

Building Blocks Learning Center

125 Mechanics Street
Doylestown, PA 18901

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Director: Michele Burchell

Parent Handbook

Building Blocks Learning Center is housed in Andrews Hall, located on the corner of Church and Mechanics Streets in Doylestown, PA. We offer spacious, bright classrooms, a roomy outdoor play-yard, and use of an indoor gymnasium. The professional staff is composed of a director, certified teachers, and caring aides. Our regular school year runs from September to May.

We provide a safe, nurturing, and educational environment for young children in which to learn and grow. Our school is licensed by the PA Department of Education as a Private Academic School, and we follow the state's Learning Standards for Early Childhood.

BBLC aims to build your child's social-emotional, academic, and motor skills by gently encouraging independence, inspiring good school habits, introducing and practicing age-appropriate skills, and allowing for a balance of teacher- and child-led activities. Our fun and creative programs exceed the standards.

We take pride in fostering an early love of learning while expertly accommodating the developmental needs of children between two-and-a-half and five years old. We offer enrollment without regard to race, national origin, gender identification, ethnicity, disability, religion, or parental status.

This handbook will outline our school's policies and procedures. As a BBLC family, you are asked to make yourself familiar with this information and follow all the protocols outlined to ensure safety and fairness for all. Please save for your records and reference.

Classes/Programs Offered

Step One

(2.5- and very young 3-year-olds)	Tuesday/Thursday	9:00 A.M. - 11:45 A.M.
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Step Two

(older 3-year-olds and potty-trained; no diapers/pull ups)	Monday/Wednesday/Friday	9:00 A.M. - 11:45 A.M.
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3-Day A.M. Pre-K

(4 by Aug. 31)	Monday/Wednesday/Friday	9:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.
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5-Day A.M. Pre-K

(4 by Aug. 31)	Monday through Friday	9:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.
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(3-Day and 5-Day PreK students may be combined, based on enrollment)

Full Day Pre-K

(4 by Aug. 31)	Monday through Friday	9:00 A.M. – 2:50 P.M.
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Pre-K Extension

Tuesday/Thursday	12:00 P.M. - 2:50 P.M.
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Building Blocks Learning Center

Policies and Procedures

Arrival/Departure

There are two ways to arrive and depart from BBLC. First, parents may park in our school parking lot/surrounding area and escort their children, by hand, to/from the door along the back driveway. Second, parents may drive through our driveway loop. Cars should first line up in our parking lot and enter the driveway behind the school according to our guidelines. Parents then escort their children, by hand, to awaiting staff at the back arrival door. Never leave a child unattended. Driveway guidelines must be followed to ensure safety and fairness. Children are to remain buckled in car seats until cars come to a complete stop in our driveway. Our arrival door is open from 9:00 to 9:15 a.m.

Departure times are staggered, based on program.

- *Parents are to provide names of adults (18+) who are authorized to transport children (at any time) on dismissal cards. Individuals must have photo ID ready to display to BBLC staff for children to be released. In case of a change in dismissal plans, and an adult not listed on the dismissal card will pick up, parents must notify BBLC in writing (note/email) or via phone call. That person must have photo ID ready for viewing.*
- *If there is any suspicion that an adult is under the influence of a controlled substance or not capable of safely transporting a BBLC student, the child will not be released, and an alternate adult will be arranged for transport.*

Late/Midday Arrival

If children are late and miss the open arrival door, or if a parent needs to pick up a student before the regular dismissal time, please come to the left-most front door on Mechanics Street (near the paver courtyard with benches) and call/text the posted phone number (not the landline). Do not ring any buzzers to gain entrance to the school; this disrupts the business of DPC. Photo ID should be ready to display, if needed.

- *There are no accommodations for early arrival or late departure. If a true emergency occurs and a child must arrive early or depart late, the child will be under the supervision of the director.*
- *If a family is more than 15 minutes late for pick-up, there is a charge of \$10 the first occurrence and \$20 each additional occurrence. It is the responsibility of the parent to be aware of pick-up times for class, Lunch Bunch, and add-on programs. Late pick up can cause anxiety in our young students and disruption to our staff schedule.*

Closings

BBLC will consider the decisions made by the Central Bucks School District for closings or late openings due to inclement weather as a guide. However, BBLC may make alternate decisions based on the condition of our building's surrounding roads, parking lot, and campus, and on the status of electricity. If a delay is called, then we will offer abbreviated preschool classes from 10:00/11:00 to 12:15/12:30, with no walk-in Lunch Bunch. It is not the normal policy of BBLC to attempt to make up any lost school days due to inclement weather. We will send emailed/texted notifications regarding school closures or delays. Please be sure to check for any communication. BBLC reserves the right to close or delay for any other emergency/unforeseen circumstance.

Snacks/Birthdays/Lunch

BBLC provides snack and water daily. Children with special dietary needs/food allergies are asked to notify the school and supply their own safe snacks. We are not a nut-free institution.

If you wish, a sealed, store-bought snack may be provided for a birthday. This needs to be arranged with the teacher in advance. Colored frosting, either pastel or vibrant, is not permitted at BBLC (chocolate/vanilla is fine); full-sized cupcakes are also discouraged. We will gladly distribute paper birthday invitations in class, ONLY if the ENTIRE class is included.

BBLC offers a one-hour "Lunch Bunch" which is an extension of the school day and can be used on a daily drop-in basis (Mon-Thurs) for an additional small charge (\$10 per day/\$45 for a discounted punch card of 5 uses). A proper lunch box is required (not just a Bento box). The fee/punch card is to be placed directly in the child's name-labeled lunch box. Parents supply the child's lunch, SPILL-PROOF beverage, utensils, and two napkins. All items (including the beverage) need to fit inside of the lunch box and DO NOT need to be individually labeled. BBLC does not cool/heat lunches. BBLC may cancel this program at any time, with ample notice. The driveway loop will be open for dismissal from Lunch Bunch.

Lunch Bunch dismisses at 12:45 for Step One/Two and at 1:00 for A.M. PreK students.

Calendars/Communication

A year-at-a-glance calendar (subject to change) will be distributed over the summer and at the start of the school year. Specific classroom calendars will go home each month, and a monthly school newsletter will be sent electronically to keep our parents fully informed of activities, events, and news. Classroom teachers will also send home brief weekly updates via email. Needed information is included in each correspondence, so please note important dates and happenings. The reading of these communications is vital to the strengthening of the home-school connection—parents are asked to read, comprehend, and respond appropriately. BBLC typically uses one primary email address per family, unless other arrangements have been made. Families are also required to register to receive texts from the school. Parent conferences are held twice a school year, and formal progress reports are completed for Pre-K students.

Field Trips

Field trips are planned to support and enrich our curriculum. Parents are notified of trip details and fees in advance and asked to complete a permission slip. These excursions are designed to allow our students to experience additional enriching activities in conjunction with the class curriculum. Field trips require parents to transport the children; some trips will allow guests to attend, while other trips are only for the children and BBLC staff. In case of inclement weather, attempts will be made to reschedule outdoor trips.

Supplies/School Attire

Children will need a full-sized backpack, large enough to carry folders, show-n-tell items, lunch boxes, and extra clothes. A full change of clothes (top/bottom/undergarments/socks and diapering supplies, if needed for Step One students) in a name-labeled Ziplock must be always included in the backpack. Washable play clothes are strongly suggested for school. Although smocks are used when necessary, clothing cannot be completely protected from paints, markers, etc. Easy on/off clothing choices are ideal. Avoid one-piece garments like rompers, overalls, and onesies. Closed-toe, sneaker-like footwear is also required. Sandals and boots/UGGS are not the safest choice for playing in the gym or in the recess yard, or for walking on the steps. For those walking to school in rain boots, sneakers should be sent in the backpack for school use. Hairstyles that cover the eyes are not safe for school; kindly pull/clip/pin hair back.

Please be sure to **name-label everything**. This includes sweaters, jackets, coats, hats, mittens, the outsides of lunch boxes, and insides of backpacks. If you do not wish to write on the garment itself, medical tape or Band-aids work well.

Except for show-n-tell days or specially arranged events, do not send toys or trinkets to school. Excessive amounts of key chains clipped to backpacks or elaborate jewelry/wristwatches can also create challenges for our young group environment; please limit these items and use your best judgement. If the school deems an item as unsafe or as a distraction, we will pack the item into the child's backpack to be enjoyed at home.

Tuition/Payments

Tuition payments (cash, check, money order) are due the first school day of each month and can be sent in folders, using the tuition envelope provided. Arranging recurring check payments with your bank is welcome. Please be sure to schedule so that payment arrives by the first of each month. Tuition is for an enrollment seat and is due whether or not the child attends all school days. Absence due to sickness, travel, or inclement weather does not excuse full monthly payment. Checks are to be made out to "BBLC" and written solely in BLUE or BLACK ink. Any check returned will assess a \$36 fee. Tuition received after the 8th of the month will be charged a \$20 late fee. After two returned checks in a school year, payments will only be accepted in cash or money order. If you will be away when tuition is due, please arrange to submit tuition before you leave to avoid late charges. There will be no invoices/bills; your tuition envelope will be your reminder. Checks and paper currency are acceptable forms of payment; no coins can be accepted at BBLC.

Add-On Programs

Add-on programs are offered to Step 2 and Pre-K students. Parents can register for these programs monthly, on a first-come basis. Once the programs are full, emailed communication is sent. If a child is absent when registration forms go home/are to be returned, emailed communication must be used. A seat cannot be granted simply because of school absence.

Health Policies/Injuries

Students are to be 24 hours fever-, vomit-, and diarrhea-free, and able to successfully and comfortably participate in the school day. If an antibiotic is prescribed, child must be on medication for 24 hours before returning. BBLC may refuse admission to any child displaying symptoms of illness or communicable disease or may send home any child who develops symptoms. When absence is due to contagious disease, a note from a physician or negative test result may be required to return to school. Students may also be required to remain out of school until the contagious period has ended. Except for emergencies, BBLC does not administer any medication. Epi-Pens and inhalers must be accompanied by an individualized action plan and medical signature and will be stored at school. If a child is injured at school, staff will administer basic first aid, and an OUCH report will go home with details. If a child arrives at school with an injury, please consult with the director. Medical release or clearance forms may be required to attend school. All BBLC employees are Mandated Reporters and will make a ChildLine report with reasonable cause to do so. It is not our position to further investigate any suspicions of abuse, neglect, or endangerment; Child Protective Services will determine any next steps.

Enrollment/Tuition Policy

BBLC has an open enrollment policy, thereby accepting students throughout the year on a space-available basis. A Registration Agreement, Emergency Contact/Info Form, immunization record, non-refundable registration fee, and May tuition deposit are required. Class space cannot be promised, reserved, or confirmed unless the registration forms and fees are submitted.

May's tuition deposit is only refunded after one month of attendance and with written notice a full two weeks in advance of withdrawal. Summer withdrawal before the start of school must be submitted in writing by June 15 to receive a refund of the May tuition deposit, with no exceptions.

Current families receive priority enrollment, beginning in December. Families new to BBLC will be granted seats beginning in January.

Each child is unique and not every program may be able to support every child's needs. If, after several strategies have been implemented, reasonable accommodations made, and open communication with parents has been offered, BBLC has determined that our regular staff simply cannot meet a child's individual needs, then the child may be referred to an alternate placement. If a child's behavioral patterns pose a risk to the physical/emotional safety and well-being of him/herself or to the physical/emotional safety and well-being of others (students and staff), then enrollment at BBLC will be modified or suspended or ended.

