



2023-2024 School Year Parent Handbook

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Mission/Philosophy

Our mission is to provide a nurturing environment for children to engage in hands on learning so that they may grow into confident, capable, and caring students. At Bloom Early Learning we nurture the whole child as we strive to develop kindness, independence, and confidence. Our philosophy, wholeheartedly, is based upon the idea that learning is fun when children are engaged in a warm, inviting environment that provides opportunities to explore, create, and experiment.

Team

The team at Bloom Early Learning (BEL) is rooted in experience as well as enthusiasm! With decades of teaching and administrative experience, we all share a commitment to play-based learning as well as a joy of teaching.

Every staff member at BEL was selected based on their demonstrated excellence in teaching. Team members are skilled at creating engaging and impactful lesson plans, making meaningful connections with students and families, and maintaining positive attitudes.

All staff members are certified in first aid/CPR and undergo regular training in early childhood best practices.

Hours/Drop-Off & Pick-Up Process

The school day runs from 9:00am to 1:00pm. Drop-off procedures will begin at 8:55. We encourage all families to take advantage of our carline for both drop off and pick-up. We do have covered spaces to wait with the children outside so carline will run rain or shine! Thunder and lightning are the only instances which would cause us to suspend carline. At Parent Orientation you will be shown the appropriate entrance and exit points for carline.

If you are arriving after 9:10, you are asked to park and walk your child in to the building. Please do your best to arrive on-time daily as our learning activities begin right away!

If walking up for drop-off or pick-up is preferable, please speak to your child's teacher so that we may arrange the safest way to accommodate that request.

Pick-up procedures will begin at 12:45. Please display your carline tag in your window to help the process move quickly until we get to know you and your car. A BEL staff member will come to your car and verify the identity of the person picking up. Please be prepared to show a valid photo ID. If someone listed on your emergency contact list is picking up, they will be asked to provide ID. If someone new is picking up, who is not on your contact list, please provide notice to your child's teacher or the Director, in writing and communicate to the person picking up that they will be expected to show ID. Please note that as much notice as possible for changes to pick up is preferred and will ensure that we are ready to release your child.

We will bring your child to you – **you do not need to leave your car and walk up to get your child from us.** We will not buckle your child into their car seat, you may exit the car to secure their seat. All children **MUST** be in an age-appropriate seat.

We know that unforeseen circumstances arise from time to time. If you are in a situation that prevents you from arriving on time for pick up, please call or text Bloom at 704.607.6928. However, if late pick-up becomes a regular occurrence, you will be charged after being given a warning. A \$20 fee will be assessed if you are late after being given a warning.

Sick Policies/Covid

All staff members at Bloom have received the full vaccination for Covid-19 and receive boosters as recommended by government guidelines. In addition, our toys and facilities are cleaned and sanitized daily, and hands are washed throughout the day.

We are a small community and trust that we will all take keeping one another safe very seriously. Please keep your child home if they have any of the following symptoms:

- Fever
- Persistent cough
- Shortness of breath
- Loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Vomiting/diarrhea
- Persistent green nasal drainage
- Confirmed or suspected Covid-19

We know that children get sick for a lot of reasons. Please be sure that if your child is sick, you keep them home so they don't share it with others! It is important to keep in mind that if a group setting is a new experience for your child, they will likely get sick more often than they have in the past. While certainly not ideal, it is quite normal!

If they have something highly contagious such as Strep Throat, Hand/Foot/Mouth disease, or lice please notify your teachers ASAP so that other parents can be on the look-out for symptoms. If we have more than one child out in the class with the same contagious illness, we will inform the rest of the class.

Your child should be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to school.

Medical Emergencies

At Bloom, our first priority is to keep your child safe. All teachers are trained in emergency responses to extreme weather, fire, and recognizing and responding to medical emergencies.

If a true medical emergency takes place, our first response will be to call 911. You will be notified ASAP by a staff member if a 911 call has been made on behalf of your child.

If your child has a life threatening allergy or other medical condition that requires medication to be kept on site, please communicate that need to the teacher and the Director. Please note that medications for life threatening medical situations are the only one that we will keep or administer to children. For example, anti-seizure medication, epi-pens, or diabetic care drugs. If your child needs medicine to be kept at Bloom, you will be asked to fill out an authorization form to leave

with the medicine. Over the counter medicines such as pain reliever will not be given while at school.

Special Needs

We welcome all children to learn and grow at Bloom. If your child has special needs, we believe that communication and information is the key to a successful experience. We ask that you sit down for an in person meeting with the teachers and Director before your child starts so that we can talk about how to best meet your child's needs. In addition, we welcome the chance to work alongside therapists that may be helping your child. If they want to conduct some of their sessions while your child is in school, we can accommodate that. We believe it provides a unique opportunity for the therapist to see your child in a school setting AND provides the teachers with the chance to gain valuable knowledge on how to better serve the child.

Please note that we are a small school with limited supports, resources, and space. While our goal is always to help children thrive in our program, if a child's needs are outside of our capacity we will work with parents to transition to another program with more specialized resources.

Do you have concerns about your child's development or progress? You are welcome and encouraged to talk to us about them! While we are not doctors or therapists, we do have a lot of early childhood experience and may be able to help identify areas that merit further attention. We also have a wealth of resources that we can steer your towards when it comes to developmental screenings or specific therapy evaluations.

Behavior

Young children are learning all sorts of things – including how to manage their emotions! Some behavior issues are going to happen and are completely age-appropriate. Our first response to negative behavior is redirection. If the behavior persists, there will be logical consequences. (i.e., if you throw a truck, you don't get to play with a truck!)

If our tried and true attempts are not successful after consistent application, we will contact parents to sit down and brainstorm some alternative approaches. If behavior escalates, or is aggressive toward a particular child, we will contact you to pick your child up for the day.

Unfortunately, biting is a way that children sometimes try to communicate and express feelings in our youngest class. We will do our best to identify triggers and prevent the biting from happening in the first place. However, if a child does bite, we will firmly remind them that we do not bite and will help them find other options for expressing their feelings. If a child is biting habitually (more than 3 times, breaking the skin in a period of one month) we will contact the parents for a conference.

If a child older than age three bites and breaks the skin, they will be asked to leave the program for the day. Regardless of age, if a bite occurs, the parents of the biter and the child who was bitten will be notified. If skin is broken, the area will be thoroughly washed and basic first aid will be provided as necessary.

Potty

All children enrolled in our Petals and Blooms classes are expected to be fully potty trained. We understand that occasional accidents happen, but the expectation is that your child can communicate when they need to go to the bathroom and that they can go with minimal assistance. If there is a developmental reason that your child is still working toward this milestone, please let us know!

In our Buds class, we are happy to help your child through the process and look forward to helping your little ones achieve this milestone! We are happy to work with you and mirror some of the things you do at home – such as filling in spots on a sticker chart, giving a small treat after a successful potty visit, etc. What we can't accommodate however, is taking children to the bathroom every 30 minutes or changing soiled clothes multiple times a day. This takes one person out of our ratios and negatively impacts the quality of our program while potentially compromising the safety of our children. Please know we have had great success in the past by following the guidelines below:

- Please take your child to the potty just before you leave your house for school.
- At snack time, approximately 10:15, we will take the potty trainers as a group to the bathroom.
- The next time we will make a group trip is during lunch around 12:10.
- If they communicate to us that they need to use the potty in between the designated times we will take them individually.
- If children are able to stay dry in their pull up for the full day over a two week period, and are **articulating that they need to use the potty**, we are ready for them to be sent to school in underwear!
- If two accidents occur in a day, we will ask you to have them wear pull-ups to school until they are able to meet the above criteria.

Communication & Involvement

We can't wait to tell you what we have been doing at school! Your teachers will communicate with you regularly via the class Bloomz app to share information on what we have been up to in the classroom. We will send home a folder each day that will contain your child's work. Please check and empty it daily before returning it to us.

Regular email updates will be sent from the Director regarding events and general school updates. You will also receive a monthly calendar with important information regarding happenings in your child's class (picture days, show and tell, etc.) in their folder.

We invite you to join the private Facebook page for Bloom Early Learning 2023-2024 as well. This will be a place where we share announcements and connect as a community. It will **only** be for family members of the Bloom community.

Please also join our Remind text alert system. This will be a way for us to send you quick text reminders about events or any news updates that may need to be communicated, such as weather related closings and delays.

To join, text **@eceed6** to **81010**

We will have opportunities for parent/family involvement throughout the year from helping prepare materials at home, to assisting with school events and activities. If you have a special skill or area of interest (i.e., you are a gardener or you have an interesting job or pet) let us know! We'd love to find a way for you to share your knowledge with our classes! Information regarding specific volunteer opportunities will be available at Parent Orientation.

What to pack

Please send your child to school each day with a backpack that is large enough to contain their belongings. Be sure to label **all** items – bags, coats, lunchbox, ice packs, etc.

We ask that you send a separate labeled snack with a refillable water cup and a lunch for your child each day. **NO nut products, please.** This includes peanut butter, trail mixes, almond butter and Nutella.

Please put an extra set of clothes in your child's bag that we can use in case of emergency (potty accidents, spills, wet slides, etc. can all necessitate a clothing change!) and be sure to change it out seasonally. If your child is in the twos class, the teachers will communicate with you directly about diapers.

Part of play-based learning involves getting messy! There will be paint, we will be outside, and we will play with messy sensory items. Please do not send your children to school wearing clothes that cannot get dirty.

School Calendar

Please refer to the 2023-2024 school calendar for a list of scheduled closings for holidays and teacher workdays. Additional information on events related to the school or your child's class will be shared via email and on a printed calendar that you will receive each month.

Developmental assessments will be done for our three-year-old, four-year-old, and five-year-old classes in January. Conferences will be held to review the assessments and to touch base about your child's progress. You will receive information regarding the date/time of conferences from your child's teachers.

Inclement Weather

Weather closings and delays will be decided based on the conditions of the roads and area in the south Charlotte and Waxhaw region. Any closings and delays will be decided with the safety of the staff, children and families in mind. Announcements will be made via our Bloomz app, the Facebook page as well as our Remind system.

Tuition and Fees

A \$50 registration fee is due at the time of registration. A one-time supply fee will be charged on August 1st. The fee is \$115 for our two-year-old and three-year old classes and \$135 for our four and five-year-old classes. .

Tuition will be charged on the 15th of the month preceding service. So tuition for the month of September will be charged on August 15, 2023. The last tuition payment will be April 15, 2024 and will cover the month of May.

If you need to make changes to your payment method, you can do so directly on the parent portal via the Jackrabbit site. The parent portal also allows you to review your payments and see how much tuition has been charged. [Bloom Early Learning Parent Portal \(jackrabbitclass.com\)](http://jackrabbitclass.com)

Cancellation

If for any reason your child is to discontinue enrollment a two week written notice is required. If tuition has already charged, a refund will be issued after the two weeks are taken into account.

Priority Registration for 2024-2025 School Year & 2024 Summer Camps

In late January, all currently enrolled students will be given priority registration for themselves and siblings for the next preschool year as well as summer camps. Information will be shared in January regarding the process.



*Thank you for being part of the Bloom Early Learning Community!
We can't wait to grow with you and your child!*