preschool Mission

- **Introduce God's plan and the love of Jesus for the children, encouraging His values and character into their lives.** *"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. John 13:34*
- **Recognize formative years of children as an important window of opportunity to teach and equip them for life.** *"Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it." Proverbs 22:6*
- **Provide developmentally appropriate curriculum and emergent activities that encompass the spiritual, social, emotional, cognitive, and creative domains, engaging the whole child in learning.** *"And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man." Luke 2:52*
- **Provide a balanced combination of child-directed and teacher-directed experiences, recognizing that young children learn fundamentally differently than older children, and that play constitutes a deeper form of learning.** *"When I was a child, I spoke like a child; I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways." 1Cor. 13:11*
- **Provide learning experiences for children to develop confidence and self-esteem as they learn of God's unique gifting and plan for their life.** *"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope." Jeremiah 29:11*

## Educational Philosophy

Recognizing that children's formative years are an important window of opportunity to teach and equip children for life, we provide developmentally appropriate curriculum and emergent activities which encompass the spiritual, social, emotional, cognitive, and creative domains, engaging the whole child in learning.

We provide a foundationally play-based program along with a balance of developmentally appropriate academic curriculum, thus creating a combination of child-directed exploration and teacher-led learning experiences. Our staff are ‘educators’ as well as ‘facilitators’ guiding each child to build on their knowledge and grow in their confidence to reach the next developmental milestone. We foster a love of learning by encouraging exploration, discovery, and creativity.

Our distinctives include a stimulating and loving Christian atmosphere; Outdoor Classroom which extends our learning environment beyond the indoor class areas and instilling in children lifelong healthy living habits. Our indoor and outdoor classrooms are designed to meet research-based components found in ECERS’R, providing the most effective learning environments for children.

### **BCA Preschool Staff**

All BCA administrators, teachers, caregivers, and staff are selected to serve as nurturing Christian role models and are considered as our “living curriculum”. Team members are trained and certified as early childhood educators, meeting and exceeding California’s State Standards and compliance requirements, with many holding associate’s or bachelor’s and master’s degree level. They are committed to the development of each child and staff, are required to keep their credentials current and encouraged to seek ongoing professional development toward obtaining higher certifications in the ECE field. All our teachers are certified in pediatric CPR and First Aid.

Team teaching provides great support and exposes children to a variety of teaching styles. Our culturally diverse staff helps to create an enriching environment representing various cultures.

BCA’s leadership is committed to good stewardship of its staff; mentoring and guiding each member to achieve their personal caregiving and teaching goals. We recognize teachers as being the most important factor in the success of a school and consider it a blessing to have many teachers we have served at our school for multiple years.

### **Notice of Nondiscriminatory Policy As To Students:**

BCA Preschool does not discriminate with regard to enrollment or participation in programs or activities on the basis of race, color, national origin or ancestry. BrightStar Christian Academy (BCA) is a non-profit religious corporation and, therefore, operates its programs under a religious mission where it partners with parents in the early educational experience of their children. BCA does not require parents to subscribe to any statement of faith or make a profession of faith, but does require parents to cooperate with and respect BCA’s religious mission, values, religious education and philosophy. Accordingly, BCA does retain the right to deny enrollment or continue enrollment where parents are not willing to support the religious educational philosophy and ministry of BCA or respect and abide by BCA’s standards while on the campus of BCA or BCA related events.

**Parent Cooperation-** BrightStar Christian Academy is a non-profit religious corporation, and as such, is not subject to the same rules, policies, or practices of public schools or public or private employers. Enrollment at BCA is a privilege, not a right. BCA is legally entitled to set its own rules, policies, practices based on biblical and spiritual principles. BCA expects parents and students to receive, review, acknowledge, accept, agree, and abide by the rules, policies and practices. Love, peace, unity, respect, and cooperation are among the highest core values at BrightStar Christian Academy.

**Admission Policy** – BrightStar Christian Academy aims to actively promote equality of access and participation for all children. While it is our deep desire to serve all children, we equally desire the best fit for every student and may not be able to serve every child. BCA reserves the right to eliminate admission to students for any reason solely at the discretion of the school. Admission and continued enrollment is based on the extent to which our resources can help your child succeed. BCA commits to executing open communication between the school and the parents if at any time it is felt that we may not be able to fully support you and your child.

Your advance communication to BCAs administration about your child’s needs and any specific developmental struggles will help us better determine our ability to accommodate his/her developmental needs. In general, significant struggles of a behavioral nature, a child’s inability to participate in a group setting, or inability to follow teacher direction without constant teacher intervention are more difficult for our program to accommodate and may make our program as not the right fit for the child.

**Schedules offered and Rates:**

We offer a range of schedules and tuition rates to meet the needs of our parents. Refer to Program and Tuition Schedule available at the school office.

**Programs Offered:**

BCA offers a variety of programs to meet the needs of our youngest children through graduating transitional Kindergarteners. We offer additional programs that enhance the learning experience including art, cooking, phonics, science, and literature. BCA holds weekly chapel that offers prayer, worship, and biblical teaching through an integrative curriculum developed for young students. Students lead in flag pledges, participate in dramas, learn to worship, and support missions.

We currently offer three class/groups for children ages 2.0 to entering Kindergarten. Placement of children in a specific program is based on the requirements for each class (stated below) and is at the discretion of the Admin and teaching staff.

**Sparrows – Love for Learning Program (1:6 ratio) Age 2.0-3’s**

Requirements: Child must be 2.0 before their start date and does not need to be potty trained.

Our Sparrows program is a blended age classroom providing a structured yet nurturing environment that allows toddlers to grow and learn in a loving, safe and comfortable atmosphere.

### **Turtledoves – Foundation Building Program (1:8 ratio) Age 3.0-4’s**

**Requirements:** Must be potty trained and evaluated for social, emotional, and academic readiness.

The Turtledoves program is a blended age class designed to meet the needs of children as they prepare to enter Transitional Kindergarten. Our curriculum meets each child’s development. The daily schedule reflects these students’ attention span, natural curiosity and fundamental need to move. Students will be exposed to a wide variety of age-appropriate activities, rich in movement, sensory exploration, and discovery. Self-reliance will be fostered through daily tasks.

### **Precious Owls- Kindergarten Readiness Program (1:8 ratio) Age 4.0-5’s**

**Requirements;** The Precious Owls program is designed to be a more individualized kindergarten readiness program.

This program has an increased teacher directed time, designed to create an environment where your child will receive the support they need to get ready for their transition to kindergarten. The daily schedule incorporates a developmentally appropriate balance of structured “academic” time and open-ended play base activity options. The children in this program must be turning 4 prior to the upcoming December, fully potty-trained and able to emotionally navigate the structure of this environment successfully.

### **Napping and Rest Period**

As per CCLD licensing requirements, children are to be provided a rest time at the center. Nap/Rest times are provided every day in the Part Day and Full Day program. All children will be encouraged to rest quietly with music or stories in the background. For children who do not fall sleep after a period of rest, individual quiet activities may be provided. Currently BCA does not offer an option for non-nappers.

Each child will need a sleep set designed to fit onto school cots (such as a TotCot Nap Mat: <https://urbaninfant.com/products/tot-cot-nap-mat>) and must be labeled with the child’s name. Napping items are to be taken home at the end of each week, laundered, and returned at the beginning of each week. Soiled nap mats (in case of a potty accident) will be placed for pick up to be washed and returned for the next day.

### **Christian Education and Chapel**

Our entire curriculum is based on a biblical worldview and will reflect God’s love for all. Children learn that the Bible is God’s Word, how and why we pray, how to serve others, to be good stewards, and to be Christ-like in all we do. Our Bible time includes short children’s bible stories, music, and prayer for the child’s requests and for one another.

On Fridays, all programs’ children and staff participate in a weekly chapel service. We make it age appropriate and very child friendly. The children will have a time of worship, singing songs that typically involve hand motions or movements. Worship is followed by a short story reinforcing biblical concepts and character development.

Children are encouraged to bring an offering to be collected and used for the benefit of other children's ministries and missions.

### **Social Studies and Multi-Culture Curriculum**

Social Studies curriculum (August – September) revolves around the children's knowledge of self, family, community.

BCA's Multi-culture curriculum (September – May), is a part of our multi-cultural curriculum introducing children to the riches found in world regions and cultures represented in our student body and their contribution to mankind and to all cultures. God's love for all individuals and nations will be presented to children in this multi-cultural aspect of the curriculum.

### **Enrollment and Registration**

Our preschool program is licensed to serve children ages 2 to entering First Grade. All children, including those presently enrolled, must re-enroll each school year in order to save their space for the next school year. Our program will be offered year-round with an academic program running from August to May, and a separate Summer Enrichment Program for June and July.

Enrollment is on a first-come first served basis. Priority shall be given to returning families and siblings of current students.

### **Annual Registration Fee**

There is a non-refundable registration fee for each child every school year. Student enrollment must start at the most by one month from the date of registration as agreed upon with the Director. We will be unable to guarantee a spot if the start date is altered past one month.

### **Waitlist fee**

There is a non-refundable fee required for a student to be placed on our waitlist and we will do our best to accommodate each family. If the student can be enrolled, the Waitlist Fee will be applied towards the Annual Registration Fee.

### **License and Certifications**

BrightStar Christian Academy is established as a 501c3 non-profit religious organization, Tax ID number 77-0324445.

We are licensed by the state of California, Department of Social Services Facility number 434413153.

BrightStar Christian Academy is a Green certified campus through the Green Conservatory Agency of Santa Clara County.

BrightStar Christian Academy is a recognized member of Valley Christian Schools' Exemplary Preschool Initiative.

BrightStar Christian Academy is a member of the Association of Ekklesia In Education.

### **Transportation**

BCA does not provide any transportation services for its preschool program.

### **Tuition**

Tuition is due at the end of each prior month, no later than by the 3rd of the month of service. Payments not received by the third of each month will be charged a late fee of \$20.00 per day. Students may not attend if their tuition is more than 4 days delinquent. Childcare may be discontinued for all delinquent accounts.

Parents must note that tuition is due on time regardless of holiday or closure. There is no reimbursement of tuition for illness, absence, vacation or extended trips. Tuition is not pro-rated for school holidays or in-service days. Sibling discount of 10% is offered on the tuition of the older child.

BrightStar reserves the right to change tuition rates following a 30-day written notice to the parents.

BCA has established automatic tuition withdrawal system for monthly tuition payment, through the Procure digital App. Parents are required to download the Procure App and to enter their banking information in order to set up the automatic tuition payment system.

### **Returned Checks**

A \$35.00 service charge will be assessed for returned checks or NSF tuition withdrawals.

### **Change of Status**

If a change in attendance or schedule for your child is necessary, a “Change of Status Request Form” must be picked up and returned to the office for approval. A one calendar month advance notice is required; For example: If a change in schedule must take place during the month of May, you must fill out and submit a “Change of Status Request Form” no later than April. Change in status is not always guaranteed upon request. We must consider factors of availability, waiting list, ratio, etc. While we strive to meet the requests of all families, you will be notified whether that change has been approved, denied or if we have to add you to the waiting list for a future available space.

### **Withdrawal**

Parents withdrawing their child from BCA must submit the following to the office no later than the last business day in the month BEFORE your last month (one calendar month notice). No refund for withdrawal, vacation or illness will be given.

- “Last Months’ Notice” and returned to the office one calendar month prior.
- The last month’s tuition is due with the “Last Months’ Notice.” (For example; the notice and FEBRUARY tuition is given in JANUARY stating that FEBRUARY will be the last month of attendance)



### **Termination of Services**

BCA reserves the right to deny enrollment and may terminate services or withdraw a child from continued enrollment for any reason at the discretion of the school. Reasons for termination of services may include but are not limited to : 1-Falsifying information on admissions and enrollment paperwork;2- Non-payment of services and/or non-compliance with BCA admissions and financial agreement; 3- Non-compliance of parents/ guardian to follow the policies as listed in the BCA Parent Handbook; 4- The continued enrollment of the child poses a risk to the health and/or safety of other students, parents and BCA staff; 5- Continued enrollment of the child constitutes an undue hardship or burden on BCA, or, 6- Any other reason as determined in the sole discretion of BCA.

### **Absences**

Please notify us regarding your child's absence/illness by 10:00 am by calling the school or (408)266-7600 or email at [admin@mybrightstarca.com](mailto:admin@mybrightstarca.com) and your child's class email. Absences are not credited or refunded.

All illness absences 10 days or more will receive a 50% reduction for that month's tuition. A stamped physician's note must be turned in to the BCA office for the tuition reduction to take effect. This will be offered only one time per school year.

### **Vacations**

BCA does not offer any vacation credit. Tuition is due in full each month in order to guarantee your child's space. The ONLY exception is a Temporary Withdrawal and Re-enrollment for the summer months (June & July).

### **Temporary Withdrawals:**

BCA allows students to temporarily withdraw for the summer session of June-July and re-enroll for the next school year starting in August without losing their priority placement. The required form must be completed at least one month in advance – by the last day in April.

### **Admission Forms**

We require an appointment to be set with the Director to complete the application process and to discuss the specific needs of your child. All admission forms and required documents must be completed and up to date in the child's file BEFORE the start date. Parents/guardians are responsible for keeping the office administration informed of any changes to their child's records (including Emergency Contacts, Pick-Up Authorization List, medical information, etc.). Identification regarding students based on race, color, sex, religion, nationality or ethnicity is required to be kept on file per the California State School Immunization Record and the State of California.

## Hours of Operation

BrightStar Christian Academy Preschool is licensed to be open from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday-Friday. Parents will be notified in advance if there are any changes to the school's hours of operation.

## Holidays and School Closure days (for exact dates refer to annual school calendar)

Labor Day

Thanksgiving

Christmas / New Year (one week)

Veteran's Day

MLK Day

Presidents' Day

Memorial Day

Independence Day

Easter Break (one week)

Summer Break (one week)

Staff Development Days (refer to school calendar)

## Green Campus

*"God blessed Adam and Eve and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground." Genesis 1:28*

As good stewards of our God given precious resources, at BCA we will incorporate the following healthy living practices daily. These practices are taught and modeled:

- Snacks served daily will include fruits, vegetables and 1% low fat milk twice a day. We purchase organic whenever possible.
- We compost all green kitchen scraps and use it in our yard.
- We grow fruits and vegetables year round for consumption by children.
- We utilize discarded grass clippings to grow our own fruit orchard.
- We keep our campus toxic-pesticide free.
- We reduce, reuse, and recycle.
- We use "Green" cleaning supplies.
- We encourage all lunches to be "Green." Parents provide a daily healthy lunch in **100% reusable** containers and include a cloth napkin/washcloth, reusable utensils, and thermoses filled with water.

# **DROP OFF/PICK UP POLICY**

## **Sign In/Out**

It is against the law not to sign in/out the enrolled child of BCA. There is a \$45 fine per occurrences to be levied by Community Care Licensing of CA. This fee will be passed on to the parent/guardian for every missed sign in/out occurrence. Make sure the child is signed in/out by our procedures.

### **1. ProCare “DIGITAL SIGN IN/SIGN OUT” on iphones**

BrightStar Christian Academy uses a digital log in/out software called “ProCare” that has been customized for our use in the aid of efficiency and accountability in record keeping. Every parent/guardian on an enrolled child’s pick-up authorization list will be given a unique code number that will be used to sign in/out the child on our school iphones. ProCare allows up to 8 additional people authorized for pick up (for a total of 10 persons). ProCare will notify both parents upon sign in/out via email or push notification through the ProCare Parent App. (Please refer to ProCare FAQ’s [www.procaresoftware.com](http://www.procaresoftware.com) for additional information on sign in/sign out)

#### **Instruction to sign in/out the child using ProCare:**

1. use the QR code
2. Wait for the application to register that you are dropping off/picking up the child.
3. Press “sign in/out child”
4. Wait for the application to confirm your entry as successful.
5. Or you can provide your individual pin code to the staff to sign in/out your child.

DO NOT share your individual pin number with someone else. Your pin number is unique to you and authorizes only you for pick up.

### **2. PAPER SIGN IN/SIGN OUT**

If the device malfunctions, we have physical sign in/out sheets for that day. Enter your child’s name on the list and sign in/out with a pen. We will then transfer that information to the system by entering the code for the parent who has signed the paper form.

#### **Pick-Up Authorization**

Only the authorized individuals whose names and information has been added to the “Pick-Up Authorization List” in the child’s file will be able to pick up the child. NO EXCEPTIONS are made. A teacher in charge of the child during the time of pick-up must recognize the authorized individual that is picking up the child. You will be asked to show an approved photo ID (i.e. driver’s license, passport, etc.) to identify yourself if the teacher does not recognize the individual. Please consider and be prepared for this safety procedure if you know you are sending someone to pick up the child for the first time or if it is not the regular individual picking up. (Minimum age of pick-up person is 14 years old). You can add or remove individuals on your Pick Up authorization Form at the office.

### **A.M. / P.M. Inspection**

A daily inspection of each child's health will take place before they proceed into the classroom. This procedure is to be done in accordance with the Title 22 CA State regulation. Please allow an extra two to ten minutes for this process.

### **Drop-Off Inspection May Include:**

- Taking the child's temperature with a digital thermometer by a teacher
- Asking the child and/or parent/guardian of the child's well-being  
If the morning greeting merits a further check the following may take place:
- Observing the child's eyes for dilation, redness, swelling, discharge, etc.
- Checking for any cuts or scrapes
- Making note of possible signs of neglect or abuse
- Checking the child's scalp for head lice
- Checking for appropriate clothing
- Parents are to notify the teacher at drop off AND email their child's classroom should there be any unusual occurrences to be noted for their child

### **Timely Drop off**

To preserve the integrity of the program and the child's needs it is important to be on time. Parents/guardians are asked to refrain from being late, so their child can get the most out of the activities planned for them. Note that late drop off causes disruption to the rest of the students and class routine.

### **Early Pick-Up**

If the child must be picked up early for medical appointments or any other personal reasons, the parent/guardian must notify the office and the child's classroom ahead of time. Regular sign out procedures must be followed during early pick-up. Late pick and drop off are discouraged during naptime (12:30 p.m. to 2:45 p.m.). Please pick-up before or after naptime.

### **Late Pick-Up Charges**

BCA provides a 10 minute grace period after your time schedule for the Half-day and Part-Time schedules. Late pick-up after Half-day program will begin at 12:10 and 3:10 pm for Part-time program. A full hour care is charged at \$20.00 an hour thereafter.

Families that pick up their child at 12:00 pm or at 3:00 pm are asked to leave the campus within 15 minutes at the end of their dismissal in consideration of the on-going program.

Late pick-up after 5:01 p.m. will be charged a Late Pick Up Fee of \$10.00 plus \$3.00 per minute/per child for pick up after 5:05 pm.

After 5:01 pm, parents/guardians may pick up and sign out their child at the office. Late fees will be calculated and posted on your monthly tuition invoice to be paid with the following month's tuition. Nonpayment may result in removing your child from the program.

# **SAFETY POLICY**

## **Visitors and Volunteers**

All visitors must check-in at the office to sign in the Visitor's Log and are not permitted to enter the classrooms without authorization. Signed-in visitors must wear a 'Visitor Badge' and will be accompanied by a BCA Staff Member (unless they have an enrolled BCA student). Parent Volunteers for special class/school events must also check-in at the office, sign into the Visitor's Log and must wear a badge. Parents may not be left alone with students. Any person volunteering 16 or more hours per week must also submit a Live Scan fingerprint clearance.

## **Reporting Suspected Child Abuse – Mandated Reporter**

The Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing, mandates that every employee of a childcare center is considered a Mandated Reporter. Any staff who has knowledge of or observes a child in his or her professional capacity or within the scope of his or her employment whom he or she knows, or reasonable suspects has been the victim of child abuse to a child protective agency immediately by telephone or to send a written report thereof within 36 hours of receiving the conformation concerning the incident.

## **Gates and Classroom Doors**

Our facility perimeter is secured by gates to be opened only by adults on campus. Make sure gates are securely closed behind you. Ring the office door if the gates are locked.

Classroom doors, once closed, do not open from outside. Knock on your classroom door to enter. For the safety of children present, it's advised for parents to step inside and close the door behind them for pick up/drop off.

## **Parking Lot Safety**

It is important that we all work together to create and maintain a safe environment for our children on campus as well as in our parking lot. The best precaution is to allow time to arrive early and to simply STOP and SLOW DOWN. Hold your child's hand and walk your child to the gate using the safe pathways. Avoid crossing the parking lot. Please minimize use of cell phones while in the parking lot and on school campus.

## **Photo/Video Sharing**

BCA posts children's pictures on our website as well as publication materials. **Parents acknowledge that they are informed and are granting permission to BrightStar Christian Academy for publication and sharing of their child's picture.**

Our log in/out software, "ProCare," has the capabilities so that BCA Staff can take pictures of your children and share them with you through email. These photos may include other children in the group or activity. Our desire is to connect families and to use the "ProCare" Application to improve our communication.

# EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

## Emergency and Disaster Preparedness

BrightStar Christian Academy has taken the following steps to prepare our students and staff for the eventuality of an emergency or disaster:

- Our Teachers and Admin are First Aid and CPR Certified and Health and Safety Trained
- We have scheduled fire and earthquake drills.
- Lockdown Drills are scheduled twice a year.
- Each building is equipped with a 'CODE RED' backpack that is supplied with emergency supplies.
- We have a prepared disaster shed which holds water and food for each student and staff member for 3 days.
- Detailed "Evacuation Plan Routes" are clearly posted in every classroom building near the parent bulletin, staff room and the office.

## Emergency Hospital

The closest hospital to our center that we will use in any case of emergency will be Good Samaritan Hospital on 2425 Samaritan Drive, San Jose, CA 95124 (408) 559-2011.

## Evacuation Notifications and Procedures

ProCare enables emergency notification (e.g., during blackouts and power outages) to be immediately sent to you through text and email. (See ProCare FAQs for additional information on emergency notifications)

In any case of major earthquake or other disaster, students may have to be evacuated from their classroom. In case of such evacuation BCA staff and children will be directed to **Lietz Elementary School** on 5300 Carter Ave. San Jose, CA 95118 (408) 264-8314 OR **Dartmouth Middle School** on 5575 Dartmouth Drive, San Jose, CA (408) 264-1122.

Depending on the magnitude of the incident, the school may be closed until further notice and will be in constant communication with all parents/guardians of the situation.

Students will NOT be released to any individual not listed on the "Emergency Contact Form" that is stated in the child's file. They must show a photo ID (driver's license, passport, etc.) to identify themselves if they are not familiar with the staff. BrightStar Staff will always be the very last to leave the site in any state of emergency or disaster until each child is released.

# SICK CHILD POLICY

## Dealing With A Sick Child

It is the parents/guardians responsibility to check the child's well-being before bringing them to school.

BCA reserves the right to refuse a child to attend or return to school after an illness if at the school's discretion the child seems unwell, may still be contagious, or is unable to participate in the daily activities.

Refer to the list of common symptoms of illness as a guide.

You may not bring your child to school if:

- Your child has a fever with a temperature of 100+orally or 100 on the forehead.
- If your child has been vomiting or has had diarrhea in the last 24 hours
- If your child has discolored mucus (with the exception of a physician's note)
- If your child is listless or showing signs of illness (coughing, sneezing, etc.)
- If your child is having a difficult time comprehending their surroundings
- If your child has an ear infection
- If you child has meningitis or any forms of it
- If your child has a sore throat
- Head lice is found – Child must be treated, and ALL lice and eggs removed. Child will be inspected prior to return to school.

Children who begin to show any signs of illness (contagious or not) while under BCA care, will be taken out of the classroom to rest in the office. Parents will be notified immediately by phone of their child's health. Depending on the severity of the illness, you will be asked to pick your child up and bring them home to rest.

## Contagious Diseases

The state requires a physician's certification of good health prior to acceptance. Health regulations require that you notify BCA immediately of any contagious diseases or serious illness in the family.

DO NOT bring your child to school if they have the following contagious diseases:

- H1N1 (Influenza, also commonly known as the flu)
- Dysentery (Severe Diarrhea)
- Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease
- Pink Eye (mucus discharge from the eye)
- Fifth's Disease
- Chicken Pox
- Measles
- Mumps
- Head lice/nits

## **Exposure Notices**

Parents/Guardians are required to notify BCA Preschool office immediately if their child is diagnosed with a contagious illness or disease (as previously listed). All parents will be notified through email with an "Exposure Notice" if a child may have been exposed to a contagious disease and a notice will also be posted in each of the buildings. Children exhibiting symptoms of having had the illness may be sent home and may not return without a physician's note stating they are not contagious.

## **Returning To School**

Children CANNOT return to school after a contagious or serious illness without a physician's written permission stating they are no longer contagious. Children with chronic sinus infections must be sent to school with a box of tissues for the day and a note from their physician must be kept on file stating the chronic illness. When your child returns to class, inform your teachers of the illness they are recovering from so they may closely monitor their behavior.

Children who have missed school due to the following cannot return to school until:

- Fever- must be fever free for 24 hours without the use of medication.
- Vomiting – No vomiting in the past 24 hours and has no other symptoms.
- Diarrhea – Must have had no diarrhea in the past 24 hours and has had a normal bowel movement.

## **Medication**

Medication will not be dispensed at the Center without a prescription written by a physician or authorized instructions from the child's parents/guardians. If your child must have their medication during school hours, fill out a "Medication Authorization Form." Children with severe allergies requiring Epi-Pens, must be provided with a non-expired Epi-Pen. All medications and Epi-pens must have a prescription label clearly stating the child's name and must be stored in the office "Medication Lock Box." You must give special instructions to an Office Administrator to help us effectively administer the medication.

## **Required Immunizations**

Up to date immunizations are required as per State requirements. All students must have taken a TB test within 1 year of enrollment or have their pediatrician complete the TB Risk Assessment form. Proof is required prior to attendance including a stamp of authenticity from the doctor's office.

## **Head Lice Policy**

Head lice are a common exposure in human beings since recorded time. After a parent/guardian or BCA staff notifies the office of a child's exposure to head lice, the following procedures will take place:

Day One

- The child exposed to head lice and/or nits is sent home (along with information papers regarding head lice treatment)
- An immediate general head lice check of all BCA Staff and students is performed.
- All helmets, carpets, stuffed toys, bedding, pillowcases are disinfected.



- Day Two
  - A follow-up head lice check of the exposed child before permitting into the Center.
  - We have a no nit policy. All nits (eggs) must be removed before returning to school.
  - Second general head lice check of all BCA Staff and students after 24 hours.
- 10 Days Later -A general head lice check of all BCA Staff and Students

### **Accident and Incident Reports**

All accidents are reported daily, and the parent of the child will receive a thorough written report. First aid is administered to the child if needed. Any incident which results in an injury and/or chronic disciplinary problem will be recorded as an incident report. For any type of incident involving the child's head, even if minor, parents will be called immediately.

# DRESS CODE POLICY

**\*\* Please label all your children's personal belongings\*\***

## **CHILDREN'S DRESS CODE**

- Modest and moderately loose-fitting clothing, safe for playing without restrictions.
- Appropriate positive messages and logos on shirts
- Gang-related clothing is not allowed.
- No caps/hats are allowed to be worn indoors (including the office and chapel)
- The bill of baseball cap must be worn properly (not backwards)
- During spring and summer seasons, hat use is encouraged outside.
- All shoes must have fastened straps.
- Shoes must be worn outdoors, unless approved by the staff.
- No flip-flops or slippers without backing/straps are allowed.
- No crocks may be worn to BCA (They are not safe for running)
- Shoulder straps must be 2 inches or wider.
- No midriff showing.
- Shorts must be no shorter than 2 inches above the knee.
- Pants should not be sagging and worn below the hips.
- Shirts must cover the abdomen. Tight fitting shirts are not allowed (including short shirts that show the stomach or back when arms are raised)
- Belts are to be held by pant belt loops.
- Skirts and dresses must be no shorter than 2 inches above the knee and/or 8 inches from floor to hem when kneeling. We recommend bikeshorts to be worn under skirts.
- Narrow straps, backless and halter tops are not allowed.
- Make-up is not acceptable.
- No two-piece or bikini swimwear is allowed (one-piece suits are allowed)
- Accessories such as necklaces, bracelets, dangling earrings are discouraged to be worn for children's safety and to avoid being lost or damaged.

## **Chewing Gum**

Students may not chew gum anywhere at school at any time.

## **Lost and Found**

Please label all your child's belongings. Lost items will be placed in Lost and found bucket where parents can claim them. Unclaimed items will be donated to charitable organizations every other month.

## **Assessments & Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Formal observation and assessment of children takes place twice each school year using the DRDP developmental tool – initially to create a baseline of strengths and developmental goals for each child, followed by a second one mid-year to track the progress toward his/her developmental milestones.

Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled twice each year; one during the period between October- November and once in January-February to discuss the child’s development and progress based on assessments made by the teacher.

Regular Parent-Teacher Communication- to address any concerns or questions you may have regarding your child’s daily routines and classroom activities please keep the following in mind:

- Please communicate directly with the Lead Teacher in your child’s class – if your class does not have a Lead Teacher, you can communicate with any of the teachers in your class.
- Preferred method of communication is by email – allowing the teacher to give adequate time to review and respond. Most emails are responded to by the afternoon.

## **Expectations for Classroom Behavior**

**At BrightStar Christian Academy we create a Christ-Like environment by committing that all staff and children adhere to The 5 R’s**

- Respect for God
- Respect for Adults & Elders
- Respect for Others
- Respect for Yourself
- Respect for All Property

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Our policy is to make our rules few and simple so that every child can understand them, and then to lovingly guide them. Through a method of positively guiding children, BrightStar Christian Academy teaches and implements the “5R’s” inside and outside the classroom. The “5R’s,” shown on five fingers of the hand, are Respect for God, Respect for Adults, Respect for Others, Respect for Property, Respect for Oneself.

## Rules of Discipline

The school is an extension of the home, and we are here to support you as you train and build up character in your child. You are the first and primary teacher. As an extension of your home, we will provide opportunities for your child to practice obedience and a good attitude toward the school environment.

Ephesians 6:1-3 *“Children obey your parents in the Lord.....”*

Our policy on discipline is to use praise and positive statements about our children rather than negative statements. We choose redirection as the preferred choice of discipline. The child is redirected toward a more acceptable mode of behavior. In the event of any problem our staff cannot handle repetitive discipline issues, the school will call the parents to come and get the child. In any case, the school will not tolerate bad language, fighting, or any other abusive behavior. This may be grounds for immediate withdrawal from the program. We feel the school and family need to work as a team to help all the children gain control of their behavior. Please let the school know of any problems your child may have had in the past or is currently having.

It is very important a child’s social development is nurtured through predictability, prevention, redirection, love, consistency, and firmness. Also, it is “typical” and developmentally appropriate for children to throw tantrums, struggle to communicate their emotions, get into disagreements with their peers and at times act out with aggression. However, while caring for children, some “typical” misbehavior may escalate into more escalated aggressive behavior: biting, hitting, kicking, spitting, hostile verbal behavior, non-compliance and other behaviors which will hurt another child that cannot be permitted.

### **In response to these behaviors the staff will NOT:**

- Apply physical punishment (even if requested by the parent)
- Deprive a child of food or other basic needs.
- Use fear to manage behavior.
- Use humiliation or isolation in response to misbehavior.
- Utilize threats or bribes.
- Physically restrain a child

### **In response to these behaviors the staff WILL:**

- Comply with California law and Title 22 Licensing standards.
- Respect every child.
- Establish clear limits.
- Be consistent in enforcing predictable behavioral expectations.
- Use developmentally appropriate language to explain desired behavior.
- Always communicate with children at their level
- Give clear and appropriate options.
- Redirect children to an alternative positive activity, when available
- Provide the child the option to “take space” in a quiet supervised area

## Rules of Discipline (cont.)

If a child's behavior is excessively disruptive or harmful to themselves, their peers or staff, the child's parents will be notified, and the child is to be picked up and offered to return the following day. In this situation an individualized behavior plan may be developed with the collaboration of the Parents, Lead Teacher, and Director. Should these measures not resolve the behavior issue, parents may be asked to make other childcare arrangements.

**State Licensing Agency's Rights** (outline in ADSS Manual CCL-86-95 section 101195 (b) &(c) "The department has the authority to interview children, or staff, and audit child or facility records without prior consent. The licensee shall make provisions for private interviews with any child/ren, or staff members and for the examination of all records relating to the operation of the facility. The Department of the Licensing Agency shall have the authority to observe the physical condition of the child/ren, including conditions which indicate abuse, neglect, or inappropriate placement and to have a licensed medical professional physically examine the child/ren." The state also mandates that we report suspicion of child abuse to the proper authorities.

## CLASSROOM POLICIES

### Potty Training

Potty trained at BCA is defined as:

- Child tells teacher that they have to go potty BEFORE they have to go in order to avoid potty accidents.
- Child is able to postpone going potty if they need to wait for another child to finish going potty.
- Child pulls down their pants and underwear without assistance.
- Child wipes/cleans themselves after going pee or poop without assistance.
- Child gets up from potty and pulls up their pants and underwear without assistance.
- Child washes and dries hands properly without assistance after going potty.
- Child is wearing underwear all of the time, including waking up dry after nap time (no pull ups).
- Child has consistently shown that they are comfortable taking care of themselves in the bathroom without assistance and remains accident free all of the time.

Each child must provide their own supply of "Pull-Ups" (Training Pants) and baby wipes, which will be stored in the classroom. Children in the potty-training process should wear clothing that can be easily removed, such as elastic bands. Avoid belts, "Onesies," etc.

All children are given the opportunity to go to the bathroom every 40 minutes or as needed and are changed every hour. Teachers keep records on the “Potty Chart” and will inform the parent/guardian of the progress of their child’s success.

### **Extra Clothing**

Two sets of clothes must always be kept in a plastic bag in the child’s backpack. For the hesitant learner/non-potty-trained children, please bring three sets of change of clothes. Please include tops (shirts/blouses), bottoms (shorts/pants), underwear, socks, etc.

### **Labeling and Lost & Found**

All students’ possessions, including jackets, hats, bags, etc., MUST be labeled with their name. Many times, children have identical articles of clothing, so this will help distinguish what belongs to whom. All unidentified clothing/belongings may be retrieved from the Lost & Found located in the office. Any items not retrieved within one month will be donated to a local non-profit organization.

### **Sunscreen**

All parents/guardians are responsible to make sure your child is prepared for outdoor play, especially in hot weather conditions. Apply sunscreen to your child prior to their scheduled drop off time. All children must have their own sunblock lotion, with their name clearly labeled on it, which will be left in the classroom. Parents acknowledge that staff may apply the sunscreen they have provided on their child as needed by completing the Parent Consent for Application of Sunscreen form. We recommend that all children bring a cap or hat to protect them from the sun.

### **Toys**

We provide a wide variety of play toys at our center, which makes it unnecessary for children to bring toys from home. Toys from home are not allowed as they may be easily lost and/or damaged. Exceptions are made on specific calendar days that may be relevant to the day’s activities. In those cases, clearly label your child’s name on each item. Other exceptions may be a small stuffed toy for naptime or a ‘comfort blanket’, both of which must be kept in their cubby until naptime.

### **“Wonderful Me”**

*“I praise you Lord because I am fearfully and wonderfully made....” Psalm 139:14*

BrightStar Christian Academy sees children as special and unique and there is no one else in the world like them. Each week, one child is in the spotlight. This turn usually falls on or close to their birthday month. (Please check the monthly calendar for your child’s turn.)

For your child’s week in the spotlight:

They need to bring a home-made creative poster that tells about your child. This poster may include pictures of family and friends, favorite places, hobbies, activities, cartoon

character, food, etc. It can be anything your child feels they want to share with their friends. They will talk about their poster during the opening session/circle time.

- They may bring a favorite snack to share with the class (special fruit and/or a healthy treat)
- They will be the line-leader.
- They will lead the class during prayer.
- They will also hold their classroom's offering bucket and pray at chapel on Friday.
- They may bring a favorite book, song, or toy (Please make sure all items are labeled and will be kept in their cubby until it is time to share with the class).

Being in the spotlight is a great way to overcome shyness and build self-esteem. Sharing during opening sessions is a great way to develop language and communication skills. Children love sharing and learning about their friends and they look forward to their week of showing their unique and wonderful being.

### **Birthdays**

BrightStar Christian Academy desires to instill habits of good stewardship of our bodies including teaching healthy eating. Every month, each class will hold one birthday celebration for all the birthdays of that month. Those celebrating their birthday that month will all be honored by the class, and everyone will be served the special snack provided by the parents. This will be held every last Friday of the month during chapel or snack time.

On the child's actual birthday (or the school day closest to the day), parents may bring a special treat for the class. To support our efforts, we ask that healthy treats are brought for the birthday celebrations. In addition, we ask parents to donate a special book to the class on their child's birthday which will be shared and enjoyed by everyone. Please put a picture of your child and a written dedication inside the book.

If you are inviting any class members to your child's outside birthday party, we ask that you would not pass out the invitations in the class in order to avoid causing hurt feelings.

### **Meals**

Meals for the children are not provided at BrightStar Christian Academy.

Breakfast should be eaten at home.

All children enrolled for after 12:00 p.m. must bring their own well-balanced lunch to school and will eat during a scheduled 30-45 minute lunch time with the class. Parents are required to prepare and provide a well-balanced lunch (including a main entrée, fruit/vegetables, protein, whole-grain, nuts, etc.). When preparing your child's lunch, consider the portion size and avoid choking hazards (cut food into bite size). Microwaves are available in each classroom to warm up lunches.

To support our good stewardship and green campus and efforts, all meals are to be brought in 100% reusable containers. We ask that you DO NOT bring pre-packaged food

in your child's lunch (such as Lunchables, snacks with wrappers, juice boxes, etc.). All meals should be in lunch containers (Tupperware, Gladware, etc.) and must include a cloth napkin/washcloth, reusable utensils.

Every child must bring their own reusable water bottle or container (filled at home) that is clearly labeled with the child's name and be filled at home every morning.

### **Snacks**

We provide two snacks (AM and PM) every day for full-time students. We provide fruits and vegetables and Lowfat milk for their daily snack (see monthly calendar posted in classrooms for detail). For Full-day students, parents may choose to pack an additional heartier snack to be served with the PM snack to their child.

### **Children with Allergies**

If your child cannot drink whole milk for medical or personal reasons, you can bring an alternative product that contains calcium like soy, rice, or almond milk. It will be stored in our refrigerator, labeled with your child's name. Teachers will inform you if your supply is low or if the product has reached the expiration date.

Parents acknowledge that their child's name will be placed on the List of Children with Allergies along with specific emergency steps to be taken, to be posted in the classroom for easy reference of all staff.

### **Parent Visits**

Parents are welcome to visit our school at any time. We ask for your cooperation to protect the integrity of the program that your visit not happen during structured time including nap time and that you limit visits to the classroom to no more than 5 minutes during drop-off and pick up times. If a parent's visit is found to be disruptive to a child's adjustment to the preschool setting, they will be asked to leave shortly after drop-off. If you'd like a conference with any of our staff members, please call or email to arrange a time. For any visits to your child's classroom anticipated to be longer than 5-10 minutes, be sure to sign into our Visitor's Log in the office.

### **Parent Helpers and Events**

Although BCA does not have mandatory service hours for parents, we encourage our families to consider the Center as an extension of the home where parents and teachers work together for the benefit of the children. We appreciate that you would share your time and talent with the school. If you have special skills, trade, or talent that you would like to share with our friends at school, please let us know.

Throughout the school year, BCA offers a variety of special events and celebrations that you and your family are invited to attend.

Parents are always welcome in the classroom as helpers (be sure to sign into our Visitor's Log). We have many areas where you may serve if you desire. Licensing requirements do not allow siblings to be present in classrooms during school hours.



# GRIEVANCE POLICY

*(PARENT/GUARDIAN COPY- Please keep for your records)*

## PARENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE AND AGREEMENT

These procedures are with regard to this financial agreement or with staff or center administration. Direct, face-to-face resolution is the scriptural means of resolving differences:

1. Should there be a question about or disagreement with school policy / procedures, we will in no case complain to any parent, but register concerns with teachers, the Director, or the AECSJ School Board, following the appropriate chain of command.
2. To ensure the resolution of possible disputes of a non-criminal nature, in the spirit of Christian Love, it is agreed that such disputes will be settled in conformity with the Biblical injunctions of Matthew 5:22, 18:15-20, and 1 Corinthians 6:1-8.
3. IF the matter is not resolved after private meetings with the individuals involved, the Director and the Board of Directors, either party may submit the matter to the Bay Area Christian Conciliation Service for mediation, and if necessary, binding arbitration. It is further agreed that a secular court will settle no dispute.

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Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date Signed

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Signature of Staff/Witness

Date Signed

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT of REVIEW OF BCA PARENT HANDBOOK

I have reviewed the BCA Parent Handbook Book. Please sign your initials stating you have read each section of the BCA Policies and Procedures.

\_\_\_\_\_ Vision/Mission/Philosophy Statements

\_\_\_\_\_ Admissions Policy

\_\_\_\_\_ Drop Off/Pick Up Policy

\_\_\_\_\_ Safety Policy

\_\_\_\_\_ Emergency Policy

\_\_\_\_\_ What to Do When Your Child is Sick

\_\_\_\_\_ Dress Code Policy

\_\_\_\_\_ Disciplinary Procedures

\_\_\_\_\_ Classroom Procedures and Policies

\_\_\_\_\_ Legal Policy and Agreements

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  Male  Female

Parent/Guardians Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_