

# Welcome to Belmont Academy

Choosing a school or childcare center is a difficult decision for any parent. Thank you for putting your trust in Belmont Academy. It is our goal to give each and every child the love, nurturing and education they deserve.

Communication with parents is one of the most important parts of understanding the individual children we care for. This handbook was designed in order to let you know about our basic policies and procedures. If you have any comments, questions, or suggestions regarding this handbook, please do not hesitate to speak with our school's director. Your input is very important to us. If you ever wish to discuss your child's development or behavior, feel free to visit with their teacher. Our faculty and staff are always willing and happy to talk to parents about their children. We have an open door policy that encourages parent participation in our program.

Once again, thank you for putting your trust in Belmont Academy. We look forward to getting to know you and your children.

## Our Mission Statement

Belmont Academy is dedicated to providing a welcoming, nurturing, safe, supportive environment, where children can explore, learn, and thrive with warmth and respect and without discrimination on the basis of sex, race, creed, ability, religion, national origin, or ancestry.

## Our Philosophy

- We believe that all children are born with the desire to learn and acquire knowledge about the world they live in. It is our goal to foster an excitement for learning and critical thinking.
- We believe children learn and grow through hands on experiences. We are committed to providing space, books, materials and activities that reflect the interest of our children.
- We believe that exposure to a multitude of cultures, languages, types of music, and beliefs help foster a child's tolerance and understanding of others.
- We believe in modeling and encouraging peaceful problem-solving skills for the child to take into adulthood.
- We believe in encouraging all children in their desire to be independent.
- We believe that it is integral to the development of the whole child to form a partnership between teacher and parent. We recognize parents as the most significant adults in a child's life.
- We believe that it is important to become familiar with each family's unique characteristics, strengths, culture, and traditions.

## Licensing

Belmont Academy is licensed by the Employment Department's Office of Child Care. We are licensed to have several classrooms with adequate staffing in each classroom based on the student to teacher ratio. All of our staff members are current on the childcare criminal background registry, have current certification in infant and child CPR and First Aid and each year take a minimum of 20 in-service training hours in Early Childhood Education. You are welcome to review our most recent certification records.

## Arrival and Departure Policies

Parents are responsible for signing their children in and out at the front desk. **We ask that you physically take your child to their classroom or gym and hand your child off to a teacher. All children must be with an adult at all times. They may never go to classrooms or be outside on playground by themselves.** Please do not drop your child off in the office. These rules are extremely important for attendance records and safety measures.

If you or a regularly designated person is unable to pick up your child, please call or leave a note at the front desk giving authorization for someone else to pick up your child. The person will be asked to show photo I.D. for your child's protection. Also, for security reasons please close the security gates behind you upon entering or leaving the school.

## Attendance and Absenteeism Policies

To help our teachers plan their lessons as well as keep our cook apprised of accurate numbers

for lunches and snacks, we need to keep accurate attendance records. Please call the office by 9:00 am if your child cannot attend on any given day.

In order to provide the best care for our children and a fair wage to our employees, we cannot give credit from the monthly tuition for time you are not present due to illness or other planned activities. Our lease, teachers, insurances, and business expenses must be paid without regard to attendance. Please review the Tuition Policies/Parent Contract for information about annual two week vacation credit.

## Tuition and Payment Policies

- **REGISTRATION FEE/ DEPOSIT:** A \$150 non-refundable registration fee plus one month's tuition will be charged to each child upon enrollment.
- **TUITION PAYMENT:** Tuition is due in advance on the first of the month unless other arrangements have been made. There will be a \$20 late fee on any tuition paid after the due date. Tuition payments must be made within five days of the due date in order to continue school privileges. If you would like to pay twice a month, one half tuition is due on the 1st and the remainder by the 15th. **Tuition rates are subject to change with 30-day notice given by center.**
- **LATE PICK UP FEE:** Children who are not picked up by our 6:00 pm closing time will be charged **\$4.00 per minute, per child until picked up.** Late fees are due before your child can attend again.
- **RETURNED CHECKS:** There is a \$25 charge for returned checks.
- **VACATION:** Students will be awarded 2 weeks (2 x the # of enrolled days) vacation credit each September. Families enrolling in March through May will be awarded 1-week vacation after attending for a minimum of two months. Vacation credit must be used a week at a time and may not be applied for days the student is in attendance. Vacation credit may not be carried over. To receive your vacation credit, you must advise us of vacation plans at least two weeks in advance and preferably prior to billing period.
- **ILLNESS:** Full tuition is due for absence due to illness, emergency closures, or absence from school.
- **WITHDRAWAL:** 30 days written, pre-paid notice is required.
- **EXTRA DAYS/DROP IN DAYS:** Extra days **may** be available upon request. Extra days will be charged at the current hourly rate (\$10) or daily rate (\$50) depending on the number of hours in attendance.
- **BEFORE/AFTER CARE FOR SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN:** There will be an extra \$35 charge for attendance on no PPS school closure days. You will be charged **\$20** if you fail to advise Belmont that your child will not need to be picked up from school.
- **HOLIDAYS:** The center is open year-round. Full tuition is due for scheduled closures. (Rates have been calculated to accommodate these closures.  
**(We are closed New Year's Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, the Friday before Labor Day, Labor Day, two days at Thanksgiving, and two days at Christmas.)**

## Termination of Service Policies

### Termination of Service by Parent

If it is necessary to withdraw your child from Belmont Academy, we do require one month's written notice, in order to avoid full tuition payment for that month. Earlier notice would be greatly appreciated.

### Termination of Service by Center

Belmont Academy reserves the right to re-evaluate the continued participation in the program of any child who has needs we cannot meet. Mitigating circumstances including damaging physical property of the school, or behaviors detrimental to the health, progress, or safety of the other children or staff members, may result in Belmont Academy requesting the withdrawal of the child from the program. Unless the child is in immediate danger to himself or others, two weeks' notice will be given should the center request withdrawal of the child from the school. We reserve the right to refuse service to anyone at any time at the discrepancy of Belmont Academy.

## Supplies

## **Blankets/Sheets**

We ask that you bring one blanket (no larger than crib sized) for your child to use during rest time. We also ask that you bring a crib-sized sheet for the napping mats for warmth and comfort. We ask that each week you take your child's bedding home for laundering.

## **Clothing**

- As the children are busy throughout the day, accidents of all kinds can occur. We ask that you provide two extra changes of clothes for your child with their name clearly labeled.
- We are inclined to get a bit of fresh air everyday, therefore it is important your child comes to school prepared for Oregon's unpredictable weather.
- When summer approaches we will ask you to sign a waiver to administer sunscreen to your child. The sunscreen must be provided by you, cannot be aerosol spray, and must be clearly labeled with the child's name.

## **Diapers**

If your child is in diapers, we ask that you keep a constant supply of diapers, disposable or cloth, available for your child. We provide baby wipes at no extra charge. Parents need to supply any diaper creams and names should be clearly marked on the container.

# **Infant Care**

## **Sleeping**

Each infant has their own crib and is put down for naps on their own schedule. All infants will lie on their backs and be checked frequently. We cannot use blankets or swaddlers with infants for safety reasons and ask that you bring a small crib sheet (pack & play size), and arms-free sleep sack. Please make sure they are labeled clearly with your child's name. We also ask that on each Friday you take your child's bedding home for laundering.

## **Food**

All bottles and baby food must be brought by parents and be in containers clearly marked with the child's name. Food requiring refrigeration should be refrigerated immediately upon arrival.

Bottles and baby food jars should have enough milk, formula, or food for one feeding only. All unconsumed food and drink, by law, must be discarded to prevent growth of bacteria, and cannot be left at room temperature or re-refrigerated.

Unless a parent notifies staff, babies will be fed on demand. Never more than four hours will lapse between feedings. Mothers are welcome to breastfeed their baby at any time of the day.

## **Diapering**

We ask that parents provide a cloth or disposable diaper supply (your choice) and a change of clothes for your child. Diapers are checked frequently throughout the day to ensure your child stays dry and clean. All cloth diapers and soiled clothing will be treated as soiled laundry and placed, un-rinsed in a sealed, waterproof bag for home laundering.

# **What Not to Bring to School**

Belmont Academy cannot assume responsibility for loss or damage to any personal possessions children bring to the center. We ask that all toys, dolls, purses, jewelry, balloons, games, money, valuables, sweets, and such be left at home. There are special "Share" days in each classroom when children can bring certain items to share with their classmates. Children and parents will be notified of these days in advance. If personal possessions of any kind get lost at school, we do have a lost and found located in the main office. Small toys often do not make it to lost and found.

# **Meals and Snacks**

## **Snacks**

We provide a mid-morning and mid-afternoon snack to all children attending during those hours. All snacks include at least two food groups.

## **Lunch**

Lunch is included in full-time tuition. We plan a five-week, rotating menu so that our children get plenty of variety in their meals. Menus are posted in the office. You may have a copy to take home to keep track of what we are serving each day. If your child cannot have what is on the menu and substitutions cannot be made, we ask that you send a lunch from home.

## **Meals and Snacks from Home**

Belmont Academy is **nut free**. This includes peanuts, all tree nuts, coconut and any nut products. Your child's lunches or snacks from home may not include nuts, peanut butter or any other nut products. All lunches and snacks from home must be in a lunch box/bag clearly labeled with your child's name. If you choose to bring your child's lunch from home, it must meet all USDA food requirements, meaning it must have an item containing something from every food group. If you want your child to refrain from having cow's milk here at Belmont, you must have a doctor's note. If food from home is intended for other children in your child's class (i.e., a birthday party, holiday party, and candy) by law, it must be purchased from a store and dispensed from its original container.

## **Classroom Schedule**

Classroom daily schedules vary from class to class. Schedules are posted in the classrooms and will be given out when signing up and upon movement to the next class.

## **Placement into Older Classes**

A child is assessed for placement into the next class by chronological age, and in their social, emotional and physical development. The availability of an open spot also influences the move. Classroom teachers discuss the child's readiness and, if the move is imminent, will begin preparing the child for a move by scheduling classroom visits.

## **Assessment of Child's Progress**

All age groups are assessed formally and informally to ensure that the teachers plan their curriculum goals and activities to support individualized learning. Our teachers observe, record, and document each child's emotional and cognitive development throughout the year.

We perform a formal age-appropriate ASQ assessment on each child at the beginning of each school year. The first assessment is usually performed in the Fall or within 45 days upon entering our program. Either the ASQ or another assessment will be performed again later in the year. If the assessment results indicate concerns in certain areas, a conference will be scheduled to discuss ways to assist the child. Pre-Kindergarten also assess students twice a year for kindergarten readiness. All of our assessments are kept in the child's folder to follow their development throughout our program.

## **Parent Conferences**

Your input is very important to us. If you ever wish to discuss your child's development or behavior, feel free to request a conference with their teacher. Our faculty and staff are always willing and happy to talk to parents about their children.

## **Parent Support/Family Involvement**

We encourage and welcome our families to participate in class activities, school events, and to share family hobbies and traditions. Children feel very special when their parents join in our fun by:

- Leading an activity, sharing a book or story related to your culture or traditions.
- Sharing a special talent or activity related to your occupation,
- Joining the class for holiday parties,

- Participating in class field trips,
- Joining us for part of our day.

Our center has an open door policy. We strongly encourage and welcome parents and family members to visit Belmont Academy anytime. Visitors must sign in and out on the visitor log located in the office. At no time should a visitor or volunteer, who is not enrolled in the Central Background Registry, have unsupervised access to children including during an emergency.

## Communicating with Families

In addition to conversations with your child's teachers during drop off and pickup, there are many opportunities to keep informed about what is happening in the classroom and center:

- Parent info board in office and classrooms
- Weekly lesson plans
- Newsletters (Jr. Preschool, Preschool, Pre-K)
- Email (make sure we always have your correct email address)
- Hollie's email- [holliek@belmontacademy.org](mailto:holliek@belmontacademy.org), Rachel's email- [rachelv@belmontacademy.org](mailto:rachelv@belmontacademy.org)
- Belmont Academy Facebook page
- Brightwheel

## Guidance & Discipline Policy

At Belmont Academy we treat each child with respect and dignity. We strive to *guide* rather than discipline our children. We never tolerate emotional abuse or punishment. We understand that our children are still working on their social and emotional skills. Knowing this, our approach is to focus on prevention. We believe that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure! Our program works to prevent problem situations from occurring in the following ways:

- We plan age appropriate activities that keep children motivated
- We model the kind of behavior we expect from our children
- We use positive reinforcements by encouraging the child to succeed
- We acknowledge and accept the child's feelings
- We establish clear rules and limits
- We encourage children to verbalize feelings and frustrations
- We give choices as often as possible unless in a safety situation where a choice is not an option.
- We implement child guidance techniques consistently and appropriately based on each child's individual needs and specific situations.

If preventative measures are not enough, with positive discipline techniques, we do the following:

- Redirect the child and help engage the child in another activity, or if this doesn't work;
- Remove the child from the situation to focus on the child's behavior in a calm manner.
- Parents will be notified of challenging behaviors in cases where reoccurring challenges exist. It is an opportunity to work in close partnership with parents to address child's difficulties by developing consistency between home and school. Challenging behavior is any behavior that:
  - (1) Interferes with a child's learning, development and success at play
  - (2) Is harmful to the child, other children, or adults,
  - (3) Puts a child at high risk for later social problems or school failure.

Belmont Academy will not tolerate the infliction of physical pain on a child as a means of controlling behavior. This includes, but not limited to, spanking, shaking, slapping, thumping, or pinching a child.

## Child Abuse Policy

All staff of Belmont Academy are mandated reporters and are required by law to report any suspected abuse, neglect or maltreatment on the part of an employee, parent, family friend or stranger. If abuse is suspected it will be reported to the Child Protective Services Child Abuse Hotline 503-731-3100.

## **Transportation**

Belmont Academy provides transportation for children in grades K-6 to various schools in the local area. Please speak with office staff about which schools we are presently transporting to and from.

- If your child participates in our afterschool program and does not attend their school on any given day, or is dismissed early due to illness, etc., please notify Belmont Academy prior to 2:00 p.m. We will not leave the child's school until we are assured that your child is safely in your hands. There will be a \$20.00 fee for delaying the other children in their return to Belmont Academy.

Belmont Academy drivers adhere to safety procedures when transporting children. Only staff members with a current acceptable DMV driving record will transport children by buses or cars. Our insurance company annually reviews driving records. All of our drivers carry cellular phones to ensure communication between the schools and ourselves. Drivers deliver and pick children up at a designated area. Drivers will remain at the child's school until the children have been met by a teacher or have entered the school. Roll call is taken at each delivery and pick-up point.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips are a fun and educational part of our program. Parents will receive advance notification of the field trip and means of transportation in the parent information area of the office or classroom. Transportation will be provided by one or more of the following: school buses, public buses, staff vehicles, or by foot.

Center T-shirts will be worn on field trip days so that children may be easily identified. Parents are welcome to join us on our field trips. We will provide the same responsible adult supervision for these excursions as we do while your child is attending our school.

## **Sanitary Health Care Policies**

We realize that you are counting on us to keep your little ones healthy and safe. It is also necessary to keep our teachers healthy so they can be here to care for your children. We pride ourselves in adhering to fastidious sanitation procedures in order to keep our school a clean, safe environment.

### ***Hand Washing***

Children are encouraged and taught the importance and proper methods of hand washing. Children wash their hands with soap and water after using the restroom, after wiping noses, before and after each meal and snack, before cooking activities, after messy art projects, etc.

All staff members wash their hands after using the restroom, before and after diaper changing or toilet training, after coming into contact with any bodily fluid, before feeding a child or handling food, after assisting a child wiping their nose, and before and after food preparation.

### ***Soiled Laundry***

In order to reduce the chances of spreading infections, we do not launder children's soiled clothing. All items will be placed without rinsing in a sealed, moisture-proof bag and returned to parents. In the event of an accident, the child will be dressed in their extra change of clothing.

## **Medications, Injuries and Illness Policies**

The health policy of Belmont Academy is designed to best meet the needs of our children, parents and staff, and to meet the State Child Care Rules and Regulations.

**When should my child stay home?**

A child who is not feeling well and cannot participate in a meaningful way needs the TLC of home. We do our best to prevent the spread of illness through careful sanitation procedures. We ask that you do your best to prevent the spread of illness by keeping your child home when displaying any symptom listed below.

**Please keep your child at home if they:**

- Have a fever of 100 degrees or above,
- Have had a fever within the last 24 hours,
- Complains of tummy ache or headache accompanied by a fever, however slight, or has vomited within the last 24 hours,
- Displays difficult breathing (wheezing) or rapid respirations; coughing severely
- Complains of pain,
- Have diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool per day),
- Have skin or eye lesions or rashes which are severe, including pink eye,
- Have a sore throat, or mouth sores
- Have head lice or nits
- Signs of severe illness: unusual lethargy, undefined irritability, persistent discomfort crying or difficult breathing
- Symptoms of a contagious childhood disease

**Absence due to illness**

Please call the center if your child will be absent and let us know why. Contagious illnesses must be posted in the classroom and office.

**If your child becomes ill at the center**

If your child complains of illness or is found to be ill, they will rest in an area separate from other children and parents will be notified for pickup immediately. If we do not reach you after a half hour we will try again and begin to call your child's emergency contacts on file. If arrangements cannot be made to pick up your child within that hour, there will be a \$15 per hour additional fee for the one-on-one care we must provide.

**IF YOUR CHILD IS ILL, THEY MAY NOT RETURN TO SCHOOL UNTIL THEY ARE SYMPTOM FREE FOR AT LEAST 24 HOURS.**

***Medications***

By law, we are not allowed to administer medication without written consent from you. Medication must be in the original container and labeled with the child's name and dosage. We ask that you follow these procedures when it is necessary to bring medications (prescription or otherwise):

1. Sign the Daily Medication Log: Name, medication, dosage, and time;
2. Check the medicine in at the front desk;
3. Notify your child's teacher of the medicine along with any special instructions.

***Injuries & Accidents***

If your child should sustain a minor injury, first aid will be administered by a staff member. An accident report will be completed by staff member to advise you of the circumstances of the injury.

***Emergency Medical Care***

In the event of a serious medical or life-threatening emergency, the center will administer CPR, call 911, and contact the child's parents. If the paramedics deem it necessary, the child will be transported to a hospital at the parent's expense. In all cases of injury or illness parents will receive a copy of the accident report.

## **Screen Time Policy**

It is very infrequent that our preschool and pre-kindergarten students will watch an age appropriate, 30 minute or less video related to our instructional goals, i.e., Magic School Bus, Letter Factory, Fire Safety Video, or social emotional skills building video. We have an alternative activity available for those children not wishing to participate.

## **Weather Related Closures**

In the event of inclement weather, Belmont Academy will make every attempt to open. However, to preserve the safety of our staff and children, we will remain closed or close early if conditions deem it necessary. If we do have a delayed opening or closure, Belmont Academy families will be notified of the decision prior to 6:30 am in the following way:

- Local news stations and websites: Look under school closures, Private Schools
- A message sent through the Brightwheel app

We will make every effort to remain open for the working parents; however, if we find it necessary to be closed we will not be able to credit or discount tuition fees.

## **Emergency Drills**

Belmont Academy practices regular fire drills, stop, drop and roll drills, earthquake drills, and lock down drills.

## **Evacuation Without Reentry Policy**

Although unlikely, Belmont students could be in a situation where they would need to be evacuated from the school without being able to reenter any of its buildings. In this event, we plan to take the children to the public library located on Cesar Chavez Blvd and SE Yamhill.

We are prepared for such an event and maintain a copy of emergency phone numbers and each child's emergency medical sheet in a notebook that is easily transportable. The Assistant Director, or in her absence the director, will take the notebook, attendance sheets and two cell phones. Teachers will take classroom attendance sheets and ensure the students reach the library in an orderly manner. The director or assistant director will then alert our service (Flashalert) that notifies news media of emergency evacuations or closures. We will keep you updated through this service. We will then begin calling and emailing parents to advise them where their children may be picked up. We ask that parents do this in an orderly fashion and always advise the teacher and assistant director or director that you are taking your child.

## **Lock Down Policy**

If for any reason our school should be required to go into emergency "lock down," all children will be moved into the main building gym if deemed necessary. All outside gates and doors will be locked. We will notify our parents through Brightwheel. Please respond if you get our message. We will call if parents do not respond to our message.