



Bethlehem Preschool, Inc.  
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# **Bethlehem Preschool Parent Handbook**

## **Welcome to BPS!**

The staff and directors of Bethlehem Preschool are pleased and excited that you have chosen to become part of the Bethlehem Preschool family. We are proud of our program and our ability to work with parents in meeting the needs of our families.

We recognize the need for teachers and families to work together positively and respectfully to help your child grow. Any questions and concerns that you have regarding your child's care should first be brought to his/her teacher's attention. The directors are available for discussions either by phone or in person and welcome your comments. We feel that individual meetings are the most effective way of negotiating difficulties and differences when they arise.

Information for parents on the Preschool's policies and programs is most often communicated on Brightwheel, our online platform for enrollment, communications, and online bill pay. We also communicate via e-mail and

informational notes placed in your child's mailbox. Please check your child's mailbox every day for these notes and read them carefully. Your comments and questions are always welcome. We ask parents to complete a survey every June to give us feedback and to let us know how we can improve the program.

The staff of Bethlehem Preschool is aware of the great responsibility that we assume by caring for your child, and we look forward to working closely with you. In order to best support your child and family, we hope that you will work closely with the staff, providing information about your child's health and development and responding promptly to our concerns about your child. We expect that you will follow our health exclusion guidelines, as they are in place to protect your child as well as others in the program. We recommend that you have back-up arrangements for your child's care in the event that he/she is ill.

Again, we thank you for choosing Bethlehem Preschool, and we look forward to helping your child grow.

### **Our Program Philosophy**

Bethlehem Preschool, Inc. is a not-for-profit, early childhood education center established in 1975. Our goal is to provide the best possible environment for the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of each child. We strive to have staff, parents, and administration work collectively for the benefit of each family.

Our program is based on the belief that children will grow and develop to their potential in an environment that is caring, nurturing, child-centered and developmentally appropriate. The Preschool is divided into six classes to help achieve the goal of individual development of each child according to his or her needs and abilities. The program for each group includes age-appropriate learning activities such as free expression art activities, creative music, dance and

movement, cooperative and educational games, language arts, hands-on math, children's literature, dramatic play, and cooking.

Learning experiences are planned to focus around themes, or study units. Experiences are non-bias, related to the children's daily lives and include all cultures. Children, parents and community members are encouraged to share their family traditions, cultural heritage and other areas of interest with the class. We strive to give children the opportunity to discover and explore new things about themselves as well as others.

Each child develops at his/her own rate, and our teachers are trained to use observation, their knowledge of child development and a formal assessment tool to identify the developmental level of each child. Each family will be given at least three formal opportunities throughout the year to meet with classroom teachers to discuss their child's development. Developmental screenings, assessments and portfolios will be used to guide these discussions.

Although the program is set up to help each child achieve his/her potential, the staff may feel that a particular child has needs that we cannot meet. In that case, we bring our concern to the parents and ask that they seek outside evaluation and, if appropriate, intervention to help the child. The staff and directors are very familiar with this process and are eager to help in any way necessary. The Preschool staff make modifications to the classroom environment and curriculum to help children with Individual and Family Service Plans (IFSP) or Individual Educational Plans (IEP). Staff works closely with itinerant therapists and families to provide the best possible environment for the individual child. There may be times when developmental issues cannot be adequately addressed at Preschool, so other child care arrangements may be necessary to best help the child.

## **Transitions**

Bethlehem Preschool recognizes the need for children and families to feel comfortable with new child care arrangements. The Preschool encourages families to spend time in the classroom before the child's starting date. You are welcome to spend as much time as needed to make you and your child comfortable. Information on the child's day (class schedule, routines, procedures and policies) will be distributed in a welcome letter for your class. Early in the year you will be encouraged to bring in family photos for classroom displays. Resources on separation and attachment problems are available in the parent resource area.

It is Preschool policy to minimize the number of transitions, and to transition groups of children together. Transitions within the Preschool usually occur at the end of June and/or September. We maintain an approximately eight month age span in our rooms (excluding the Infant room.) Children that are a part of our program until kindergarten age will transition through all of our rooms; some groups of children will be part of a classroom for only the summer months before moving to the next older room.

Children are prepared for the transitions by class discussions, opportunities to visit the next classroom, and opportunities to interact with the teachers from the next room. School wide "drop-off and pick-up days" are scheduled each August for families to meet the new classroom teachers and for the children to experience their new classroom prior to the September transition. Transitions are discussed during parent-teacher conferences.

Infants and toddlers (6 weeks -24 months) will only transition once in the child's first two years. The same regular and part-time staff are scheduled each day in the infant and toddler rooms so the children will have the opportunity to bond with the fewest number of adults. Infants prepare for their transition by visiting the toddler

room several weeks before the start date; infant teachers accompany the child to the toddler room and stay with the child for several visits. Visits are scheduled as needed to meet the comfort level of the infant. The infants also transition from napping in cribs to napping on cots, with parental permission, approximately 4 weeks before the move to the next room.

When families leave the Preschool, either to attend another child care arrangement or to attend kindergarten, we support the transition by completing any enrollment papers needed for the new placement and forwarding any records indicated by the family. When the transition is to kindergarten, the Preschool notifies current families about local school district kindergarten registration and screening processes in the monthly newsletter and on the website. Two pre-kindergarten parent workshops are also held each year.

### **Discipline Policy**

The New York State Office of Children and Family Services (NYS OCFS) requires that child care centers establish written disciplinary guidelines. Bethlehem Preschool's discipline policy has been established to help children develop self-control and learn acceptable forms of social behavior. Appropriate arrangement of the environment, supervision, clear, consistent and fair limits for classroom behavior and redirection are a few of the methods used to help children develop self-control. Copies of the complete discipline policy are available at the front desk.

### **Health & Medication Administration**

The spread of illness is a concern to both the staff and parents in any child care setting. In order to help minimize the spread of illness, we ask you to follow our

hand washing procedure at drop off. When you and your child arrive for the day, please go directly to the sink and wash your child's hands. This procedure can be worked into your morning drop off routine. It is a great way to start the day if your child usually begins his/her day at the morning snack table.

Despite our best efforts for "germ control," illnesses will occur. The staff will quickly become familiar with your child's needs and personality and will readily know when your child is not acting like his/her normal self. The child may still be well enough to attend Preschool, but there will be occasions when the child requires more care than the staff can provide, even if the child is not diagnosed with a particular illness. We expect parents to make back-up arrangements for your child's care in the event that he/she is ill or needs to be picked up during the day. We ask that you respond promptly to requests for symptoms to be cleared by a physician and that you respect the exclusionary guidelines below. If you are not able to abide by these guidelines, or do not trust our judgment when excluding children based on illness, you may need to investigate other child care arrangements.

Each child entering Bethlehem Preschool must provide the Preschool with a written statement signed by a health care provider stating that the child is able to participate in child day care, currently appears to be free from contagious or communicable diseases and is receiving health care, including appropriate health examinations. This statement may be documented on the **Health Examination Form (Form DSS 4433)** provided by the Office of Children and Family Services. After the initial entrance examination, a yearly check-up is required for continued enrollment.

Evidence of age-appropriate immunization must be provided at the time of enrollment. This must include evidence of immunization against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, poliomyelitis, measles, mumps, rubella, Haemophilus influenza type b (Hib), varicella, hepatitis B,

pneumococcus and any other inoculations required by regulation at the time of enrollment. The only exception to these immunizations is when the child's health does not permit him/her to maintain the required schedule of inoculations because of allergic reactions or medical indication. In the event of a health related exemption, the health care provider must sign an exemption form for that particular immunization.

Each child is evaluated daily for signs of illness, injury, maltreatment, or abuse. This health check is conducted when the child first arrives in the program and again whenever their behavior or appearance warrants another evaluation. The health check includes, but is not limited to a temperature check, signs of illness or complaints of not feeling well; the child's behavior and activity level; and skin rashes, itchy skin and itchy scalp. All staff members are trained to observe the children for these and other signs that a child is not well through health care seminars, consultation with the health consultant and first aid / CPR courses. The teachers will bring the child to the administrator in charge who will determine whether the child may remain in care.

In order to protect our children and staff from the spread of all illnesses, we require anyone entering the building (children, family members, staff) to immediately wash their hands.

During times of recognized community illnesses and, as directed by our governing bodies, it may be necessary to wear face masks/coverings and to take children's temperatures at drop off. Please respect these simple procedures to minimize the spread of illnesses.

The following are guidelines for the exclusion of ill children from Preschool attendance. These guidelines are subject to change as we base them on CDC and NYS OCFS guidelines. If there are changes to our health policy parents will be informed. Please remember that these guidelines

are used for the protection of all children and staff in the program, including your child. If you are not able to abide by these guidelines, or you do not trust our judgement when excluding children based on illness, you may need to investigate other child care arrangements.

Children at Preschool will be excluded from the program or will need to be picked up within 1 hour after onset if at the program for the following:

- Any illness, or the child's reaction to it requiring more care than the staff can provide, or an illness that compromises the health and safety of others.
- Fever: a measured temporal artery (forehead) temperature of at least 100.4 °F or axillary (underarm) of 99°F. The child must be fever free without use of medication for 24 hours before returning to Preschool. Your child's temperature may be taken at drop off.
- Persistent diarrhea or liquid stool (two or more bouts in the past 24 hours). The child must be free from diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to Preschool.
- Any vomiting accompanied by other signs of illness or dehydration, or vomiting two or more times in the past 24 hours. The child must be free from vomiting for 24 hours before returning to Preschool.
- Undiagnosed rashes.

Children at Preschool will also be excluded until a medical evaluation allows inclusion for the following:

1. lethargy
2. uncontrolled coughing
3. persistent abdominal pain
4. discolored urine
5. refusal to eat or drink
6. irritability
7. persistent crying
8. difficulty breathing



9. wheezing
10. green nasal discharge for more than 10 days
11. eye discharge or extreme redness

If a child is prescribed an antibiotic for a contagious disease or infection, including, but not limited to, conjunctivitis or strep throat, the child must remain out of Preschool for 24 hours after the first dose of medication.

Parents must inform a director of the Preschool if their child or a family member is exposed to, suspected of having, has been tested for, or has been diagnosed with COVID19 or other pandemic illnesses, or if the child or family member has been placed in a quarantine situation. Your family's identity will remain confidential, and any information will be used to formulate a pandemic action plan for the center. **FAILURE TO REPORT A PANDEMIC ILLNESS, THE EXPOSURE TO OR A QUARANTINE BY ANY FAMILY MEMBER MAY RESULT IN IMMEDIATE TERMINATION FROM THE PROGRAM AND LOSS OF YOUR SECURITY DEPOSIT.**

Parents should inform the Preschool if their child is exposed to a contagious disease or infection. Some of these include conjunctivitis, chicken pox, bronchitis, fifth disease, Cocksackie virus, lice, scabies, measles, mumps, and impetigo. This will allow us to look for specific symptoms while your child is in our care. Childhood illnesses are of concern to us all. Please remember that the above guidelines are used for the protection of all the children and staff in the program, including your child. It is important to keep him/her at home until the child recovers or has been cleared for return by his/her physician.

Outdoor play is an important part of the day. A child should be well enough to go outdoors before he or she returns to school.

The Bethlehem Preschool staff will not administer medication to a child, prescription or over-the-counter orally-administered medication, without a written order from the child's physician and written permission from the parent. Written consent must be documented on the **OCFS "Written Medication Consent Form"** provided by the Preschool. This is the only form that Bethlehem Preschool will accept as a written order. This form must be completely filled in by the physician and parent; Bethlehem Preschool will not administer prescription or orally-administered over-the-counter medication to the child if this form is incomplete. A separate form must be completed for each medication and each time the same medication is prescribed; the form must be updated every 6 months. It is the parent's responsibility to accurately complete this form. Preschool will not accept medication consent from a physician or parent over the phone.

Only the parent's signature on the **"Written Consent Form"** is required for over-the-counter topical ointments. One form for each over-the-counter topical ointment is required.

According to NYS OCFS regulations, medications may be administered in a child care setting only by staff members who are MAT certified (Medication Administration Training certified.) Bethlehem Preschool plans to have MAT certified staff available to administer medication from 9:00 AM until 5:00 PM, Monday thru Friday. Please note this schedule so you can plan to have medications given during these hours. Outside of these hours or under circumstances beyond our control when a MAT certified person is not on premises, you will be notified that no one is available to administer the medication. You will be responsible for the administration of the medication in these situations. In a life-threatening situation, emergency personnel (911) will be called to administer life-saving medications if no MAT staff are available.

All medication must be in its original container and labeled with the child's name, medication name and dosage information (amount, time to administer), expiration date and, for prescription medication, the prescriber's name and license number. Package inserts describing possible side effects must be supplied by you if the prescriber has indicated this on Question #8A and/or #10A of the "Written Medication Consent Form". If medication has expired or is left over, it will be returned to you. If you do not respond to the request to remove the medication, it will be properly disposed of. Medication is stored in a locked cabinet in the kitchen, or for medication that requires refrigeration, in a marked box in the milk cooler. Be sure to notify your child's teacher of required medicines.

Children with special health care needs such as asthma, diabetes, or any other chronic illness or condition lasting more than 12 months must have an individual health care plan on file at Bethlehem Preschool. The plan must be completed on the form "Individual Health Care Plan for a Child with Special Health Care Needs," provided by NYS OCFS. Bethlehem Preschool will collaborate with you and your child's physician to write the plan describing the child's health care needs. The plan will include the identified triggers, signs and symptoms of the illness or condition, the actions to be taken in the event of an emergency and any additional training for caregivers that is needed to care for the child. Parents of children with special health care needs should be aware of the hours that MAT trained staff will be available to give out medication, and if MAT staff are not available, emergency personnel (911) will be called to administer life saving medications.

As a child care provider, Preschool is a mandated reporter of child abuse and maltreatment. Mandated reporters are those individuals who must report, or cause a report to be made, whenever they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child coming before them, in their professional or official capacity, is abused or maltreated.

Bethlehem Preschool follows the procedures and guidelines provided by the Departments of Children and Family Services and Child Protective Services.

### **Parent/Teacher Communication**

Bethlehem Preschool recognizes the importance of involving families in a successful early education program. We recognize the need for teachers and families to work together positively and respectfully to help children grow.

Teachers are available to speak to you on a daily basis, at pick-up or drop-off, anytime by telephone, or through Brightwheel messaging. Parents of infants will receive daily updates on Brightwheel. Parents of toddlers and preschoolers are asked to refer to the daily communication board located near the door of every classroom. This will contain information on daily classroom activities, meals, and special notes such as upcoming field trips or parent conferences.

Conferences to discuss children's learning and development may be scheduled with teachers or directors at any time of the year. Bethlehem Preschool offers formal conferences at least three times per year. Conferences are scheduled at times that are convenient for the families. Questions, comments and concerns are always welcomed by the teachers and directors.

### **Parent Involvement**

We offer parents several different avenues to be directly involved in their child's education program:

- Parents are always welcome in the classroom, at any time of the day.
- Parents can volunteer to drive and chaperone on field trips.
- Parents can volunteer time to share an area of knowledge or interest, such as career, family

tradition, travels, etc.

- Parents can send in books, CD's, items of interest or props relating to the class' theme.
- Parents can make donations of used computer paper, gently used toys, dress-up clothes and props for dramatic play.
- Parents can participate in fundraisers.

### **Parent Education**

Parenting is a very challenging and demanding job.

Parents may seek helpful hints from BPS in several different ways:

- Borrowing resources from our parent library. We have information on child development, child health insurance, child care tax credits and child care financial assistance.
- Attending parent seminars.
- Obtaining professional referrals from the directors.
- Speaking with our experienced staff and directors about any questions or concerns.
- Participate in parent /teacher conferences.

### **Physical Well-being & Health**

Bethlehem Preschool is committed to promoting practices that will maintain physical well-being of the children in our program. We believe that good health stems from three areas in our program: Healthy eating; physical activity; and parent involvement.

Bethlehem Preschool participates in the **Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)**. The meals we serve (breakfast, lunch and PM snack) meet the requirements of the CACFP Program. Specific requirements of the Program are available upon request. We are committed to serving meals prepared in our kitchen from fresh ingredients, including fresh fruits and vegetables, low-fat meats and dairy, and whole grain products. When developmentally

appropriate, children are served family style, and are encouraged to try all parts of a meal. Serving sizes are chosen by the children, but monitored by the teachers.

Bethlehem Preschool discourages families from bringing in food from home, especially for morning breakfast. Always check with your child's teacher before bringing in a food to share with the class. We encourage families celebrating birthdays or other occasions to choose healthy options when sharing in the classroom. A list of healthy treats is available to parents for celebration ideas.

Some children with severe allergies may provide their own meals, but most children with specific food preferences or needs (vegan, non-pork products, lactose intolerance, peanut allergy etc.) can be accommodated from our own kitchen. A note from your child's physician may be necessary if your child is not able to eat a particular food. We are happy to work directly with families to resolve any food issues. Please speak to a director if you have any questions regarding our food policy or your child's particular dietary needs.

Bethlehem Preschool is committed to promoting physical activity in all of our classes. Infants are given daily opportunities to move freely to explore the indoor and outdoor environments, including tummy time. Toddlers and Preschoolers are given opportunities for structured and unstructured physical activity throughout the day. We encourage outdoor play twice per day (morning and afternoon) for all classes, year round. When outdoor activities are not available due to weather constraints, indoor gross motor activities are planned and substituted.

As a part of our physical activity policy, we limit the use of television/video time for children ages 2 to 5 to no more than 30 minutes once a week of high quality educational or movement-based commercial-free programming. We have a no tv/video policy for children under 2 years of age, and tv/videos are never used during nap or meal time. In addition, computer use for Pre-K 3/4s

and Pre-K 4s is limited to 10 minutes per day, and is a child's choice of whether to participate in the activity.

## **Naptime Policy**

At Bethlehem Preschool we strive to have a pleasant, relaxing naptime that is responsive to individual and group needs. Naptime begins after the group's lunch time, sometime between 12:15 and 1:00.

All children are expected to rest quietly on their cot/mat at the beginning of nap-time. The infants nap in a crib, toddlers and 2's on cots, and 3's, 3/4's, and 4's nap on mats. During this time, teachers sit near the children and rub their backs to relax the children and create a soothing atmosphere for resting. Most children fall asleep within the first half hour. Others may take a bit longer, and we are patient with them. We have found over the years that most children need a nap. Our afternoons are successful if they get one!

As the children enter the Pre-K rooms, a few grow out of their need for a nap. Our policy is that all children begin naptime on their cots/mats. If children are unable to nap, they are offered a book to look at on their mat. Later in the nap period, these children are allowed to get up and sit at a table for quiet play. Please note, the room lights will remain off until the end of nap time.

## **Bethlehem Preschool Emergency Plans**

Bethlehem Preschool will hold semi-annual shelter-in-place drills, as required by NYS OCFS. You will be made aware of this drill in advance. We also hold monthly evacuation (fire) drills.

In the event that our program is directed by emergency services to move to another location, you will be notified on Brightwheel after we arrive at the new location,

the children are safely inside, and are properly accounted for. We will also place a written notice on our front door unless an immediate threat precludes us from doing so.

Our evacuation plan calls for us to walk to our relocation site in classroom groupings. Non-walkers will be carried in the event that baby strollers and wagons are not accessible. If you arrive during the actual relocation of the children, we ask that you assist us in walking the classes to the new site. We will not release any children until we have arrived at the relocation site and all children have been accounted for. Furthermore, we will only release your child to persons who have permission to pick up your child, as per our usual pick-up procedures.

Both our primary and our secondary relocation sites are churches which have several rooms, water, toilet facilities, and ample parking. We will travel with our emergency “go” bag with extra diapers, our cell phones and parent emergency contact information.

**Primary relocation site:**

Kings Church Chapel  
440 Rt. 9W  
Glenmont, NY 12077

**Secondary relocation site:**

Glenmont Community Church  
1 Chapel Lane  
Glenmont, NY 12077

### **Unplanned Center Closures or Crisis**

On occasion, we may need to close or make changes to our program due to circumstances beyond our control and without much warning. During these situations, we must strive to ensure the financial sustainability of our center, as well as work as creatively as possible to provide care and support to our families and staff. Actions taken during these unusual times may include:

- Temporary reduction of program hours: hours will be determined based upon staff availability and parent need.



- Temporary change to tuition, either by extending vacation/sick credits or eliminating tuition on an individual family basis.
- Enhanced health screenings and temperature checks upon arrival.
- Stricter child exclusions for signs of illness.
- Limitation of family members in the building.
- Elimination of non-essential visitors into our building.
- Food and other items from home may not be permitted without director approval.
- Family style dining may be temporarily discontinued. Food will be plated for each child individually by the teacher. There will be extra food available if the children want extra portions.
- We will follow the guidelines for health emergencies from our governing bodies, including but not limited to NYS OCFS, Albany County DOH and US CDC.
- We will communicate with families via Brightwheel, email, and phone calls.
- New child/staff ratios and groupings may be necessary to follow health guidelines and/or to maintain financial sustainability for the center. Program changes will be communicated to families as soon possible.

## **Celebrations**

Bethlehem Preschool is a non-sectarian, non-discriminatory early education center. Therefore, we make an effort to provide children with a sample of holidays from many cultures. Consequently, we will not stress a particular religion or culture. Each class discusses several themes throughout the year, which may include specific "holiday" celebrations that are tailored to the age-appropriate level of understanding and ability of each class. Children, parents and community members have the opportunity to share their traditions and cultural heritage with the class through

stories, dance, cooking and other items of interest. Parents are always welcome to join us during a holiday party.

We recognize that children get very excited about many of the holidays. We share in their enthusiasm and thank you for your support. Emphasizing the importance of a child-centered classroom, all food, cards, masks and costumes are made in school rather than brought from home. Please do not send:

- Valentine cards
- Halloween masks or costumes

### **Children's Supplies**

1. Infants need a sturdy cloth bag to transport their possessions each day. Please provide two or more changes of clothing, a blanket for nap time and a pacifier, if used. You will also need to bring diaper changing materials, such as baby wipes, cream or powder. All items must be labeled and left in a common storage area set aside in the room.

2. Toddlers need to leave a complete change of clothing, a blanket for nap time and any favorite sleep toy or pacifier at school. If your toddler is not toilet trained, diaper changing materials, such as baby wipes and cream, need to be brought from home.

3. Older children need:

a. A complete change of clothing, labeled and stored in a shoe box. Check your child's clothing box regularly to assure that it is complete and seasonally correct.

b. A small blanket for rest time. All children are required to rest each day. The length of time varies with the age and needs of the individual child as well as the group. Pillows are not permitted due to our limited storage space. Blankets are sent home for washing every Friday afternoon.

c. Toys and other personal belongings must be left at home.

Please encourage your child to wear play clothing.

Sneakers are a must. Sandals or dress shoes are dangerous on the playground and should not be worn at Preschool. Warm clothing is needed for outdoor play in the winter.

All items brought to Preschool must be labeled in an indelible marker with your child's name.

## **Calendar**

The child care center is open from 7:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, 52 weeks per year, with the exception of certain holidays or scheduled staff training days. A school calendar showing days we are closed is available.

Every effort is made to keep the early childhood education center open. Should we be forced to close due to severe winter weather or another emergency, the closing will be announced on local radio and television stations as well as through Brightwheel.

## **Attendance**

Children must be signed in when they arrive at Preschool and signed out when they leave. Parents are able to sign their child in/out on their phones using the Brightwheel app, or using a school tablet and their own personal code assigned when they set up their Brightwheel accounts.

No child will be allowed to leave the Preschool with someone other than a parent or guardian unless the person has the written consent of the parent or guardian and shows a photo ID when he/she picks up the child.

Due to staffing needs, a child may attend school only on his/her assigned days. If you wish to add a day, please consult one of the directors. There is an additional charge if a child attends on a day other than his/her assigned ones. Unused time may not be applied to another day.

## **Summer**

Because Bethlehem Preschool operates on a year- round basis, summer programs are developed each year to provide children with new learning experiences. Summer fun consists of exciting themes, picnics, water play, special events and field trips (older classes only.) Due to the many people waiting for child care openings, it is not possible to guarantee fall placement for a child whose parents wish to keep him/her home for the summer.

## **Tuition & Fees**

A contract will be electronically signed through Brightwheel when your child is enrolled, stating the registration fee, the tuition deposit and the weekly tuition fee. All registration fees and tuition deposits are non-refundable. The tuition deposit is applicable to your child's last week's attendance when proper withdrawal notice is given. The information on your current contract supersedes any previous contract(s).

Tuition is due on Thursday each week. Tuition is charged for holidays that the center is closed. The Preschool reserves the right to charge tuition in the event of an emergency school closure. A calendar, with the dates of holidays indicated, is available at the beginning of each school year.

Children enrolled in both full and part-time programs pay full tuition the first two days of any absence. When a child is absent for more than two consecutive days, a holding fee is required to maintain his or her enrollment. This policy may be applied to absences for a maximum of two consecutive weeks per absence. Only two (2) weeks of vacation (8 days of the holding fee) is allowed during our summer program.

Unpaid accounts will be charged a \$10 late fee each Friday. The promiser hereby waives demand notice of presentation. In the event it is necessary to refer this matter to an attorney for collection, it is mutually agreed that the prevailing party shall be entitled to reasonable attorney's fees and that the venue of any action shall be Albany County, NY.

A fee is charged for non-negotiable checks returned by the

bank.

Due to the long hours the Preschool is open, it is imperative that you pick up your child and leave the building by 5:30 p.m. Bethlehem Preschool will charge an additional fee for every 10 minutes of care given after closing time. Overtime charges start promptly at 5:30 p.m. In the event of an unavoidable emergency, please inform the school of the situation at the earliest possible time.

(Please see tuition rate sheet for all Tuition and Fees).

### **Withdrawal Procedures**

If a child will be withdrawn from the Preschool, we ask that you notify us in writing as soon as possible. Your contract requires a minimum of four weeks written notice. Four weeks tuition is due if the required notice is not given. Contracts are on a year-round, not school year, basis.

### **History of Bethlehem Preschool**

Bethlehem Preschool, Inc. was established in 1975 by Eleanor Howell and Patricia Swanson. Bethlehem Preschool has been located in the Bethlehem Center School Building since 1976. The Preschool has grown and changed with the needs of the community, adding care for infants in 1982 as well as expansion of our pre-kindergarten programs. Mrs. Swanson retired in June of 1992, and Mrs. Howell retired in January of 1995.

Mary Morrill and Catherine Halayko served as Co-Directors from 1992 to June of 2021. During this time, the school developed a summer camp for school-aged children, was nationally accredited, and achieved a five-star rating by the QualityStarsNY program. Both former Co-Directors now serve as Co-Executive Directors. Mrs. Morrill currently serves as Kitchen Manager, and Mrs. Halayko continues her duties as Business Manager.

Tara Rinckey was appointed Director in June 2021.

## **A Brief Profile of the Director**

Tara Rinckey received her Masters of Science Degree in Family Studies and Human Services, and her Early Childhood Education Bachelor's Degree from Kansas State University. Tara is certified in Early Childhood Education from the Kansas State Department of Education. Previously Tara worked at several early childhood programs in Kansas and Virginia. Tara joined Bethlehem Preschool in 2005 as head teacher in the Pre-K 4s room. In 2019 she changed roles to become the curriculum director, and in 2021 was promoted to Director at Bethlehem Preschool.

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