



2024-2025 Parent Handbook

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Bethany School and Bethany United Methodist are non-smoking facilities.

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Bethany Preschool Overview

Bethany Preschool, Bethany United Methodist Church's weekday program of preschool classes for young children, has a history older than much of the community it serves.

Beginning with only a handful of children and a few loving teachers, Bethany Preschool has grown along with the community to include over 100 students and 26 teachers and staff members. Our classrooms are filled each weekday with enthusiastic children ready to play, learn, and grow. With a variety of techniques and personalities, a dedicated staff of

part-time teachers, aides, and administrators strive to nurture the development of the individual child:

- to build trust, confidence, and a sense of family in the classroom;
- to enhance physical development;
- to encourage cognitive learning;
- to foster social and emotional maturation through interaction with peers;
- to begin a personal awareness of the love of God.

Bethany's Preschool song reflects the school's philosophy:

"Bethany, Bethany, that is the place
Where I go in the morning with a smile on my face.
All our friends and our teachers will be there today.
And the Lord will be watching us play."

Bethany Preschool uses a well-rounded, research-based curriculum focusing on the whole child. Using the Texas Infant, Toddler, and Three-Year-Old Early Learning Guideline, the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines and the NAEYC's Developmentally Appropriate Practice as our blueprint, Bethany teachers create intentional lessons and learning experiences for each student we teach. Bethany teachers know the strong academic value of purposeful play and structure the environment to enrich learning through age-appropriate play and toys. Bethany has also adopted Handwriting Without Tears in the Prekindergarten class, and gross and fine motor skills are built beginning in our infant class to support the development of this program.

Preschool classes are an excellent choice for the child who is ready to experience an organized day, who is comfortable interacting in a group, and who can follow directions. Children who are 2 years and younger experience special movement, library, science, and music classes in their classrooms each week. The 2½ year olds and older have special classes in music, movement, science, as well as Chapel services each week.

Mission Statement

The mission of Bethany Preschool is to facilitate the development of every student while recognizing that each is a unique gift of God.

Bethany Preschool admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school.

Enrichment

For an additional fee per session, Bethany Preschool offers optional Enrichment Programs, which go beyond the regular preschool curriculum for children in the 2½, PreK3 and PreK4 classes. We have three, eight-week sessions, fall, winter, and spring. Enrichment class space is limited. Parents will be notified of each session's sign up period and when the online registration link is active. Registration will be online and offered on a first come, first served basis. If needed, a wait list will be created for full enrichment classes. Placement in the enrichment class is finalized when paperwork and payment have been completed and turned in to the Bethany Preschool office.

Spanish (Tuesday), Art (Wednesday), and Fun Friday enrichment classes are offered to PreK3 and PreK4, and held three times during the year in eight-week sessions beginning in October. Lunch Bunch (Thursday) is offered to potty-trained 2½, PreK3, and PreK4 classes and held three times during the year in six or eight week sessions. On Mondays, Soccer Shots offers their soccer program to our PreK3 and PreK4 classes and they are aligned with our sessions.

Licensing

We are licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and meet all Texas Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers. A copy of these standards and our licensing inspection reports are available in the Bethany Preschool Office.

Licensing phone number: 512-834-3426

Website: dfps.state.tex.gov

Insurance

As a ministry of Bethany United Methodist Church, Bethany Preschool is covered for liability under the church's insurance policy.

Grievances

Any grievances should be brought to the attention of the Director. Every effort will be made to resolve problems and issues with the children, the school, and the staff, while keeping the interest of children as our top priority. If a parent is not satisfied with the results of a concern they may reach out to the school board to schedule a meeting with them. The current school board and contact information can be found on our [website](#).

Enrollment

Registration for Bethany Preschool begins in February and continues until classes are full.

Information about registration is available in January for all current families and Bethany United Methodist Church members. Priority for registration is given to church members and currently enrolled families. Following the first phase, registration opens to the general public.

Parents will be notified of their status in the middle of March. Enrollment is complete when the registration fee, supply fee, and the May tuition deposit is paid.

Enrollment Information

Each child must have a completed enrollment form on file before the child's first day of school.

Enrollment forms must have the following information:

1. Parent's names, address, and phone numbers where they can be reached during the school day
2. Names, addresses, and phone numbers of persons to contact in the event of illness or emergency
3. Name and phone number of persons authorized to pick up child
4. Signed authorization for emergency medical attention

Withdrawal

If it is necessary for a child to withdraw from the program, parents must submit notice in writing at least two weeks in advance.

If you withdraw PRIOR to the beginning of the school year, we will offer a refund minus the registration and supply fees for administrative purposes.

If you withdraw AFTER the school year has begun, please note that the registration fee, supply fee, and May tuition paid prior to the start of school are non-refundable upon withdrawal. Extenuating circumstances may be brought to the school board's attention.

Security

Safety is a priority. We will have a secured entrance that will only allow for visitors to enter the building after they have been buzzed in. Parents and other visitors are allowed into the building as long as public health guidelines permit it. All visitors must check in at the Bethany Preschool office.

For all persons other than peace officers, firearms, hunting knives, bows and arrows, and other weapons are prohibited on the premises of a child care center. (746.3707 Texas Licensing)

Calendar

An electronic version of the school calendar can be found on our [website](#). Bethany Preschool considers days off taken by both Round Rock Independent School District and Leander Independent School District when setting their calendar. Bethany Preschool follows a nine month calendar, September through May. Bethany Preschool offers classes Monday through Friday and the preschool day is four hours (9:00 AM-1:00 PM) in length every day except Thursday, which is three hours (9:00 AM-12:00 PM).

Orientation

A Parent Orientation will be held one evening the week before Bethany Preschool begins its regular session of classes. This orientation is split into two sessions. The first session will be held in the Worship Center to

introduce parents to the school staff and update them on current school policies. The second session will be divided up by age groups and they will meet outside of the Worship Center. The teachers will inform parents of specific classroom procedures. Notification letters will be sent home two weeks prior to the start of school. Specific dates and times of orientation will be indicated in the correspondence.

Bethany Preschool children will be invited to visit their classrooms one morning the week before school starts. At this time, the children will meet their teachers. Each teacher will contact their students as to the day and time of this meeting.

Tuition Information

Tuition is due the first day of the month of each month. Full payment is due each month. A late charge of \$25 will be assessed after the 10th day of the month. If a family is late more than two times, they will be asked to have a credit card on file to avoid late payments. An additional \$30 fee will be charged for insufficient checks.

Tuition is reviewed each year by the school board. Tuition is an annual amount which is divided into equal monthly payments for your convenience. (Note: May tuition is paid prior to the start of the school and is non-refundable) There are no refunds for missed days whether due to sickness, your own vacation time, or bad weather.

There are three ways to pay tuition:

1. Parents can set up bank pay through their personal banking institution from September through April.
2. Tuition may be paid electronically through the parent portal by a credit card with a 3% convenience fee.
3. Parents can pay with cash or a check. Checks should be made payable to Bethany Preschool.

There is a \$15 per month reduction in tuition rates for:

- Bethany church members
- Second enrollee from a single family unit

Scholarships

Partial Scholarships may be available for families that need some assistance with tuition. If you would like to learn more information about our scholarships or get an application, please ask in the office.

Arrival, Departure, and Parking

Your child's arrival time is from 8:55 to 9:05 AM; departure time is from 12:55 PM to 1:05 PM and 11:55 AM to 12:05 PM on Thursdays.

Parents are expected to:

- Walk children to the classroom
- Sign children in and out
- Pick up children at the classroom

Please notify the office and teachers in advance when someone other than a parent or caregiver is to pick up your child. Those picking up a child must be authorized by the parents as an Authorized Pick Up Person. Photo IDs will be checked if the individual is not recognized.

There will be a late fee for lack of punctuality when picking up your child. In general, there will be a fee of \$1 (per child) per one minute starting at 12:10 or 1:10 PM. Late fee notices will be distributed, and charges will automatically appear on your next month's tuition bill. If you are late, you may pick up your child from the office.

To avoid arrival apprehension, the parent should exhibit an attitude of happiness, confidence, and anticipation. Bring your child to the classroom, make a positive statement of leaving with an assurance of your prompt return at pick up time, and leave immediately without lingering. Distress at your departure is usually over within minutes of your leaving. Be assured the staff will call you if the need arises. DO make sure that you are on time for pick up so that you build a feeling of trust with your child.

Visiting with other parents is best done away from the classroom so that children may feel free to settle in and begin their school day.

Late Arrival or Early Pickup

Parents who bring their child after the school day has begun or need to pick up a child before regular dismissal time are asked to come to the office with their request. A staff member will assist you in taking or collecting the child to avoid disturbing the class.

Religious Education

Children 2½ years of age and older attend a fifteen minute Chapel time led by Bethany United Methodist's Children's Pastor or Director. The Chapel service consists of singing songs, a Bible story, and a prayer. Children and Staff birthdays are recognized once a month during Chapel. In January, the 2-year-old classes join Chapel at the discretion of the Director. We encourage all children to wear their Bethany Preschool shirt on Religious Education days.

Parent Participation

Parent participation is encouraged. Parents should feel that they are a part of Bethany Preschool and parents and teachers are working in partnership for the best development of their child. We have many ways parents can volunteer in our program. You may choose to help with parties, special events or celebrations, the book fair, share your skill, interest, or hobby with children in your child's classroom.

Special Needs/Adaptive Equipment

A child with special care needs will need to have accommodations provided by a health care professional or an early intervention professional. The preschool will use the adaptive equipment provided. The preschool makes sure the daily activities will integrate children whether they have special needs or not. If a child needs early intervention or special education services, the preschool will make arrangements for them to work with the child at the preschool.

Visitors

Visitors are welcome at Bethany Preschool but must sign in and out at the school office and wear a "visitor" name tag while on campus. A member of the school staff may accompany the visitor while on campus. Parents are

always welcome to visit our program at any time to observe their child's class without prior approval.

Parent Information

Newsletters and messages will be sent via our parent/school communication program, Procure, periodically to keep your family informed of school activities. Please read these carefully. Also, note the parent information board in front of the office and the individual class information by each classroom door. Follow us on Facebook at Bethany Preschool Austin or Instagram @bethanyschoolatx for additional information which is updated often.

Parent Communication

Please inform your child's teacher of any changes in your child's daily routine, such as family illness, death, or separation that may affect their day at school. Calling the office to let us know if your child will not be in school is greatly appreciated. The classroom teacher will contact the family if a child is absent for more than three days.

Parent Conferences

Parents are invited to set up a conference time with the classroom teacher or with administrative staff at any time during the year. The teacher, parent, or administrative staff may set up other conferences as the need arises. Setting a specific time to talk to the teacher is much more rewarding for both parties than attempting to have a discussion as children and parents come and go or while the teacher's supervision is needed to guide the activities of the day.

Picture Taking Policy

We take photographs of children in their classes. These photos are used to share with parents, used in some of the children's projects, and occasionally may be used on our website. Teachers have a private class photo share site, and you will receive more information before school begins. Photos will only be used with your permission on the Waivers and Release form.

Classroom Lists

We have class lists of parents/children who have authorized release of their information. This is provided by request for the use of Bethany Preschool parents. We only release the class your child is in to you. Distribution of the information contained in the directory to any business or individual for solicitation or commercial use is strictly prohibited.

Health

Bethany Preschool health policies are developed from guidelines set by the Texas Dept. of Family & Protective Services. Documentation of up-to-date immunizations and a current Certificate of Health are required to be in the individual child's folder before the child's first day of school. It is the responsibility of the parents to keep the school informed of changes in the child's medical records throughout the school year.

Due to Covid-19 guidelines constantly changing, please follow the [CDC](#) guidelines for the most up-to-date Covid-19 guidelines and protocols.

Parents are expected to keep their child home when the child:

- Has had vomiting, diarrhea, or fever within 24 hours
- Has been taking an antibiotic for less than 24 hours
- Has sore or discharging eyes
- Gives evidence of a fresh cold
- Is unable to participate in all activities
- Is irritable or not behaving like they normally do
- Has nasal discharge
- Has a sore throat
- Has chills
- Has shortness of breath
- Has any symptoms of a possible communicable disease including known contact with someone who is confirmed to have flu or COVID-19

A child will not be admitted to school with a rash unless accompanied by a note from a physician stating that the rash is not contagious.

Please notify the director if your child has a communicable disease so that the other parents can be notified.

If a child becomes ill while at school, the child will be removed from class and comfortably monitored until parents can arrive. Parents should have plans in place to pick up a child within thirty minutes of notification from Bethany Preschool.

Medical Emergencies

All teachers and staff are certified in CPR, the use of AED's, and in First Aid. In the event of a medical emergency, we will call 911 and then notify you immediately.

Food Allergies

If your child has food allergies, we must have an emergency plan in place, signed by your child's doctor, in the event that your child is inadvertently exposed to a food allergen.

Please note that a classroom with an allergic child may have additional restrictions, as necessary, to ensure the safety of that child.

EpiPens

If your child has a severe allergy and requires the use of an EpiPen, you will be given a copy of the "Bethany Preschool Food Allergy Action Plan," which your physician will need to complete and return to the office. The EpiPen is to be supplied by the parent, kept in its original packaging and with current expiration date. All medications will be kept in a secured location in the school office.

Medications

If your child must have medication administered during school hours, we will give you a form to fill out with exact instructions and for dosage and timing. Permission forms are available in the school office. Medication to be given must be brought in the original, appropriately-labeled container in order to comply with the state health regulations. To simplify matters, parents are encouraged to set medication dosage times so they occur

before and/or after school hours, thus retaining control and responsibility with the parent.

Accident/Incidents

If a child has a minor accident (small bump, scraped knee, bloody nose) or a minor incident (an event that happens with cause like being bit) and is able to return to their classroom activities, we will tend to the child's injury. If the child's injury is more extensive or the child is distraught, we will call the parent during the school day. An accident/incident report will be provided to the parent at pick-up time.

If a parent later decides that a child needs further medical attention after school, please inform the school so the documentation may be sent to Texas State Licensing.

911 will be called for emergencies.

Vision and Hearing Screening

In the fall, parents of PreK4 students can sign their child up for a vision and hearing test. Parents will be notified only if their child needs to be referred to a health care professional for further evaluation.

Head Lice

Our school has a no nit/no lice policy, which requires that children remain at home until all nits (lice eggs) are removed. If lice or nits are discovered at school, the parents will be called to pick up and treat the student immediately. Children can return to school when they are free of nits and will be checked in the office or have a note from a doctor stating they are free of nits.

Insect Repellent and Sunscreen

Insect repellent and sunscreen are considered over-the-counter medication. If you want your child to wear insect repellent or sunblock, please apply them before school.

Lunches

Good nutrition is an important part of your child's development. Lunch should contain non-perishable foods such as: sandwiches, cheese, fruit, and vegetables that your child is comfortable managing on his/her own. The parent, not Bethany Preschool, is responsible for meeting the child's daily food needs and for providing food that has good nutritional value. Bringing a nutritional lunch to school benefits your child physically, as well as teaching good nutritional choices through daily experience. If utensils are needed, please make sure they are reusable.

Breastfeeding

Parents may provide breast milk for a child while they are at school. In addition, parents who want to breastfeed their child during school hours may use the nursing mom's room (W108) in the Worship Center.

Snacks

A snack and water provided by the parent will be served midmorning in the classroom. Please send utensils needed to eat snacks.

Celebrations

Bethany Preschool classes will have parties to celebrate Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter, and the last day of school. Teachers might ask for help from parent volunteers for these events.

Birthdays

Simple recognition is given to each child on his/her birthday. No gifts or goodie bags are to be exchanged, but the honoree may give a book to the Bethany Preschool Library to commemorate the occasion. The Librarian will prepare a nameplate for the book and read it for the birthday child's class.

If you wish to have a special birthday snack, please communicate with your child's teacher prior to the event. No balloons or candles may be part of the birthday celebration.

Children who are having a birthday party away from school and wish to distribute invitations in the classroom may do so only if every child in the class is receiving an invitation.

School Pictures

School pictures, both individual and class (group), are taken once a year in the spring.

Dress for Play

Children should wear clothing that is:

- comfortable, washable, suitable for play
- simple enough for the child to manage alone, especially in the bathroom
- appropriate for subjection to paint, glue, playground, etc.

Children should wear shoes that:

- fit correctly
- are close-toed

Tennis shoes or sneakers are most appropriate for climbing, playing, and Movement class.

Outside Play

Dress your child so that they will be comfortable to go outside to play. Children will be taken outside every day unless temperatures are lower than 45° by 9 AM or above 95° at noon, or if it is raining. On cold days, children should wear warm, outside clothes. Staff is not available to allow a child to stay indoors while the rest of the class goes outside. Before returning to school after an illness, your child needs to be well enough to play outside.

When weather is inappropriate for outside activity, we will play in Fellowship Hall (Big Room). Please label all outdoor clothing.

Lost and Found

Unidentified articles of clothing and other items will be placed in a basket outside of the school office until the end of the month.

Toys

Toys are not to be brought to school with the exception of special occasions such as “show and tell.” Valued possessions from home cause problems with sharing and may be lost or broken. Anything brought from home will be put away at the teacher’s discretion until dismissal time. Weapons and weapon-like toys or guns are not permitted. Aggressive behavior is discouraged.

Weather

Bethany Preschool will follow Round Rock Independent School District and Leander Independent School District’s pattern of opening and closing during severe weather. However, when RRISD or LISD delays opening until mid-morning, Bethany Preschool will remain closed. These days will not be made up.

Potty Training

Children entering the PreK3 program need to be potty trained. Any extenuating circumstances should be discussed with the Director or Assistant Director.

For young children, being potty trained is a significant step toward independence, self-reliance, and personal responsibility. Achieving this developmental milestone can be an important indicator of readiness for preschool. Mastery of potty training includes handling of their clothing and wiping themselves. This independence enables the child and teacher to spend time fully engaged in the learning activities of the day.

Realizing that control of body functions is a developmental process, it is important to watch for signs of readiness, and use that window of opportunity for training.

Signs of readiness include:

- being able to walk and take clothing on and off
- understanding what is expected
- interpreting body signals
- expressing needs in words or gestures
- showing an interest in toileting
- indicating discomfort when wet or soiled

Additional information on potty training can be found in the school office.

A child who is not potty trained by the end of October in the PreK3 or PreK4 classes will be charged an additional \$10 per month per days attended for a maximum of \$50 per month. This will cover the additional personnel hired and supplies needed to change and care for these children.

When it is established that the child is potty trained and only having occasional accidents (less than three per thirty day cycle), the additional fee will be removed. This will be documented in the classroom by the aide who does the change each time. If three accidents happen within a thirty day span, the child will not be considered potty trained and the additional fee will be assessed through the office. In January, if a child is continuing to have accidents, the fees will be charged after two accidents in a thirty day cycle.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

Bethany Preschool has a response plan in place for emergencies. It is available for review upon request. All staff is trained on the emergency plan upon hiring, and training is reviewed each year, or as needed.

Fire Drill (includes fire, bomb threat, gas leak, or other events that require evacuating the building)

- Drills are conducted once a month during school hours
- The Prayer garden is the designated meeting area

Severe Weather Drill (includes severe storms, tornadoes, or other incidents that require everyone being in one area inside the building)

- Drills are conducted once every three months during school hours

- The designated meeting area is in Disciple building rooms S104 and S105

Lockdown Drill (includes intruder with weapon or other incidents that require a full school lockdown)

- Drills are conducted four times annually
- Classroom doors are locked. Teachers and students remain in their classroom with the door shut until the threat is over
- Outward facing windows are closed and inward facing windows are covered with blackout material

Shelter in Place (used when we need to be clustered inside the building for something such as a chemical spill, distant fire, smoke/fumes, etc.)

- Drills are conducted twice each year during school hours
- We will shelter in four designated rooms: G100, G105, G110, D124

Evacuation of Children

When alerted by authorities or when the Director and/or the Assistant Director feel it is necessary to remove your children from campus to protect them (e.g. for a fire, flood, etc.), all teachers, staff, and children will evacuate to the Unity Church (directly across from Bethany Church on Anderson Mill Road).

Parents will be contacted through the Procure portal and through text.

Discipline

Bethany School uses a positive approach to discipline by directing children toward age-appropriate behavior. Teachers help the children to develop self-discipline by:

- Redirecting the child when necessary
- Using patience, love, and understanding
- Setting clearly defined limits
- Talking about acceptable ways of handling situations as they arise
- Using positive reinforcement of appropriate behavior choices

Bethany Preschool reserves the right to remove a child from the program due to behavioral issues on the part of the child or child's parent or guardian. In this case, refunds will be made for the unused days.

Bethany Preschool follows the Texas Dept. of Family & Protective Services Guidance and Discipline policy as stated below:

Discipline must be:

1. Individualized and consistent for each child;
2. Appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and
3. Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following:

1. Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior;
2. Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements;
3. Redirecting behavior using positive statements; and
4. Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

1. Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment;
2. Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training;
3. Pinching, shaking or biting a child;
4. Hitting a child with a hand or instrument;
5. Putting anything in or on a child's mouth;
6. Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child;
7. Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language;
8. Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom or closet with a door closed; and

9. Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Chapters 746 and 747, Subchapters L, Discipline and Guidance

Policy for Suspension and Expulsion of Students

Bethany Preschool takes suspension and expulsion of children very seriously. It should always be a rarity. We work with children, on an individual basis when behavior is causing concern in the classroom.

1. Teacher works with child in the classroom and contacts parents when there is a recurring problem.
2. Child goes to Director's office.
3. Child goes to Director's office and parent is called.
4. Parent meets with Director (or teacher and Director) to form a behavior plan.
5. If child continues to hurt others, not listen, run away, etc. after the parent call, the child will be sent home for the remainder of the day after the next problem.
6. If the behavior continues, the child will be sent home for the remainder of the week.
7. When we have gone through the previous steps with no change in behavior, the child may be suspended from Bethany School.
8. Texas Licensing gives the director authority to remove any child from Bethany School when it is in the best interest of the child or other children at the school. (746.501 Texas Licensing)

Consumer Product Safety - Recalled Products

A licensed child-care center is prohibited from having or using unsafe children's products that have been recalled by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).

You may view a list of current recalls and notices on the CPSC website: www.cpsc.gov, or the Department of Family and Protective Services website: www.dfps.state.tx.us. You can also sign up to receive notification of new recalls by going to www.cpsc.gov/cpsclist.aspx.

Gang Free Zones

The Texas Penal Code designates certain areas around child-care centers as “gang-free zones”. This means that gang-related criminal activity or anyone engaging in organized criminal activity within 1000’ of our school is in violation of this law and is subject to increased penalty

Child Abuse

The Child Abuse hotline is 1-800-252-5400. The website for the Texas Department of Family & Protective Services is www.tdprs.state.tx.us.

Our preschool staff receives annual training on recognizing and preventing abuse and neglect. The preschool has been committed to increase awareness and prevention techniques to employees through training and supplemental materials. Our staff are all mandated reporters and are required to report any suspected cases of Child Abuse to the Texas Child Protective Services Office and a local or state law enforcement agency.

Policies and Procedures

Bethany Preschool’s policies are developed from guidelines set by the Texas Department of Family & Protective Services. The State Licensing Agency may be contacted by calling 512-388-6109. A copy of the state’s minimum standards and Bethany Preschool’s most recent licensing inspection report is available in the school office.

[Texas Childcare Minimum Standards](#)

Parents will be notified via email of any policies that are updated or changed during the school year.

Questions or concerns of the policies and procedures of Bethany Preschool should be addressed by calling the school office at 512-258-6965, or by meeting with the school director.