



Berea Early Learning Academy
16779 Lucas Ferry Rd
Athens, AL 35611
mybela.org

BEREA EARLY LEARNING ACADEMY

Parent Handbook 2024-2025

Hours of Operation: Monday - Friday 8:00 – 3:30

**16779 Lucas Ferry Rd
Athens, AL 35611**

**Ph: 1-256-530-4332
Website: mybela.org**



Table of Contents

Mission of Berea Early Learning Academy	4
Non-Discrimination Policy	4
Child Abuse Reporting Policy	4
BELA Oversight	5
School Communication	5
Parent/Teacher Communication	5
School Closings	6
School Policies	6
Confidentiality and Privacy	6
Damage to School Property	7
Tobacco / Vaping Policy	7
Safety Drills and Evacuation Plan	7
Uniforms, Dress Code and Personal Items	7
Late/Tardy Policy	8
Drop Off and Pick Up Procedures	9
Tuition and fees	9
Tuition	9
Tuition payment and Late Fees	10
Registration and Fees	11
Classroom and Curriculum Policies	11
Children’s Curriculum	11
Naptime Policy	11
Screen Time Policy	12
Physical Activity Policy	12
Party Policy	12
Student Behavior and Discipline	13
Classroom Management and Behavior Policy	13
Biting Policy	13
Potty Training and Accidents	14
Health and Medication Policy	15
Sick Policy	15
Medication Protocol	15



Berea Early Learning Academy
16779 Lucas Ferry Rd
Athens, AL 35611
mybela.org

Lice Policy	15
COVID-19	16
Immunizations/Submissions.....	16
Nutrition Policy	17
Attachments	188
2024 – 2025 School Calendar	188
BELA Car Line	19
Preschool Handbook Guidelines Acknowledgement.....	19



Mission of Berea Early Learning Academy

Berea Early Learning Academy (BELA) is a Christian based preschool focused on providing children opportunities to succeed. Our mission is to develop young leaders with a Christ-centered education at an early age. We believe that providing a stimulating and happy environment will allow for every child to develop the skills needed to be successful in school and into their adult years. Every child has a special place in God's plan and our students will learn that God loves and cares for them while learning to think critically and explore their interest in a nurturing environment.

Non-Discrimination Policy

BELA does not screen applicants (students or staff) based on any creed or color requirements. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, nationality, ethnic origin, gender or religion in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, and other school-administered programs.

Child Abuse Reporting Policy

BELA believes that all children, regardless of age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, or religious beliefs have the right to protection from abuse. The staff and volunteers of BELA are required to report any suspicion of child abuse, including but not limited to, physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, or mental. The staff and volunteers will report any suspicion or allegations of child abuse to the Director and all suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

The staff and/or volunteers, at all times, will be aware of the safety, dignity and well-being of the child and will not act in an accusatory manner toward any



persons who may be involved. Should a child be in immediate danger, it will be reported to the local police department and the Department of Human Services.

BELA Oversight

BELA is a non-profit organization whose operation is governed by a Board of Directors. The Board of Directors act in the best interest of BELA by: enforcing existing policies, establish new policies when needed, decide payroll changes based on employee evaluations/performance, oversee any grievances not resolved by the Program Director, conduct annual evaluations of the school administration and staff. Additionally, the BELA board maintains oversight of BELA's finances, school policies, and staff.

BELA staff and parents/guardians of students are invited to address the board with advance notice.

School Communication

Parent/Teacher Communication

In accordance with BELA policy, teachers should only be contacted through the approved communication channels listed below.

- Contact the front desk at 256-530-4332 and leave a message for your child's teacher.
 - Teachers will respond to all calls in a timely manner not to exceed 24 hours from the date called.
- Send your child's teacher an email to their BELA email address.

In the event of an emergency, please ensure that the front desk is contacted. The below items are considered emergency situations which require front desk notification.



- Early or delayed pickup of your child.
- Notification that a family member, or your student, has been diagnosed with a communicable illness or other contagion such as strep, COVID-19, or lice.

It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that BELA is updated with parental contact information. In the event of changes to telephone numbers and/or custody arrangements, BELA should be updated immediately. Failure to maintain updated contact numbers may result in missed calls from the school which directly impact your child.

School Closings

A list of scheduled closures for the school is available on the BELA website (mybela.org) and as an attachment to the student handbook.

In the event of inclement weather, please check our Facebook Page for closing and/or early dismissals. BELA will follow the Athens City Schools for unscheduled school closing due to inclement weather.

School Policies

Confidentiality and Privacy

All BELA medical, behavioral, or financial records will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and privacy. Access to these records will be limited to authorized personnel only, and they will be stored in compliance with applicable privacy laws.

If you have a medical or behavioral issue or a financial concern, please contact the BELA director for a confidential conversation.



Damage to School Property

Destruction of school property is taken very seriously. While accidents may happen, the intentional destruction, damage, or loss of BELA property will be charged to the responsible parent for compensation.

Tobacco / Vaping Policy

BELA is a smoke-free/tobacco-free facility. Smoking, vaping or any form of tobacco use is prohibited, at all times, anywhere on the campus.

Safety Drills and Evacuation Plan

In order to ensure the safety of all children in the event of an emergency, fire, tornado and other safety concerns, drills will be conducted at regular intervals set by the BELA director.

Uniforms, Dress Code and Personal Items

Uniforms are required for all students. The BELA uniforms consist of a uniform top paired with navy or grey bottoms or a uniform dress. Additionally, for colder weather, uniform sweatshirts and/or cardigans are also available. The BELA Director will have a list of approved locations for purchasing uniform clothing and embroidery.

Please see the uniform dress code table below for any questions.

Approved Tops: all require the embroidered school crest or logo on the left chest		
Girls	Boys/Unisex	Colors
Polo dress		navy, grey, powder blue
Peter Pan Blouse	Polo (short/long sleeve)	white, grey, powder blue



	Cardigan	navy, grey
	Sweater/Sweatshirt	navy, grey

Approved Bottoms		
Girls	Boys	Color
Pants	Pants (cargo, plain, pleat)	navy, grey
Shorts	Shorts (cargo, plain, pleat)	navy, grey
Skirt		navy, grey
Jumper		navy, grey

School appropriate clothing should be worn at all times. This consists of rubber soled closed-toed shoes. Children should be able to put on, fasten, and take off shoes by themselves or with minimal help.

All personal items brought to school should be clearly labeled with the student's first and last name to ensure any items lost or misplaced can be returned. In the event of lost or misplaced items that do not have a label, the teacher will do their best to reunite the items with the proper child.

Late/Tardy Policy

In order to prepare your child for kindergarten, timeliness is vital. School begins promptly at 8:00 am, students arriving at school after 8:30 am will be considered tardy. Likewise, students should be picked up, for full-time by 3:30 pm and part time by 12:30 pm.

It is understood that sometimes circumstances happen; however, consistent tardiness to school or late pick up will not be tolerated. If a child is tardy more than three times in a month, on the fourth tardy you will be asked to take your child back home. If you are late picking up your child from school, there will be a \$20 late fee, per child. Late fees are required to be paid by the next business day. Excessive tardiness to school or late pick-up from school will result in expulsion.



Drop Off and Pick Up Procedures

In order to maintain safety and efficiency, drop-off and pick up procedures must be followed. Children should be dropped off and picked up at the assigned door. Parents are not permitted to enter the building unless absolutely necessary. Children will be escorted to their classroom by a teacher.

Morning drop off arrival is between 7:45 am and 8:15 am. For drop off, please park your vehicle and bring your child to the assigned door.

Student pick up times are as follows. For full-time students, between 3:15 pm and 3:30 pm. Arriving after 3:30 pm will result in a late charge. For part-time students pickup is between 12:15 pm and 12:30 pm. Arrival after 12:30 pm will result in a late charge. If you arrive before the designated pickup time, please park your vehicle in the lot and wait for the designated pickup time. If you need to pickup early, please call the front desk once you have arrived.

For the safety of the children, only persons listed on the authorized persons form will be permitted to pick up. Any person other than a known parent will be asked to provide identification before a child is released to their custody. Any changes or updates to the authorized persons list must be completed in person, changes will not be allowed over the telephone.

Tuition and fees

Tuition

1K TUITION RATES

Time	Days	Weekly Tuition
8:00 AM - 12:30 PM	M - F	\$135.00



2K TUITION RATES

Part Time	Days	Weekly Tuition	Full Time	Days	Weekly Tuition
8:00 AM - 12:30 PM	Tue / Thr	\$65.00	8:00 AM - 3:30 PM	Tue / Thr	\$100.00
8:00 AM - 12:30 PM	M / W / F	\$85.00	8:00 AM - 3:30 PM	M / W / F	\$135.00
8:00 AM - 12:30 PM	M - F	\$135.00	8:00 AM - 3:30 PM	M - F	\$150.00

3K / 4K TUITION RATES

Time	Days	Weekly Tuition
8:00 AM - 12:30 PM	M - F	\$135.00
8:00 AM - 3:30 PM	M - F	\$150.00

BELA reserves the right to adjust tuition costs each school year.

If BELA tuition is being paid on a weekly basis, ensure that all payments are made promptly each week. Weekly payments are the amortization of the academic school year broken down into a weekly schedule.

[Tuition payment and Late Fees](#)

The preferred method of payment for tuition is by credit card, assists in avoiding late fees due to late tuition payment.

Tuition payments are to be made weekly on the predetermined payment due date. If tuition payments are not received by the specified due date, the parent will receive a written late notice on the next business day pickup. If tuition payments are not made the day after late notice is received, a late fee of \$20.00 will be charged per day. All late fees and tuition payments will be required to be made prior to drop-off on the fourth business day after the due date. Tuition and fees are non-refundable.



Registration and Fees

At the time of enrollment fees will be collected for curriculum, supplies, and registration. These fees are broken down in the table below. Please note, these fees are non-refundable, even in the event of expulsion, and non-transferable.

BELA reserves the right to adjust registration and fees costs per year.

Fee Name	Cost	Applicable Class
Curriculum	\$150.00	2K through 4k
Supply	\$150.00	1K
Registration	\$50.00	1K through 4K

These fees, along with the registration fee, are non-refundable.

Classroom and Curriculum Policies

Children's Curriculum

BELA utilizes the Abeka curriculum for all classes. The Abeka curriculum has been a trusted curriculum for over forty years and features a traditional approach to teaching and learning, which includes cross-subject integration, spiral review, and plenty of hands-on activities.

Naptime Policy

Growing minds require time to rest and recharge. We understand that not all children will nap; however, the expectation is that all children will lie quietly during the designated nap time between 1:00 PM and 2:30 PM. If a child is unable to lie quietly and consistently disturbs others during nap time, we may ask you to pick up your child early.



Screen Time Policy

Screen time is defined as the use of television, videos, video games, tablets and computers. Screentime will be offered as a free choice and limited to no more than a total of 1 hour per week. Screen time is prohibited during meal or snack time. The use of computers/tablets will be limited to no more than 20-minute increments. All screen time will be educational and will be used to enrich the theme or letter of the week. On occasions, screen time will be utilized when the weather does not permit outdoor play.

Physical Activity Policy

Every child will have an opportunity for the appropriate amount of active play each day. Active play will take place outdoors when weather and environmental conditions permit. When the weather and or environment does not permit outdoor activity, active play will take place indoors. Children who exhibit out of control behavior during active play may be given a time-out.

Party Policy

During the school year, BELA will have school sanctioned parties for events such as Valentine's Day or Christmas. During these times we encourage parents to participate by volunteering your time or a monetary donation. Please contact the BELA director for opportunities.

Additionally, we recognize that birthdays are a special time for each child. You may bring cupcakes, cookies, ice cream or some other type of treat to school for the children to have at lunchtime. Any treats being brought will need to be at the school by 11:45. We ask that parents refrain from bringing gifts or balloons. If a parent would like to pass out invitations for a birthday party outside of school, we



ask that you provide the teacher with the correct number of invitations for the whole class.

Student Behavior and Discipline

Classroom Management and Behavior Policy

BELA will handle all disciplinary actions through a loving and positive manner. In accordance with the BELA mission, BELA's aim is to

In order for BELA to follow our mission, we require that students enter our school ready to learn. Students are ready to learn when they are able to listen and follow a teachers' instructions, they are able to listen to a story, and are able to get along with the other students. We understand that children have short attention spans and are still developing social-emotional skills; however, we will work diligently to help children adapt to their classroom and learn to self-regulate.

When a behavioral issue is identified, the teacher may request a parent/teacher conference to obtain additional insight, or to work on implementing similar strategies outside the classroom. If a child is identified with a consistent behavior issue, that child may be asked to withdraw from the program. A constant behavioral disruption is problematic and can become a safety concern for all students in a class setting.

Biting Policy

BELA recognizes that biting may occur as an unacceptable behavior when young children are in a group setting; however, consistent aggressive behavior toward other children will not be tolerated and will lead to expulsion.

In the event of a biting incident, the teacher will give immediate attention to the injured child and both parents will be provided written notification at the time of



pickup on the day of the incident and will require the parent's signature to acknowledge the incident. Information regarding the behavioral incident will be considered confidential.

BEAL will make every effort to work with the children and parents on techniques to address the biting behavior. On the first incident of biting, the biting child will be sent home for the remainder of the day during which the biting incident occurred. On the second incident of biting, the biting child will be asked to take a one-week break from the school. After 3 biting incidents, the biting child will be expelled from the program and not permitted to return for the remainder of the school year.

Potty Training and Accidents

All children attending BELA in a 3k or 4k class must be successfully potty trained and demonstrate a consistent ability to use the facilities without teacher assistance. Children who are 30 months of age or older and are not demonstrating a consistent ability to use the facilities without teacher assistance will incur an additional fee of \$25.00 per week until this standard is met. Any child who has two or more accidents in a week will be placed on probation period for 5 days. If the child has an additional accident while on probation, the child will be required to remain home until the potty-training standard has been met.

Children in the 2K class can be sent to school in fabric undergarments only when the parent is confident that the child has been successfully potty trained. If a child in the 2K class has been sent to school in fabric undergarments and had two accidents in one day, the child will be returned to disposable undergarments for the remainder of the school day. If the child has accidents for two consecutive days, the child will be required to wear disposable undergarments until potty training has been confirmed.



Accidents can occur and all children are required to have a complete change of clothes, inclusive of underwear, pants/shorts, socks and a shirt, to be kept in a gallon size Ziploc bag labeled with the child's first and last name. In the event of an accident during the school day, the child will be changed into the extra change of clothes. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure that the change of clothes is the appropriate size and season. In the event that the change of clothes does not fit or are not available, a parent will be required to pick up the child.

Health and Medication Policy

Sick Policy

A child arriving at school or who shows signs, during the school day, of a fresh cold, fever, vomiting, diarrhea, or any other contagious condition will be sent home immediately. Children must be free of fever, vomiting, and diarrhea for a minimum of 24 hours, without the use of medication, before they will be permitted to return to school. Conditions that are highly contagious may require a note from a physician indicating when the child may return to school.

Medication Protocol

It is BELA policy to not administer medications to students. If your child needs medication, it should be given before or after school hours by the child's parent/guardian. If a child needs asthma or emergency medication (Ex: EpiPens) and it is essential that the student receive the medication during school hours, a medical authorization form will need to be completed.

Lice Policy

Please examine your child's head regularly, behind the ears and at the nape of the neck to check for crawling lice and/or nits. If lice are found, please contact the



school immediately. The infected child can return to school when the child is identified with no evidence of live lice.

Should a teacher identify lice on a child, the child's parent will be called for early pickup.

COVID-19

If a staff member or student tests positive for COVID-19, we will alert all the families enrolled in the program. We will also inform the parents if the staff member or student is in the same classroom as their child.

For current information on CDC isolation guidelines, please visit:
<https://www.cdc.gov/covid/prevention/index.html>

Immunizations/Submissions

At BELA, we require that each enrolled student has up-to-date immunization records (Blue Card) on file. Immunization records, a Blue Card, should be kept current throughout your child's enrollment at BELA. As new immunizations become due, please promptly provide the updated blue card for our records.

BELA follows the immunization guidelines set forth by the Alabama Department of Health to ensure the protection of all children. For further information on the required or recommended immunizations, please speak with your child's pediatrician or see

<https://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/immunization/index.html>

All children attending BELA must be current on all immunizations and have provided a current Blue Card to the school office before they may begin attending school.



Nutrition Policy

BELA provides a snack daily consisting of items such as cereal bars, yogurt, string cheese, applesauce, and milk. The parents are required to pack a lunch for their children. We cannot heat up food, so please pack lunches that do not require heating. Please pack healthy lunches that include foods such as a sandwich, fruit, and a drink such as water or 100% fruit juice. Please do not send items such as candy in your child's lunch. Our staff is required to refrigerate meat or dairy products. In the event that a child forgets his/her lunch, BELA will provide a pre-packaged lunch with water. If a child does not bring lunch on a regular basis, the Director will contact the parents to discuss remedying the problem. A charge of \$5.00 per lunch may be assessed to parents who continually do not send a lunch with their child.



Attachments

2024 – 2025 School Calendar

August 5, 2024	Open House
August 6	Teacher Work Day
August 7	First Day for Students
September 2	Labor Day
October 14 - 18	Fall Break
November 11	Veterans Day
November 26	Early Dismissal (12:30 PM)
November 27 - 29	Thanksgiving Break
December 20	Christmas Program
December 23, 2024 - January 7, 2025	Christmas / New Year Break
January 8	Students return to class
January 20	Martin Luther King Day
February 14	Early Dismissal (12:30 PM)
February 17	President's Day
March 24 - 28	Spring Break
May 22	Last day for students
May 23, 2025	4K Graduation

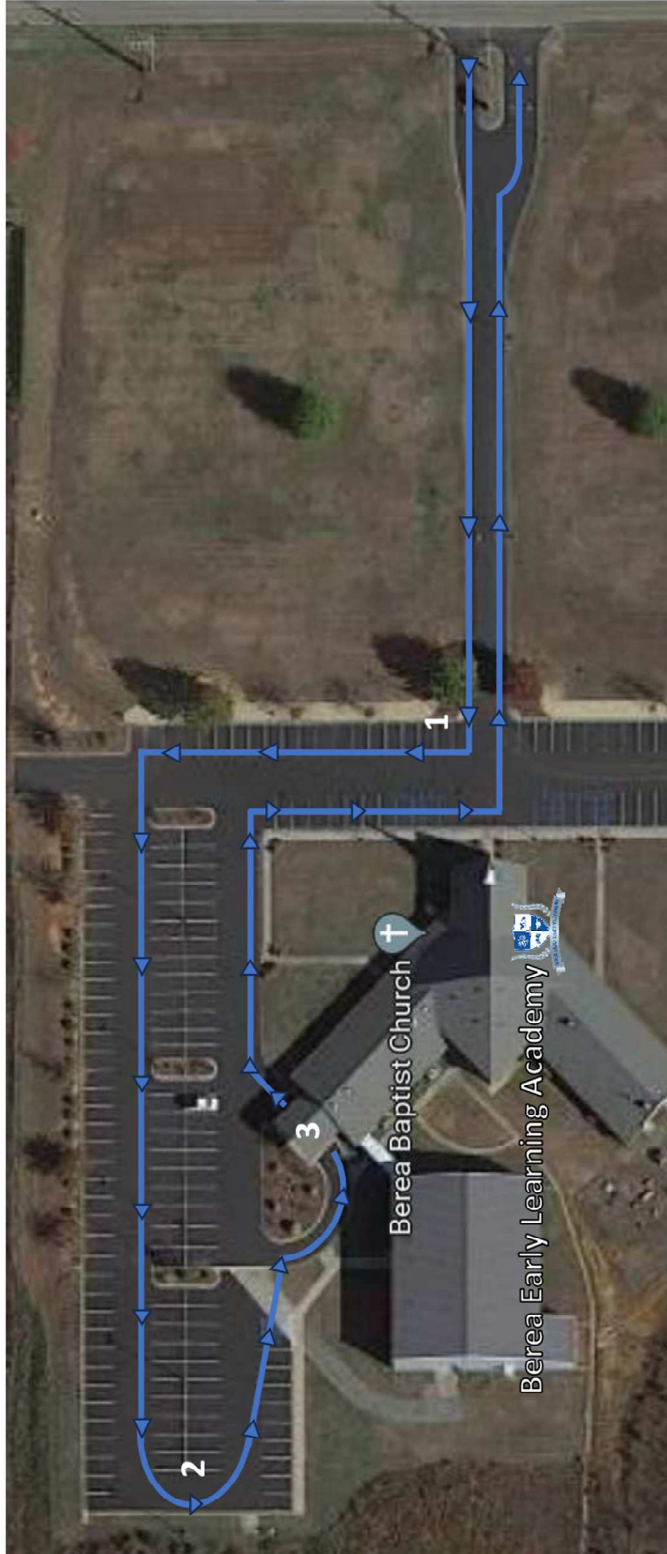
*** School closings, for inclement weather, are based Athens City School notifications***



Berea Early Learning Academy
16779 Lucas Ferry Rd
Athens, AL 35611
mybela.org

BELA Car Line

BELA Carline Directions



Directions:

1. After entering driveway, turn right at entrance of parking lot.
2. Circle the end of the parking to enter canopy
3. Pickup for your child under the canopy, exit canopy after your child is properly secured.



Berea Early Learning Academy
16779 Lucas Ferry Rd
Athens, AL 35611
mybela.org

Preschool Handbook Guidelines Acknowledgement

I, _____, hereby acknowledge that I have received and read the Berea Early Learning Academy (BELA) Handbook, and I understand and agree to comply with the guidelines and policies outlined therein. I recognize that it is my responsibility to be familiar with the contents of the handbook and to ensure that my child abides by these guidelines while attending BELA. I understand that failure to comply with these guidelines may result in appropriate actions being taken by the preschool administration.

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Child's Name: _____

Contact Email: _____

Contact Phone: _____

Please return this signed form to the preschool administration within the first week of the academic calendar year. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated in ensuring a safe, nurturing, and enriching environment for all children at BELA.

Berea Early Learning Academy
16779 Lucas Ferry Rd
Athens, AL 35611
mybela.org