

# BAYOU & BLOOM- MDO

# PARENT

# HANDBOOK



 *Rooted in Play, Growing with Nature.* 

Dear Families,

Welcome to the Bayou & Bloom family! We are so glad you're here and can't wait to get to know both you and your child. Choosing where your little one will spend their days is such an important decision, and we're honored you've chosen us to be part of this special season in your child's life.

At Bayou & Bloom, we believe that children learn best when they are free to explore, imagine, and connect—both with nature and with one another. Our days are filled with hands-on activities, outdoor adventures, playful learning, and plenty of opportunities to build friendships. By combining our play-based approach with the Highlights Kindness & Connections and Growing Up WILD curriculums, we create a learning environment where curiosity blooms and kindness grows.

This packet is your guide to everything you'll need for a smooth start—our routines, policies, and a peek at what your child's days will look like here. Please take some time to read through it, and remember that my door (and inbox!) is always open for questions, ideas, or just a friendly chat.

We are looking forward to a joyful, laughter-filled year ahead. Thank you for trusting us with your greatest treasure—we promise to nurture, encourage, and celebrate them every step of the way.

With excitement for the year ahead,

IDUNN HAAVARDSSOLM

Director of Operations

Bayou & Bloom – Mother's Day Out

# BAYOU & BLOOM- MDO

# PARENT

# HANDBOOK



## ABOUT US & OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Welcome to Bayou & Bloom!

At our center, we believe that early childhood is a time of wonder, discovery, and possibility. Our mission is to provide a safe, loving, and engaging environment where every child feels valued, supported, and free to be themselves.

We are committed to:

- Creating a warm and welcoming space where children feel emotionally secure
- Supporting each child's growth through play-based, hands-on learning
- Encouraging curiosity, confidence, and creativity through meaningful experiences, and experiencing risky play
- Building strong partnerships with families based on trust, communication, and respect
- Fostering a connected community where every child and family is part of something special

We see each child as a unique learner, full of potential and promise — and we're honored to be part of this important chapter in your family's journey.

# BAYOU & BLOOM- MDO

# PARENT

# HANDBOOK



## DAILY SCHEDULE

Here's a look at what a typical day looks like at our Mother's Day Out. We follow a consistent routine to help children feel safe and secure — with plenty of time for learning and play.

Sample Daily Schedule: TWO & THREE-YEAR-OLD CLASS

- 8:30 – 9:00 AM | Arrival & Outside Play
- 9:00 – 9:15 AM | Morning Circle Time
- 9:15 – 10:00 AM | Centers
- 10:00 – 10:30 AM | Wash hands & Snack
- 10:30 – 11:00 AM | Outside Play
- 11:00 – 11:45 PM | Wash hands & Lunch
- 11:45 – 12:30 PM | Outdoor Play & Pick Up

*This schedule may vary slightly depending on your child's age group.*

# BAYOU & BLOOM- MDO

# PARENT

# HANDBOOK



## HEALTH & SAFETY SUMMARY

Your child's health and well-being are our top priorities.

### Daily Practices:

- Daily sanitation of toys and surfaces
- Staff trained in CPR and First Aid
- Sick child policy enforced for everyone's protection
- Emergency evacuation drills conducted regularly
- Secure entry and sign-in required for all visitors

**Medication: Staff will NOT dispense either prescription or non-prescription medication under any circumstances.**

**PLEASE COMPLETE A LIFEVAC CONSENT FORM.**

# BAYOU & BLOOM- MDO PARENT HANDBOOK



## SICK CHILD POLICY

To help keep all children and staff healthy, we ask that you please keep your child home if they are showing signs of illness.

### **Please keep your child home if they have:**

- A fever of 100.4°F / 38°C or higher
- Vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours
- A persistent cough or difficulty breathing
- A contagious illness (e.g. pink eye, chickenpox, COVID-19)
- Unusual fatigue, rash, or behavior changes

### **When can they return?**

- After being fever-free for at least 24 hours without medication
- After 24 hours symptom-free from vomiting or diarrhea
- Once cleared by a doctor, if diagnosed with a contagious illness

### **Medication at school:**

If your child requires medication during the day, a parent will need to come in person to administer the medication to the child. Staff will not administer medication of any kind under any circumstances.

Thank you for helping us maintain a safe, healthy environment for all children.

# BAYOU & BLOOM- MDO

# PARENT

# HANDBOOK



## COMMUNICATION POLICY

## HOW WE STAY IN TOUCH



We believe strong parent communication builds trust and peace of mind.

You can expect:

- **Daily updates** at pick up
- **Monthly newsletters** in their file folder monthly
- **Parent-teacher conferences** per request

Questions? Just ask — we're always here for you.

# BAYOU & BLOOM- MDO

# PARENT

# HANDBOOK



## TUITION & PAYMENT INFO

We aim to keep our tuition process clear, simple, and flexible for families.

### **Tuition Schedule:**

- Tuition is due on the 25th of each month
- A 5-day grace period is provided
- A late fee of [\$25] applies after the 30th

### **Accepted Payment Methods:**

- Cash
- Mobile payment app (e.g., Venmo, Zelle)
- Bank transfer or auto-pay on **PROCARE**

### **Late Pick-Up Fees:**

A fee of [\$1 per minute] may apply after closing hours. If you're running late, please contact us — we understand things happen.

### **Receipts & Tax Records:**

- Monthly receipts available on request
- Year-end statements provided for tax filing
- ***We do not offer a sibling discount.***

# BAYOU & BLOOM- MDO

# PARENT

# HANDBOOK



## CONTACT INFORMATION SHEET

We're here to support you and your child! Feel free to reach out any time.

### **Center Contact Information:**

- Name: Explore. Learn & Play | Bayou & Bloom - MDO
- Address: 109 Smart Place, Slidell, LA
- Phone: 504- 777- 9118
- Email: [info@explorelearnandplay.com](mailto:info@explorelearnandplay.com)
- Website: [www.explorelearnandplay.com](http://www.explorelearnandplay.com)

### **Contact Hours:**

Monday – Friday: 8:30 AM - 2:30 PM

Closed on weekends and public holidays.

### **Classroom Teacher Contact Info:**

- Teacher Name: **Ms. Idunn**
- Best Way to Reach Me: 601-678-2193
- Teacher Name: **Mrs. Darlene**
- Best Way to Reach Me: 504-343-7817



# BAYOU & BLOOM- MDO PARENT HANDBOOK



## FIRST DAY TIPS

We know the first day can come with lots of excitement — and a few jitters, too. That's perfectly normal! Whether it's your first time or your fifth, we're here to make this transition as smooth and positive as possible for both you and your child.

Here are some helpful tips to ensure a great start:

- **Arrive a little early** so your child has time to settle in without feeling rushed. A calm start can make a big difference.
- **Keep goodbyes short, upbeat, and reassuring.** A simple “Have a great day — I’ll see you after lunchtime!” works wonders. We’ll take it from there.
- **Bring everything from the checklist** (including labeled items!) so your child has what they need to feel comfortable and prepared.
- **Let us know about any allergies, routines, or medical needs.** We want to make sure your child is safe, supported, and understood from the very beginning.
- **Don't worry if there are tears.** It's completely normal during the first few days. Our team is experienced in helping children adjust with care and kindness — and we'll send updates to keep you in the loop.

We're always here to answer your questions, ease your mind, and support your family. The first day is just the beginning of a wonderful journey!

# BAYOU & BLOOM- MDO

# PARENT

# HANDBOOK



## ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE ROUTINE

All children are encouraged to take care of their own belongings and to get their own shoes on/off as they are able.

### **ARRIVAL**

- Have your child put their things in their cubby, take off jackets, etc.
- Remind your child to remove their outside shoes
- Share any valuable information with staff (schedule changes, how the child is feeling, etc.)

If your child is going to be arriving late or will be absent for the day, please call or text us by 8 AM so we can plan our day, and won't be waiting for your child to arrive.

### **DEPARTURE**

- Encourage your child to get ready to go home as much as possible. This teaches them responsibility and prepares them for school (and life.)
- If someone other than the parent (guardian) will be picking them up, please notify us in advance.

# BAYOU & BLOOM- MDO

# PARENT

# HANDBOOK



## IMPORTANT REMINDERS

A few important notes to help your family get started on the right foot:

- We open at 8:30 AM and close at 12:30 PM
- Please sign your child in and out each day
- Let us know in advance if someone new will pick up your child
- Sick children must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning
- Check your child's folder daily for notes, artwork, or reminders
- Label all personal items (clothes, bottles, sunscreen, etc.)
- Keep your contact info up to date in case we need to reach you
- Monthly newsletters and updates are sent by email
- Tuition is due on the 25th of each month (late fees may apply after the 30th)

# BAYOU & BLOOM- MDO

# PARENT

# HANDBOOK



## SOCIAL & SELF-HELP GOALS

We feel social and self-help skills are as important as academics. Each program has different expectations for children, so we wanted to outline some of the goals and skills children in our program will be working on. We DO NOT expect your child to come in our program knowing how to meet these expectations. It is a growing and learning process. The goals we have for the children in our care are all in place for a reason. They may be for health and safety reasons or developing self-help skills they will need for kindergarten and beyond, or social skills they need to navigate through life.

### **General Manners and Expectations:**

- Children will learn to say please and thank you regularly.
- Children will learn to say excuse me when appropriate.
- Children will learn to share and take turns as developmentally appropriate.  
(Preschoolers will not be able to do this at all times – this is a goal to work towards.)
- We do not allow children to exclude anyone who wants to play with them. (They can have alone time, but we try to eliminate the “I only want to play with \_\_\_\_\_”)
- Children are expected to help clean up the classroom at clean-up times. We also encourage children to get in the habit of putting things away when they are done playing with them.
- Children are expected to use a gentle touch; we discourage rough play and pretend guns.
- Children are expected to be respectful of their teachers and other children.
- Children are expected to take care of their own things. They put their things away in their cubbies.

# BAYOU & BLOOM- MDO

# PARENT

# HANDBOOK



## SOCIAL & SELF-HELP GOALS

## CONTINUED

### **Table Manners:**

- Children wash their hands before and after each meal.
- Children are expected to remain seated during mealtimes. They are expected to say, “May I please be excused?” when they are done eating. (This helps children remember they are not to get up and down during a meal.)
- With children serving themselves, spills are to be expected. They are told, “It’s ok, try to be more careful next time.” They are responsible for cleaning up their own spills – help is given as needed, but this is one way to teach them to become responsible.
- Children clean up their own plates, cups and utensils after eating
- We all eat together at one table, and we are expected to eat together family style

# BAYOU & BLOOM- MDO

# PARENT

# HANDBOOK



## POTTY LEARNING

We believe that potty learning is different for each child, and each child will exhibit signs of readiness at different ages. Because of this, we do not require your child to be trained before starting our two-year-old class, but it is required for our three-year-old class.

We have experience and training in potty learning. We will be glad to assist in potty training with the understanding that it will only work if we work together.

When your child is showing signs of readiness, you must work with your child at home, and we'll work with them here. Children should have some consistent success at home before we start with them at school. This typically means several days with only one accident and interest in staying dry.

# BAYOU & BLOOM- MDO

# PARENT

# HANDBOOK



## OUR CURRICULUM

At Bayou & Bloom, we believe learning should be joyful, hands-on, and rooted in real-world experiences. Our curriculum blends research-based programs, nature exploration, and play to support the whole child—socially, emotionally, intellectually, and physically.

### **Highlights Kindness & Connections**

The heart of our social-emotional learning program, Highlights Kindness & Connections helps children build empathy, recognize and express feelings, form positive relationships, and practice kindness in their daily interactions. We believe a strong emotional foundation is essential for lifelong success.

### **Nature-Based Learning**

We treat nature as our classroom. Children spend meaningful time outdoors exploring seasonal changes, observing plants and wildlife, and engaging in activities that spark curiosity and care for the environment. This approach builds problem-solving skills, creativity, resilience, and a deep respect for the natural world.

### **Growing Up WILD**

This award-winning early childhood program, created by Project WILD and the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, uses nature and wildlife as a springboard for science, math, literacy, and art. Activities are developmentally appropriate, hands-on, and designed to foster curiosity about how living things are connected.

### **Play-Based Learning**

Play is not “just play”—it is how children learn best. Our play-based approach allows children to explore, imagine, and create through open-ended activities. Through dramatic play, building, art, music, and movement, children develop problem-solving skills, creativity, cooperation, and a love for learning that will serve them for years to come. By weaving together social-emotional learning, nature exploration, wildlife education, and purposeful play, we create a rich and balanced program that prepares children for school and for life—instilling curiosity, compassion, and confidence to explore the world around them.

# BAYOU & BLOOM- MDO

# PARENT

# HANDBOOK



## PAYMENT SCHEDULE

### Bayou & Bloom MDO Tuition Payment Schedule

*School Year: August 2025 – May 2026*

Month of Class	Payment Due Date	Amount Due	Notes
August 2025	Paid at Enrollment	\$285	Paid at enrollment (First month)
September 2025	August 25, 2025	\$285	
October 2025	September 25, 2025	\$285	
November 2025	October 25, 2025	\$285	
December 2025	November 25, 2025	\$285	
January 2026	December 25, 2025	\$285	
February 2026	January 25, 2026	\$285	
March 2026	February 25, 2026	\$285	
April 2026	March 25, 2026	\$285	
May 2026	Paid at Enrollment	\$285	Paid at enrollment (Last month)