

Dear New Family,

We would like to extend a warm welcome to you as you are now a part of our Bright Start family. We hope that you will feel a sense of community with the other families enrolled at Bright Start and with all of the staff. Experience has shown that a strong relationship of cooperation and support between Bright Start staff and each of our families is what makes this such a great place and sets us apart from other centers. We pride ourselves in having a very open, loving, and inviting atmosphere. Please feel free to contact us anytime you need anything or have any questions, comments, or concerns!

Our primary focus is the health and safety of our entire population of children, teachers, managers, and families. We strictly adhere to the rules and regulations set forth by the Virginia Department of Social Services and the Alexandria Health Department and Fire Code Administration. Our policies are designed to facilitate the operation of a premier center, and we request your assistance in observing these rules and procedures. Please read our Parent's Manual and ensure that you are receiving the weekly emails, so that you can stay fully informed and up-to-date on our practices.

At Bright Start Learning Center, children's natural inclination to learn through exploration and play is central to our program. We believe in creating an "optimal learning environment" for all of our children, which takes into account various factors such as the training of our staff, the available learning materials, the age and development, and interest and preferences of the children in each classroom, and the spacing of furniture and room setup. As professionals in the early childhood field, our teachers focus on the whole child when planning lessons that will engage and challenge them on a daily basis.

As important, children need to feel loved, appreciated, and respected at school. Our goal is to help your child develop a sense of security, belonging and support in a loving and nurturing environment. Children leave for Bright Start well prepared for kindergarten, both socially, emotionally, and academically.

As you review the packet of information that we have provided to you, please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions. (703-370-8414) or management@brightstartva.com.

Again, welcome to our family! We look forward to getting to know you and your child!

Sincerely,

The Bright Start Management Team



WELCOME TO THE TEDDY BEARS CLASS!

Hello Teddy Bears Family,

Welcome! We are excited to meet you and your little one. We take pride in ensuring that our classroom is your child's home away from home. We recognize that it can be difficult to leave your child and want to assure you that we will take excellent care of him or her. Please know that we love the children in our classroom and always want what is best for all of them. If we ever have any questions or concerns, we will reach out to you. We view the care of your child as a partnership with you.

Our classroom is divided into three areas: The lower class area, next to the entrance, the upper class area, and the nap area. The lower and upper class areas are both equipped with diaper changing stations, jumperoos, exersaucers, swings, and toys for the children. Each section accommodates up to nine babies. The nap area has been designed to allow the children a separate quiet area for the babies to nap in their cribs.

Every day you can expect a diaper change every two hours, activity time, outside time, and feeding times. We recognize that each child is on an individual schedule and we try hard to accommodate each child's feeding and napping needs. We also try to help the children get into a routine to sleep in their own cribs when possible.

We look forward to getting to know your child and you as well. Please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns.

Thank you,

The Teddy Bears Team



Teddy Bears Lead Teacher



Ms. Mayra

Ms. Mayra, the Teddy Bear Lead Teacher has over 10 years of experience working with infants at Bright Start. She obtained her Child Development Associate Credential (the most widely recognized credential in early childhood education) in December 2016 and continues to participate in a wide range of professional development opportunities to enhance her knowledge and skills. Ms. Mayra loves to work with infants and especially enjoys facilitating each child's mastery of developmental milestones. In her free time, Ms. Mayra loves to spend time with her two nephews and niece.

What to Bring on the First Day of School

- ❖ A sleeve of diapers
- ❖ Bottles for the day (no glass please), must be premixed and other than warming, ready to serve
- ❖ Pacifier if your child uses one
- ❖ A lovey if your child uses one (e.g., a stuffed animal)
- ❖ Extra clothing (we recommend at least 3 full sets of clothes to be kept in the cubby)
- ❖ Diaper cream
- ❖ Sunscreen (if your child is over 6 months and you do not want him or her to use Bright Start's sunscreen)
- ❖ Emergency formula (unopened) to be kept in cubby in case of emergency
- ❖ Any enrollment paperwork that you have not yet turned in

Parents, please make sure that you:

⇒ Sign your baby in and out on Brightwheel and move his or her white attendance card every day.

⇒ Help us by filling out daily information on Brightwheel, including for example, last time your baby ate, last diaper change, how he or she slept, etc. and any other information that the staff will need to know.

⇒ Bring your baby to school with a clean diaper each morning. You are welcome to use our changing stations upon arriving to check your baby's diaper.

⇒ Label each bottle and bottle top with your baby's first and last name, date, and the order in which it is to be given to your baby.

⇒ Provide your baby with at least one weather appropriate change of clothing (including shoes) that is kept in his/her cubby.

⇒ Inform us of any changes in your baby's diet, schedule, medicines, etc. so that we can provide the best care.

⇒ Bring in a sippy cup labeled with your child's name. This will stay at the Center and will be washed daily.

⇒ Bring in any snacks that you would like your child to have. Please ensure that you are always mindful of Bright Start's food allergy policies when deciding on snacks.

⇒ Bring in any comfort items that your child will need for naptime – blanket, animal, pacifier, etc.

⇒ Please understand that our first priority is the children, so we may not be able to respond to Brightwheel messages right away. If something is urgent, please call us rather than send a message.



Teddy Bears General Schedule

7:00 – 9:00 (Arrival & Diaper Change); Tummy Time, Exersaucers, & Jumpers

9:30 – 10:15 Individualized Developmental Guidance based on Lesson Plans

10:15 – 10:45 Circle/Group Time: Songs, Story time, Finger plays, Bubbles

10:45 – 11:00 Getting Ready to Go Outside & Diaper Changes

11:00 – 12:00 Outside Time

Lunch – after lunch: activities and songs

1:00 – 2:00 Diaper Changes, Balls, Tunnels, Soft Blocks, & Incline Wedge (Lunch)

2:00 – 3:00 Small Group activity by age group

3:00 – 4:00 Diaper Changes, Small Manipulatives, Tummy Time, & Floor Toys

4:00 – 4:30 Music & Movement

4:30 – 5:00 Individualized Developmental Guidance based on Lesson Plans

5:00 – 6:00 Floor Time & Story time; Diaper changes

6:00 – 6:30 Departures & Clean up time

*** Teacher-directed and individualized instruction occurs throughout the day based on the needs of each child and his or her own eating and napping schedules and diapering needs. The above schedule is a general schedule of the day as each baby in this class requires his or her own individual schedule.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How does the Teddy Bears classroom work with my child's current eating and/or napping schedule?

A: The babies in the Teddy Bears classroom are on an individualized schedule. Please be sure to keep us informed of any changes to how you are doing things at home. The most important thing is that we are keeping each other apprised of the daily routines.

Q: How do I know my older infant is ready to eat table food?

A: Your baby's teacher and pediatrician will work closely with you as your child begins to show signs of readiness to eat table food. Please be advised that your child's pediatrician may have specific recommendations with regard to your child's diet or other health needs.

Some signs that you may observe might be:

- Showing interest in trying to feed him/herself (grabbing at spoon or food)
- Refusing to be fed with a spoon
- Turning away from puree or spitting out of puree
- Chewing or mashing food
- Pincher grasp (child able to hold items with thumb and forefinger or with fist)

Q: When is the recommended time for my child to transition from formula or breast milk to whole milk?

A: Most pediatricians recommend that children abstain from drinking whole milk until they have reached at least one year of age. Your child's pediatrician may have specific recommendations for your child depending on his or hereditary and other health care needs.

Q: How do I know when it is time for my child to transition from drinking out of a bottle to a Sippy cup?

A: Your child's teachers will work closely with you to help you determine the most appropriate time for your child to transition from drinking out of a bottle to a Sippy cup. Many of our infants begin this process as early as 8 or 9 months and for others, it is closer to their one year birthday.

Q: What are some developmental goals that the teachers will have for my child while he or she is in this classroom?

A: The teachers of the Teddy Bears classroom work on supporting your child's development in all areas (physical, social-emotional, cognitive, language & literacy, and temperament).

Each week, activities are focused on a particular theme. The teachers select specific objectives for the children and observe and engage them in developmentally appropriate activities to support their development. Parent-teacher conferences are held bi-annually to discuss your

child's growth. If you ever desire to obtain information prior to the parent-teacher conference, please email the management team to set up a time to meet with your child's teacher.

Teddy Bear Songs

WELCOME SONG

Jack came to school today School today, school today.

Jack came to school today

Hi Jack Hi

*Repeat with every child's name

ABC Song

A, B, C, D, E, F, G

H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P,

Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, and Z.

Now I know my ABCs, Next time won't you sing with me.



IF YOU'RE HAPPY AND YOU KNOW IT

If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands (clap clap) If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands (clap clap) If you're happy and you know it, then your face will surely show it If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands. (clap clap)

If you're happy and you know it, stomp your feet (stomp stomp) If you're happy and you know it, stomp your feet (stomp stomp) If you're happy and you know it, then your face will surely show it If you're happy and you know it, stomp your feet. (stomp stomp)

If you're happy and you know it, shout "Hurray!" (hoo-ray!) If you're happy and you know it, shout "Hurray!" (hoo-ray!) If you're happy and you know it, then your face will surely show it If you're happy and you know it, shout "Hurray!" (hoo-ray!)

If you're happy and you know it, do all three (clap-clap, stomp-stomp, hoo-ray!) If you're happy and you know it, do all three (clap-clap, stomp-stomp, hoo-ray!) If you're happy and you know it, then your face will surely show it If you're happy and you know it, do all three. (clap-clap, stomp-stomp, hoo-ray!)

THE WHEELS ON THE BUS

The wheels on the bus go round and round Round and round, round and round The wheels on the bus go round and round All through the town. (Roll hands over each other)

The wipers on the bus go "Swish, swish, swish, Swish, swish, swish, swish, swish, swish" The wipers on the bus go "Swish, swish, swish" All through the town. (Put arms together in front of you and 'swish' like windshield wipers)

The door on the bus goes open and shut Open and shut, open and shut The door on the bus goes open and shut All through the town. (Cover eyes with hands on 'shut' and uncover them on 'open')

The horn on the bus goes "Beep, beep, beep Beep, beep, beep, beep, beep, beep" The horn on the bus goes "Beep, beep, beep" All through the town. (Pretend to honk horn)

The people on the bus go, "up & down, up & down, up & down, up & down" The people on the bus go, "up & down All through the town. (Put hands up and down)

The mommy on the bus says, "I love you, I love you, I love you" The daddy on the bus says, "I love you, too" All through the town. (Point to self on 'I', right hand over heart on 'love', and point to other on 'you')

Bright Start Policy Reminders

It is important that our parents are always mindful of some key policies and therefore ask that you review the ones below at this time.

Food Allergy Safe Policy:

To protect all of the children at the Center, we do not allow homemade food to be served to children other than your own. In addition, all food brought to the center must comply with our food allergy policy, even if it will only be eaten by your own child. In accordance with our policy, food must be labeled "school-safe" or it must be on our approved list of snacks and treats. Specifically,

- **Food labels that say "May contain peanuts or tree nuts" are NOT OK.**
- **Food labels that say "Made on equipment that also processes peanuts or tree nuts" are NOT OK.**
- **Food labels that say "Made in a facility that also processes peanuts or tree nuts" are NOT OK.**

Our safe snack list is available on our website. Please print it and have it as a ready resource. If you are sending food in of any kind, you **MUST** give it to the lead teacher and she will check it. **DO NOT** put food in your child's cubby or leave in his or her backpack. **DO NOT** allow your child to come into school with partially-eaten food in his or her hand.

Also, it is very important that your child wash his or her hands immediately upon arrival. Not only is this a good step to help prevent the spread of germs, it helps to minimize the risk of cross contamination if your child has been in contact with foods that may be allergens for other children.

Illness Notifications

If your child is diagnosed with a contagious illness, you must notify the office by phone call or email as soon as possible. It is not enough to notify the classroom via Brightwheel. We are required by our licensing regulations to post notices of such illnesses so that other parents are aware. In order to do this, we must have accurate and timely information from you. Also, please be mindful that your child must be fever free for at least 24 hours (without medication) before he or she can return to school. This helps to minimize spreading contagious illnesses.

Late Pick Ups

Bright Start closes at 6:30 pm. An on-time pick-up means that you have exited the building with your child by 6:30 not running in the door at 6:30 or lingering in the classrooms or Center beyond 6:30.

Late pick-ups cause hardships for the staff that are not able to leave on time, and for the children, who have had a long day at school. While many parents believe that an occasional late pick-up is

acceptable, one must remember that we have over 100 families enrolled. Late pick-ups are not acceptable, and Bright Start must enforce a strict policy to discourage such behavior.

Accordingly, in addition to a late fee, if you (i) pick your child up more than 15 minutes late or (ii) if you have picked your child up late more than one time in a calendar year (even if late by less than 15 minutes), you will lose care for the day immediately following the respective late pick-up. Continuing issues with on time pickups will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

Solutions will include adjusting the family's required pickup time to no later than 6:00 permanently or disenrollment.