

Parent Handbook

BETHEL INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL

1220 BETHEL ROAD
COLUMBUS, OHIO 43220

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Mission Statement

Bethel International Christian Preschool (a non-profit organization and outreach program of Bethel International United Methodist Church) provides a preschool program which supports the social and emotional development of children through play in the context of community relationships between teachers, children and families.

Through play, and with the support of adults with a sound knowledge of child development, we will build a community that:

1. Believes each individual (child, family member, and colleague) has inherent dignity and worth, and is unique.
2. View and respect each child as a whole person, including their social, emotional, physical, cognitive and language development.
3. Nurture discovery of the world through child-led engagement with the classrooms, outdoor spaces, and each other.
4. Support children in setting healthy boundaries and in recognizing and expressing emotions in a healthy manner.
5. Encourage parents and caregivers in the role of their children's first and most important teachers as well as their advocates.
6. Honoring families and the diverse backgrounds, beliefs, and traditions they bring to the community.

About Bethel Christian Preschool

Bethel International Christian Preschool (BICP) is licensed by the State of Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) and is inspected annually as required by ODJFS. The license to operate is posted inside the director's office, Room 13. The licensing laws and rules governing child care and the most current report of this center are available for review at the facility upon request.

Many of our preschool staff have years of experience working with groups of young children as well as degrees in the field of Early Childhood Education. Teachers are under the supervision of the Director. Any staff concerns can be taken to the Director first, then the Senior Pastor. Teachers participate in In-Service training throughout the year, which includes certification in first aid, infant/child CPR, recognition of communicable disease, and knowledge of the signs of child abuse and neglect.

School Hours

BICP operates the Tuesday after Labor Day in September through the second Thursday in May, Monday through Thursday. Hours are from 9-12noon for our morning classes and from 12:30-3:30 for our afternoon classes. Our school calendar is available on our website, or by request. It is also posted on the community bulletin board near the entrance. Scheduled closings include, Wed-Fri of Thanksgiving in November, 2 week winter break in December, Martin Luther King Day, President's Day, and a one week spring break in March or April. **Please see Pandemic Plan about school closures.**

LUNCH BUNCH is open and available to all families who might need an extra half hour of child care at our center, or for those families choosing morning and afternoon preschool. Lunch Bunch runs 12:00-12:30, and can be added through Brightwheel for \$40/month.

Classroom Ratios

3 Year Old Class- 3 years old by September 30th—up to 8 students: 1 teacher
4 Year Old Class- 4 years old by September 30th – up to 12 students: 1 teacher
Mixed Age, 3s and 4s-- up to 10 students: 1 teacher

Sample Daily Schedules:

3 Year Old Class

9:00—Arrival
9:30—Circle Time
9:45—Courtyard Play
10:30—Snack
10:50—Classroom Play
11:30—Outside or large muscle space
12:00—Dismissal

4 Year Old Class

9:15—Arrival and play
10:45—Clean up
11:00—Circle
11:15—Bathroom break
11:20—Snack
11:30—Large muscle play inside or out
12:15—Dismissal

Snacks

We ask that families provide a daily snack for their child that does not need to be refrigerated. Snacks should be packed in a lunch box or bag labeled with your child's name. We ask that snacks be nutritious, simple, and easy to clean up. If a child does not have their own water bottler, BICP will provide water. We encourage families to pack snacks that reflect their cultural and dietary needs. At this time, our school is **PEANUT FREE**. If we have a child with a severe nut allergy, BICP reserves the right to make our center **NUT FREE**. Snack ideas include but are not limited to:

- Fruit (already cut up)
- Goldfish crackers
- Small bagel and cream cheese
- Graham crackers
- Cereal
- Fruit bars
- Muffins

Snack time is a social time to sit and eat as a community. If your child brings food home, know they are socializing and enjoying their time talking together. Some of our best conversations happen when we are sharing a meal! We usually have around 15 minutes planned for snack. If you think your child might be hungry at pick up, it might be a good idea to carry an extra snack with you. We also use snack time to teach children to wash hands before and after they eat, as well as when they come inside from playing outside. Good hygiene rules from ODJFS mandate that no food can be eaten on bare tables even when they have been washed and disinfected. Children are asked to use a paper towel to use as a placemat to the snack table to sit down to eat. Please avoid sending foods that represent a choking hazard for children including: hot dogs, raw carrot rounds, whole grapes (you can cut them in half), hard pretzel nuggets and large pretzel sticks.

Birthdays

You are welcome to bring in any small special treats, stickers, etc. to help celebrate your child's birthday. Please check with your child's teacher to address any dietary needs specific to that classroom. We will do our best to make sure their day is very special. Parents, please remember that if birthday invitations are passed out at school, they need to be for all the children in the class. Invitations sent to special friends in the room should be mailed.

Drop Off and Pick Up

All BICP students must be accompanied by their parent or guardian. The main school doors located under the portico are opened daily at 9:00 am. Your child's teacher or the center director will help walk children into their classes and any special instructions or notes may be given at that time. Children may then unpack and settle into the classroom after washing hands.

Staff will only release children to authorized persons on the release form completed by the parents. Please provide a written note when another person is picking up your child. Staff will check photo ID of anyone they do not recognize. Your child's safety is our priority! Please check with your child's teacher to find out where to pick up your child.

Please call or e-mail the director or your child's teacher to let us know if your child will be absent. Please provide a reason so we can track illness if necessary.

Release of a child from the school to anyone other than the custodial parent or guardian will be permitted only if the parent or legal guardian has completed a Permission to Pick Up Form listing the names of those so authorized or, in an emergency, by calling the school before pick-up time. This includes grandparents, babysitters, carpools, etc. If no one arrives to pick up a child, we will attempt to reach the parent by phone. If the parent or another authorized transporting adult cannot be reached, the office will call the emergency numbers provided on the Child Enrollment and Health Information

form. If no emergency person can be reached after one hour, we will call Columbus Police and Franklin County Children's Services to determine what to do next.

Parent Engagement Opportunities

Classroom Visitation. Parents are encouraged to visit preschool as often as they wish. Any custodial parent, custodian, or guardian of a child enrolled in this school shall be permitted unlimited access to the school during hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided, or evaluating the premises. We encourage use of the one-way windows outside of each classroom. If you wish to drop in at any time during your child's class, please notify the office that you are here.

Parent-Teacher Conferences. These conferences are scheduled by teachers in the spring each year, although parents are free to contact any of the teachers at any time for a conference. Fall conferences are offered, but optional. Discussing small issues when first detected can often prevent larger issues later. Teachers use daily observations, questions, and conversations with parents to complete informal assessments for each child in preparation for conferences.

Parent Education Nights. Open to all current families. Scheduled throughout the school year, typically on the second Tuesday of the month from 7-8:00PM. Topics related to child development are presented by Nationwide Children's partners or other experts in an informal discussion format. **Parent Education nights will be held virtually this year.**

Forms and Policies

FORMS REQUIRED FOR EACH CHILD The following forms mandated by ODJFS and our center are kept in children's files in the BICP office:

1. Child's Medical Statement (ODJFS form 1305), yearly physical exam listed on form must not be more than 395 days (13 months) ago. Form must be signed by the child's physician or nurse practitioner. A record of immunizations should be attached to the medical statement, or a statement from the physician, PA, APRN or CNP indicating that that immunization is medically contraindicated for the child or not medically appropriate for the child's age.
2. Child's Enrollment and Health Information for Child Care Centers and Type A Homes (ODJFS Form 1234) signed by a parent and by a school representative.
3. BICP's Permission for Parent Roster and Photography Form
4. BICP's Permission to Pick up Form
5. (Optional, but encouraged) About My Child Form

School Fees

BICP fees are reviewed annually and communicated to our families. Current fees are as follows. For further information, please see the [Tuition Agreement](#).

Preschool

- \$285 month
- Non-refundable supply fee: \$75
- Non-refundable registration fee: \$60

Lunch Bunch

Single sticker, \$4
Monthly fee, can be used anytime, \$40/child

Fee Payments:

BICP tuition is based on a child's yearly commitment to one full year. Tuition may be paid yearly, by semester, or monthly. Our monthly tuition payment plan has 9 payments due by the 10th of the month beginning September 10th, with the final payment due April 10th. When a deposit is made, it becomes the tuition for the following May. BICP will send tax statements every January to be used by parents claiming child care expenses on their taxes. Our Tax ID number is available on request.

Late Payment Fee/ Returned Check Fee:

Tuition not received by the 15th of the month may be assessed a \$10 late fee each month tuition is not paid. A fee of \$25 will be charged for any checks returned for insufficient funds per each occurrence.

Delinquent Payments:

Delinquent payment without satisfactory arrangements with the Director will be basis for dismissal from the school.

Making Payments:

Our center will be using the online platform and app Brightwheel to process payments. Brightwheel will allow you to: receive itemized statements with all of your charges, access year-end tax reports, pay your bill directly from the app, be able to enroll in autopay for convenience, have flexibility to submit partial payments and pay ahead view your account balance and history at any time. You can link your ACH/Checking account or a Visa/Debit card to withdrawal payments. You will receive a personal invitation to join Brightwheel before the start of school. If paying by check, please make check payments to the order of *Bethel International United Methodist Church (BIUMC)*. If paying with cash, exact cash amount would be appreciated. Payments may be dropped off to the preschool director or mailed to:

Bethel International Christian Preschool
1220 Bethel Road
Columbus, OH 43220

Tuition Assistance:

BICP has a small scholarship fund. If you believe your family would benefit from monthly support, please contact the director. Our fundraising events help add to this scholarship fund. As a star-rated center, BICP also accepts PFCC (Publicly Funded Preschool Dollars). If you believe you could be the recipient of such help, please visit [here](#).

*BICP rates are based on an annual budget and charged on a monthly basis September through April. If school is closed due to bad weather, no heat, no water, other reasons that present an unsafe environment for the students and staff, school vacation days or parent initiated absences or vacations, there will be no refunds of fees or any kind. **See Pandemic Plan.**

Withdrawing a Student

BICP reserves the right to ask you to withdraw your child from the program if:

- The policies laid out in this Parent Handbook are continually disregarded by the family.
- **In the Event of Non-Payment:** If a family fails to stay current with tuition payments, the BICP director will notify parents of the date when, if tuition is not paid, their child(ren) will not be able

to continue attending BICP. If this occurs, we will seek a new student to fill the child's space in the class. Any exceptions or extenuating circumstances to this policy must be presented to and approved by the director and leadership at Bethel International United Methodist Church.

In the event that a child is being withdrawn for any reason, the parent or guardian must communicate this withdrawal to the director with a minimum of 30 days written notice. Please refer to the [tuition agreement](#) for the disenrollment procedure.

Discipline and Behavior Management

The staff at BICP are committed to interacting with each child in a kind, understanding, and consistent way. We will encourage each child to control their own body, cooperate with others, and solve problems by using their words. Our aim is to have each child grow in his/her relationship with others, and to learn self-regulation and keep themselves and others safe.

The teachers and staff at BICP will set clear limits and expectations for all children while modeling desired behaviors. Positive behaviors will be encouraged and reinforced by all BICP teachers and staff members. Mistakes will be dealt with in a positive way that will enable the child to learn and move towards mastery that is appropriate for their stage of development. Out-of-bounds behavior will be defined as actions that are inconsiderate, disrespectful, or hurtful to self or others. This includes hitting, pushing, biting, or any other action that is hurtful to another person. If a child demonstrates inappropriate behavior on a regular basis and their needs cannot be met with typical classroom management, a conference with parents, teachers, and director will be scheduled to initiate a behavior management plan. We also may reach out to our Nationwide Children's Hospital behavioral specialist for expert help and support.

BICP staff is educated in methods for working with typically developing children. Although our teachers frequently attend in-service trainings to learn how to work with diverse populations of children, they are not specifically trained to work with children with challenging behaviors or special learning needs. However, we value inclusion of all children and believe in successfully integrating our classrooms. If, after efforts have been made to work with a child and family, the child does not appear to be benefiting from our program, or if the child is seriously jeopardizing the ability of other children to benefit from our program, we shall communicate with the family and appropriate specialists to determine the child's current needs, identify the setting and services most suited to meeting these needs, and assist the family in placing the child in a more appropriate setting.

At no time shall any of the following prohibited discipline techniques be used by any members of the BICP staff as outlined by the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services.

1. Abuse, endanger or neglect of children.
2. There shall be no cruel, harsh or unusual punishments such as, but not limited to, punching, pinching, shaking, or biting.
3. No corporal punishment of any kind.
4. No discipline technique shall be delegated to any other child.
5. No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child.
6. No child shall be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area.
7. No child shall be humiliated or subjected to profane language, threats, and derogatory remarks about himself/herself or his/her family or other verbal abuse.
8. Discipline shall not be imposed on a child for failure to eat or for toileting accidents.
9. Techniques of discipline shall not humiliate, shame, or frighten the child.
10. Discipline shall not include withholding food, rest, or toilet use.
11. Punishing an entire group of children due to the unacceptable behavior of one or a few.

12. Isolate and restrict children from any or all activities for an extended period of time.

Administration of Emergency Medication

BICP **DOES NOT** administer **any** medications, with the exception of an Epi-pen or rescue asthma inhaler for life-threatening situations. Asthma inhalers or Epi-pens for students will be kept in the classroom or under supervision of teachers. The center will administer these medications to a child only after the parents complete a Request for Medication form, ODJFS form 1217. The prescription medications must be in their original container and will be administered in accordance to instructions on the label. These medications will be stored in a designated area inaccessible to children. No child who attends BICP may carry medications of any kind (prescription or non-prescription) on their personal body or keep them with their personal belongings.

Management of Illness and/or Communicable Disease

If a child shows any sign of illness, they should be kept at home until they are symptom free for a **minimum of 24 hours**. If a child becomes ill while they are at school, they will be isolated from the other children and made comfortable in a separate, supervised space. Parents and/or emergency contacts provided to BICP on ODJFS form 1234 will be contacted, and it is expected the child will be picked up within 30 minutes of our call. **Please also see updated Pandemic Plan.**

A child is considered to be sick when demonstrating any of the following symptoms:

- Temperature of 100 degrees or above when in combination with any other sign or symptom of an illness.
- Diarrhea—three or more abnormally, unexpectedly, or unexplained loose stools within a 24 hour period.
- Severe coughing that causes the child to become red or blue in the face or that makes a whooping sound.
- Difficult or rapid breathing.
- Yellowish skin or eyes.
- Redness of the eye or eyelid, thick and purulent (pus) eye discharge, matted eyelashes, burning, itching or eye pain.
- Untreated infected skin patches, unusual spots, or rashes.
- Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stools.
- Stiff neck with elevated temperature.
- Evidence of untreated lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestations.
- Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing.
- Vomiting more than one time or when accompanied by any other sign or symptom of illness.

BICP will follow the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Service Communicable Disease Chart for management of a suspected communicable disease. The chart is located in each classroom. Strep throat, measles, chicken pox, or any other **communicable disease must be reported to the school at once**. Families will be advised of any communicable disease reported in the child's classroom immediately by a notice posted on the classroom door, handed to the parents at pick up or in an email to the parents. A child who is prescribed antibiotics to treat an illness must be on those antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to school.

BICP has a written plan to cover medical, dental, and general emergencies which is clearly posted in all classrooms as well as the Director's Office and is reviewed regularly with all school teachers and staff.

Parents or guardians are notified as soon as possible of an emergency or serious illness or injury using the contact information provided on ODJFS form 1234. Parents or guardians are expected to come to the school, hospital, or other designated location immediately once contacted by the school of an emergency, serious illness, or injury. First aid supplies and person/persons trained in first aid and CPR courses approved by the state are available at all times the school is in operation. Minor incidents or illnesses that do not require emergency procedures will be communicated to parents using very communication and/or ODJFS form 1299, "Incident/Injury Report". The report shall be given to the parent or guardian on the day of the incident. Copies of the report shall be retained on file at the school for the at least one year and shall be available for review.

In the case of an emergency where it would be necessary to move the children from building, arrangements have been made with The Refectory, located at 1092 Bethel Road.

Security/Safety

A BICP teacher or staff member in charge of a child or group of children shall be responsible for their safety. No child is ever left alone or unsupervised.

Children are given the opportunity to play outdoors each day unless weather conditions or safety issues preclude allowing it. Generally, we go outside if the temperature is above 25 degrees with the wind chill, If outdoor play is unavailable, the large muscle space will be set up to provide large muscle play indoors.

We encourage children to wear clothing that will keep them warm in the winter and cool in the summer, and teachers model this behavior. We also recommend that parents apply sunscreen or sunblock with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher to their children before coming to school. When public health authorities recommend use of insect repellants due to a high risk of insect-borne disease, we recommend that parents apply insect repellents to their children before coming to school.

The preschool staff has access to a working telephone within our building at all times. Fire, emergency, and weather alert plans are posted on the school room wall showing evacuation routes and by each phone explaining actions to be taken and staff responsibilities in case of an emergency. Fire drills are done on a monthly basis. Children at BICP do not participate in swimming activities and do not take field trips of any kind. The use of aerosol sprays shall be prohibited when children are in attendance at the school. The Director and all staff members of BICP are required by the State to immediately notify the local public Children's Service Agency when they suspect a child is being abused or neglected. First Aid kits are located in each classroom as well as the director's office. BICP does not provide transportation during medical emergencies. In the case of severe emergency, first aid will be administered, rescue squad will be summoned, and parent(s) will be contacted. The following phone numbers are posted in the school office: Police, Fire, Squad – 911; Poison Control - 228-1323. 16 7. BICP has the right to refuse enrollment to any child whose parents decline to grant consent for transportation to the source of emergency treatment.

If there are custody issues involving your child, you must provide the BICP office with court papers indicating who has permission to pick up your child. BICP may not deny a parent access to their child without proper documentation.

Conflict Resolution

BICP is committed to promoting effective communication with our families in the expedient resolution of any problems or conflicts which may arise from time to time. We expect and request all parties to handle communications in a way that is both loving and constructive.

If at any time families have a concern about a BICP policy, they may contact the director. In the event the concern is about a classroom issue, teachers will also be free to answer any questions at the end of each class session once all children in their care have been dismissed. We will not speak about the child in front of the child. If you feel your concern is still not addressed by the director or teacher, your concern can be taken to the church pastor.

Parking

Those responsible for transporting students to and from BICP must park in a designated spot in the parking lot. **No parking is allowed under the portico or the covered area by the preschool entrance.** Families with adults/children who have special needs, please use the handicap parking spaces at the front entrance of the church. Encourage children to hold their own bags so that parents/caregivers are free to hold their hands. Never leave your child unattended in the car. **Please drive slowly** entering and exiting the parking lot – for all of our children!

Backpacks and Personal Belongings

An open-at-the top tote bag or backpack is the best way to keep all of your child's personal belongings together and it will provide a place to store art work and other items from school. Bags and backpacks should be sent to school each day. Please provide a labeled bag of extra clothes to be stored at school. Preschool children may also carry a complete change of seasonally appropriate clothing for spills and emergencies in their bag. All children should be dressed in washable play clothes appropriate for the weather, messy art activities, and physical play. Closed-toe sturdy shoes suitable for running, jumping, and climbing are highly recommended. Lovies, blankets or special security items are welcome (as long as they are washable or easily cleaned!). Bringing other personal items to preschool is not recommended.

Ohio Department of Job and Family Services CENTER PARENT INFORMATION REQUIRED BY OHIO ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

The facility is licensed to operate legally by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. This license is posted in a conspicuous place for review.

A toll-free telephone number is listed on the facility's license and may be used to report a suspected violation of the licensing law or administrative rules. The licensing law and rules governing child care are available for review at the facility upon request.

The administrator and each employee of the facility is required, under Section 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code, to report their suspicions of child abuse or child neglect to the local public children's services agency.

Any parent, custodian, or guardian of a child enrolled in the facility shall be permitted unlimited access to the facility during all hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided by the facility or evaluating the premises. Upon entering the premises, the parent, or guardian shall notify the Administrator of his/her presence.

Contact information for parents/guardians of the children attending the facility is available upon request. This information will not include the name, telephone number or email of any parent/guardian who requests that his/her name, telephone number or email not be included.

Recent licensing inspection reports and any substantiated complaint investigation reports for the past two years are posted in a conspicuous place in the facility for review.

The licensing record, including licensing inspection reports, complaint investigation reports, and evaluation forms from the building and fire departments, is available for review upon written request from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. The center's licensing inspection reports for the past two years are also available for review on the Child Care in Ohio website. The website is: <https://jfs.ohio.gov/cdc/index.stm>.

It is unlawful for the facility to discriminate in the enrollment of children upon the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin or disability in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 104 Stat. 32, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.

This information must be given in writing to all parents, guardians and employees as required in 5101: 2-12-30 of the Ohio Administrative Code.

Parent Resources

- [City of Columbus](#)



- **OUTREACH**
 - When you need help or answers to important questions, these community outreach organizations provide resources and critical information:
 - [IMPACT Community Action](#)
 - [Food Pantries](#)
 - [Community Shelters - Faith Mission](#)
 - [Homeless Shelter Directory](#)
 - [Hands On Central Ohio](#)
 - [Job and Family Services](#)
 - [Central Ohio Workforce Investment Corporation \(COWIC\)](#)
 - [Columbus Libraries](#)
 - [Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority \(CMHA\)](#)
- [CAP 4 KIDS](#)
 - Are you looking for reliable, up-to-date information about resources in the Columbus area for children and families? You've come to the right place! CAP4Kids will help you find many community agencies that exist to improve the lives of children and families. If you are on your mobile phone, make sure you click on the orange parent handouts at the top of the page to find all the resources. The website is updated daily!
- [Nationwide Children's Parent Resources](#) (614) 722-2000
 - Blog; Courses for Parents; Support Groups; Health, Wellness and Safety Resources; Patient Centered Care
- [Bold Beginnings Ohio](#)
 - Caregivers are essential to a child's healthy growth and development. Whether you are looking for child care options, parenting tips, or resources for a healthy pregnancy, this page offers families of all shapes and sizes with resources to meet their needs.
- [Franklin County Children's Services](#)
 - Resource guide for families; linked on our website and in print in the director's office.
- [Dolly Parton's Imagination Library](#)
 - Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is a book gifting program that mails free, high-quality books to children from birth until they begin school, no matter their family's income.
- **Additional Phone Numbers for Resources:**

- **Poison Treatment & Advice Hotline Central Ohio (24-Hour)**
1-800-222-1222
- **National Suicide Prevention Hotline (24-Hour)**
1-800-273-8255 or (614) 221-5445 Local
- **Mental Health Crisis Hotline Franklin County (24-Hour)**
Adults > 18 (Netcare): (614) 276-2273
Youth < 17 (Nationwide Children's Hospital): (614) 722-1800
- **Huckleberry House Runaway Helpline (24-Hour)**
(614) 294-5553
- **Emergency Shelter & Homeless Hotline (24-Hour)**
(614) 274-7000
- **LSS 211 for General Help (formerly known as HandsOn Central Ohio) (24-Hour)**
2-1-1 or (614) 221-2255
- **LSS 211 Foodline: Central Ohio Food Kitchens & Food Pantries (Monday-Friday 8am-4pm)**
(614) 341-2282
- **Ohio Tobacco Quit Line**
1-800-784-8669
- **StepOne: Central Ohio Pregnancy & Prenatal Care Hotline**
(614) 721-0009
- **Rape & Assault Helpline SARNCO (24-Hour)**
1-800-656-4673 or (614) 267-7020 Local
- **Domestic Violence Crisis Hotline CHOICES (24-Hour)**
(614) 224-4663 or (800) 799-7233 (National Hotline)
- **Franklin County Child Abuse Hotline (24-Hour)**
(614) 229-7000
- **Postpartum Support International (24-Hour)**
(800) 944-4773

*The PSI HelpLine does not handle emergencies