



# BRIGHT BEGINNINGS

## LEARNING CENTER

**A ministry of University United Methodist Church**

### **New Mexico PreK Program Family Handbook**

**2024-2025**

*Revised July 1, 2024*

Located at 2000 S. Locust, Las Cruces, NM 88001  
Mailing Address: PO Box 1090, Mesilla Park, 88047  
Phone: 575-522-8220  
Email: [director@brightbeginnings-lc.org](mailto:director@brightbeginnings-lc.org)  
Website: [brightbeginnings-lc.org](http://brightbeginnings-lc.org)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

OVERVIEW	Page 4
Introduction	
New Mexico PreK	
Bright Beginnings Adapted Mission Statement	
Presupposition	
Philosophy	
Curriculum Statement	
Staff/Child Ratios	
PARENTS	Page 5
Parent Involvement/Volunteering	
Parent Organization	
Home and Preschool Communication	
FUNDRAISING	Page 6
ENROLLMENT, TUITION, and FEES	Page 7
Nondiscrimination Policy	
Eligibility	
Enrollment Procedures	
Tuition & Payment Options	
Tuition & Fees	
New Mexico Childcare Assistance	
Hours of Operation/Enrollment Options	
CALENDAR & SCHEDULE	Page 9
Calendar	
School Cancellation	
MEALS & SUPPLIES	Page 9
Meals	
Required Supplies	
Required Classroom Supplies & Materials	
Personal Items from Home	
Withdrawal Policy	
CLASSROOM PRACTICES	Page 10
Arrival / Departure	
Attendance & Tardy Policy	
Visitors	
Chapel Time	
Birthdays / Celebrations	
Field Trips	

CHILD & PARENT BEHAVIOR	Page 12
Guidance/Redirection Policy	
Incident Reporting	
Corrective Plan	
Suspension/Disenrollment Policy	
HEALTH and SAFETY	Page 14
Health & Safety Policy	
Notification	
Medication	
Serious Illness, Accident, or Injury	
EMERGENCY	Page 16
Emergency Notification	
Emergency Evacuation & Disaster Preparedness	
Emergency Lock-Down Procedures	
CONFIDENTIALITY	Page 17
Confidentiality Statement	
Child Abuse & Neglect	
Bright Beginnings Committee Contact	

## OVERVIEW

### Introduction

Bright Beginnings Learning Center (BRIGHT BEGINNINGS) is a private, Christian, non-profit childcare and preschool center. Within that context we offer two New Mexico PreK Program (NM PreK) classrooms. NM PreK classrooms are government funded classrooms aligned with the New Mexico Public School system. As such, PreK classrooms do not allow for specific religious education during “in-school” time/sessions. Therefore, NM PreK classrooms will *not* include specific religious teaching, or “Chapel Time” as do our private classrooms. However, all PreK children and families will be invited to attend and participate in religious-related activities that are outside of regular school hours, that are sponsored by BRIGHT BEGINNINGS and/or University United Methodist Church. Families are under no obligation and will experience no pressure to participate in any outside activities that are of a religious nature.

Because of the unique circumstances for the NM PreK classrooms, the Bright Beginnings NM PreK Program Family Handbook is an *adaptation* of our standard Bright Beginnings Family Handbook. The only changes you will see (if you were to look at both Handbooks), is in reference to religious beliefs and constructs. All other content, especially including policies, operations, and procedures, are consistent across both Handbooks.

### New Mexico PreK

New Mexico PreK (NM PreK) is a free program during the school year that delivers high-quality education in both community-based and school-based settings. NM PreK focuses on providing a fun, rewarding, and developmentally appropriate learning environment for children ages three and four. NM PreK teachers plan play-based activities and lessons oriented towards children’s physical, cognitive, language, and social-emotional stages of development.

<https://www.nmeccd.org/pre-k/>

### Bright Beginnings Adapted Mission Statement

Bright Beginnings Learning Center (BRIGHT BEGINNINGS) strives to bring about spiritual, physical, emotional, and intellectual well-being through relational wholeness.

BRIGHT BEGINNINGS provides a safe, nurturing environment in which children may grow and thrive. Using a child-centered curriculum, we facilitate opportunities for children to explore, negotiate with peers, and create their own learning experiences through hands-on activities such as music, art, gardening, free-play, and drama. We are an academy of learners – from the smallest to the largest. As we learn together and from each other, we create solutions, make new discoveries daily, and shine the light of peace and liberation in our world.

**Presupposition:** Children who are grounded in an ethical approach to being and doing will live, grow, and thrive. They will becoming effective adult leaders that have a passion for life-long learning; live lives of integrity and sincerity; understand relationships as integral to personal and societal wellbeing; and have the courage and conviction to stand for what is good, moral, and right.

## **Philosophy**

We believe learning should

- Be grounded in ethics
- Engage the whole child
- Be hands-on
- Cultivate child-centered teamwork
- Foster social-emotional awareness
- Engage the entire community

Our small class sizes and low student to teacher ratios (consistent with Safer Sanctuaries policies and practices) enable teachers to have a powerful impact on each child's development. Our teachers are experienced and knowledgeable about early childhood education through college course work and/or professional development classes. Classes have consistent schedules that balance teacher-directed and child-centered activities. Our teachers work collaboratively to provide an atmosphere that is safe and engaging for all children.

## **Curriculum Statement**

BRIGHT BEGINNINGS curriculum is based on developmentally appropriate thematic units and practices that emphasize hands-on learning experiences, ethical values, and opportunities for children to make choices in a safe and nurturing environment. Teachers apply a variety of approaches and provide daily opportunities for children to develop and enhance knowledge and skills in language and literacy; mathematical, science, and social studies; and fine and gross motor movements.

## **Staff/Child Ratios**

BRIGHT BEGINNINGS currently has a 3-Star FOCUS rating by the State of New Mexico. We are working toward a 4-Star, and then 5-Star rating over the current academic year. Because of our Safer Sanctuaries policy, our student-teacher ratios already reflect the minimum requirement for a 5-Star rating, which are:

- 18 months – 24 months: 1 teacher for every 4 children
- 2 years old: 1 teacher for every 6 children
- 3 years old: 1 teacher for every 9 children
- 4 & 5 years old: 1 teacher for every 10 children

# **PARENTS**

## **Parent Involvement/Volunteering**

BRIGHT BEGINNINGS encourages families to participate in special events, visit their child's classroom\*, and/or volunteer. Opportunities to share your gifts and talents (career, hobbies, music, etc.) with the children and staff are welcome. Regular volunteers are required to complete a comprehensive background check, paid for by BRIGHT BEGINNINGS.

Families are expected to participate in parent-teacher conferences as scheduled throughout the year. This is an opportunity to share in depth, your child's classroom experiences, growth, and development.

*\*We discourage parents and family members from "dropping in" to see a child in the middle of the day. When a child sees a parent/family member at the school, they believe that person has come to pick them up and take them home. When the family member leaves the child behind, it is unsettling for the child, making it difficult for the child to function normally within the classroom for the remainder of the day.*

### **Parent Organization**

BRIGHT BEGINNINGS is invested in creating an active Parent Organization. Involvement includes but is not limited to, input on programming and scheduling, opportunities for improvement, increasing parent engagement, fundraising, and special events. **If you are interested in leading or being a part of a Parent Organization, please let the Executive Director know.**

### **Home and Preschool Communication**

Preschool is a delightful time. We envision ourselves in partnership with families to provide the highest quality of care and childhood experiences possible. As such, we believe that on-going and open communication with families is essential. Some ways we facilitate this is through an annual calendar, newsletters, developmental assessments with parent-teacher conferences, conversation at drop-off and pick-up times, special events, and the Student Information System (SIS) childcare app. Families are welcome and encouraged to contact the Executive Director at any time, and for any reason.

## **FUNDRAISING**

Fundraising is an essential aspect of the financial framework of our School. BRIGHT BEGINNINGS is a blended private Christian childcare and preschool provider, and simultaneously offers free public New Mexico PreK classes. Both are non-profit enterprises with limited funding sources. To operate on a balanced budget, BRIGHT BEGINNINGS must take advantage of multitude resource options. In addition to tuition and fees, BRIGHT BEGINNINGS seeks out public and private grants, and welcomes the generosity of all donors, big and small. We also rely on multiple fundraising opportunities and events throughout the year to help us be financially solvent. **As a family of BRIGHT BEGINNINGS, you will be expected to participate in fundraising activities.**

We will always strive to be the best stewards possible of the resources that have been provided to us, including through the state, the church, our families, donors, fundraising, and grants.

## ENROLLMENT, TUITION, & FEES

### Non-Discrimination Policy

BRIGHT BEGINNINGS is an equal opportunity organization and does not discriminate based on ethnicity, gender, natural origin, disability, race, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background, or any other status prohibited by applicable law.

### Eligibility

BRIGHT BEGINNINGS offers childcare and preschool education for children ages 18 months – 5 years. Toddler classes are for children 18 months to 2 years, and older classes include children ages 2 to 3 years old. BRIGHT BEGINNINGS preschool classes, as well as New Mexico Early Pre-K and Pre-K classes, are for students who are 3 and 4 years old, respectively, by Sept. 1 of each year.

### Enrollment Procedures

Registration must be completed annually, is on a first come, first serve basis, and includes a non-refundable registration fee. Registration is not complete until the Registration Packet (including all required materials) has been submitted and parents/guardians have been notified by BRIGHT BEGINNINGS that their child has been accepted and enrolled. BRIGHT BEGINNINGS does maintain a waitlist, should enrollment be full at the time the Registration Packet is received. Families on the waitlist will be notified when a space is available on a first come, first serve basis.

Additional forms/documents may be required throughout the year for continued enrollment. NM PreK enrollment may require additional registration documents.

Children may be enrolled at any time during the semester so long as there is available space in an appropriate classroom. Available space is defined by the room capacity determined by the NM Early Childhood Education & Care Department (ECECD), and the staffing capacity of BRIGHT BEGINNINGS.

### Tuition and Payment Options

Although the NM PreK program is tuition free, **PreK students participating in the Aftercare program (3:00pm – 5:30pm) must make arrangements to pay for the extended hours**, which are not included in the NM PreK program.

BRIGHT BEGINNINGS accepts the following payment options:

- Self-pay by the child's family
- Payment through the New Mexico Childcare Assistant Program (we are happy to provide information and assistance upon request)
- Tuition free NM Early Pre-K and Pre-K enrollment (does not include Aftercare – from 3:00-5:30pm)

- A limited amount of scholarship funding is available; please inquire as needed

### **Tuition & Fees**

Aftercare tuition is based on the school year and is prorated into monthly rates. Therefore, tuition is *the same every month*. Discounts are *not* given for holidays, closure for inclement weather, illness, vacation, change of residence, or school breaks.

To assist parents, BRIGHT BEGINNINGS offers “**Bridge Week Camps**” during most weeks that the School is out on break (e.g. Spring Break, etc.). **These weeks are NOT part of the tuition & fees described above, and are NOT A PART OF THE NM PreK Program. A separate registration and fee will be required** to participate in any Bridge Week Camp.

Cost of Aftercare tuition is included in the Registration Packet. A **non-refundable** registration fee is due with ALL registration. Fees and discounts are described in the Registration Packet.

Aftercare tuition payments are due the 1<sup>st</sup> school day of each month. After the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month, any unpaid tuition will be considered late, and a \$30.00 fee will be charged. Additional fees will accrue at the rate of \$10.00 per day for each day thereafter, unless other payment arrangements have been made with the Executive Director.

### **New Mexico Childcare Assistance**

Families with students whose Aftercare tuition is paid through the New Mexico Childcare Assistance Program must ensure that their contract is current and active, and that the number of hours awarded are consistent with the number of hours of attendance at BRIGHT BEGINNINGS.

### **Hours of Operation/Enrollment Options**

BRIGHT BEGINNINGS is open from 7:30am – 5:30pm, M-F.

**BRIGHT BEGINNINGS** Enrollment Options include:

- 2 – 5 days per week attendance
- Full-day **or** half-day (morning or afternoon) attendance
- Flexible drop-off and pick-up times

**NM PreK** Options include:

- 5 days/ per week attendance
- 8am-3pm full-day only
- Aftercare supplemental option from 3:00-5:30pm is available for an additional fee (Self-pay or NM Child Care Assistance Program)



## CALENDAR & SCHEDULE

### Calendar\*

A draft annual Calendar is included in the Registration Packet. An updated Calendar will be provided at the beginning of the school year (fall semester) and will be posted on the BRIGHT BEGINNINGS website. It is subject to change, and families will be notified as soon as possible of any changes. BRIGHT BEGINNINGS recognizes that changes do impact families, and we will do our best to minimize changes.

To assist working parents, BRIGHT BEGINNINGS will offer “**Bridge Week Camps**” during most weeks that the School is out on break (e.g., Spring Break, etc.). **Bridge Week Camps are NOT included in the regular monthly tuition model, or the NM PreK Program. A separate registration and fee will be required** to participate in any/all Bridge Week Camps.

*\*NM Pre-K/Early Pre-K program is required to meet a predetermined number of hours and occasionally the calendar for those classes may differ slightly from the regular BRIGHT BEGINNINGS school calendar.*

### School Cancellation

Due to severe weather conditions or other emergency situations, there may be times when BRIGHT BEGINNINGS facilities will experience an unplanned closure. Emergency closing is at the discretion of the Executive Director or his/her designee. Notifications will be communicated via the Student Information System (SIS), which is the official communication mode for BRIGHT BEGINNINGS.

#### Severe Weather Conditions:

In the event of severe weather conditions, BRIGHT BEGINNINGS will typically adopt the decisions of the Las Cruces Public Schools in determining school closure.

#### Other Emergencies:

Other situations, including but not limited to electrical power failure, lack of water, lack of heat or air conditioning, hazardous road conditions, or other situations which may endanger the safety or health of children and employees, may result in an unplanned closure, and is at the discretion of the Executive Director or his/her designee.

## MEALS & SUPPLIES

### Meals

BRIGHT BEGINNINGS provides three healthy, nutritious, and good tasting meals made from scratch each day: Breakfast (8-9am); Lunch (12-1pm); Snack (2:45pm). We consider mealtime to be part of the curriculum. All meals/snacks are provided “family style.” This provides a positive environment for eating and socializing, for trying new food, and for children to learn to serve themselves and others, and to exercise appropriate “table manners.” Children should

NOT bring food from home when they enter the classroom. This could pose a safety problem for children with food sensitivities or severe allergies and is not allowed by our food contract.

BRIGHT BEGINNINGS participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). As such, all families are **required** to complete Income Eligibility, and CACFP Enrollment forms. Information provided therein determines the amount of assistance BRIGHT BEGINNINGS receives in providing meals to children.

#### **Required Supplies – All personal items should be labeled with your child’s name**

- Change of clothing *each day* – clothing may be left in a child’s backpack and/or in a labeled zip-lock bag placed in your child’s cubby
- Water bottle daily – *water only*
- Crib-sized fitted sheet for napping cot
- Light blanket for nap/rest time
- A soft toy for nap/rest time (optional) – *no other toys should be brought into the school*
- Backpack (optional)

#### **Required Classroom Supplies and Materials**

Each semester/session, BRIGHT BEGINNINGS will provide families with a **School Supply List**. Supplies will be based on needs for each classroom. We will not require items that are not needed. For example, child-sized scissors may be included on the fall list, but not on the spring list.

#### **Personal items from home**

Please do *not* bring toys from home unless requested by your child’s teacher to enhance the current lesson, theme, or activity. When personal items are brought to school, BRIGHT BEGINNINGS is not responsible or liable for any lost, stolen, traded, damaged, or broken items. The possession or use of toy guns, lighters, knives or other potentially dangerous articles is **prohibited** and may result in suspension from the School.

#### **Withdrawal Policy**

Families who wish to withdraw their child from BRIGHT BEGINNINGS should notify the school in writing at least 2 weeks prior to the student’s final day of school. Aftercare tuition refunds will not be given for any student withdrawn without **2-weeks written notice**.

## **CLASSROOM PRACTICES**

#### **Arrival/Departure**

The blue door on the north end of the playground is the **only door** that will be used for drop-off and pick-up of students. All children must be dropped off and picked up **by an ADULT** (18 years or older). Children must be signed in and out each day via the Student Information System (SIS) kiosk at the entrance AND THEN escorted by the adult to and from their assigned classroom. Check in and out is NOT COMPLETE until the student has been checked in/out via the SIS kiosk

AND the ADULT escorting the child has ensured that a teacher is in the classroom, and that they have made direct contact with the teacher so that the teacher is aware that their child is being dropped off or picked up. *Failure to do so is potentially dangerous for the child and could be reason for dismissal from the program.*

Students should be picked up and dropped off at regular times\* so as not to disrupt classroom routines. Children should be picked up promptly at their registered time. A pickup time of more than 30 minutes after the registered time will result in a late fee of \$10. Recurring late pickups may result in additional charges and/or disenrollment.

*\*Parents are strongly discouraged from picking up children during nap time. Not only is it disruptive to the schedule of the child being picked up, but it is also disruptive to other children in the classroom who are napping.*

If there is an emergency and you are unable to pick up your child by dismissal time, please message via the Student Information System (SIS) AND call the Executive Director or Assistant Director at (575) 522-8220.

### **Attendance & Tardy Policy**

It is important that your child attend class every day so that you take full advantage of what BRIGHT BEGINNINGS and NM PreK has to offer. Please send a message through the Student Information System (SIS) or call the Executive Director at (575) 522-8220 if your child will be absent. We greatly appreciate your notification of unscheduled absences.

**Students enrolled in the NM PreK program are required to attend a minimum of 85% of the calendared school days.** In addition, **students enrolled in the NM PreK are considered tardy when they arrive after 8:30am. Consistent absences or tardiness for NM PreK classes may result in removal from the program.** The pick-up time for NM PreK classes is 3:00pm. After 3:30pm, students must be enrolled in the Aftercare program.

### **Visitors**

All visitors, including therapists from local agencies, are required to sign in at the information table and should check in with the Executive Director upon arrival. They should also wear a visitor badge. See additional information on family visitors under heading PARENTS - Parent Involvement/Volunteering.

### **Chapel Time**

NM PreK classrooms will not participate in regular Chapel time.

### **Birthdays / Celebrations**

BRIGHT BEGINNINGS welcomes birthday celebrations. In most cases we welcome modest treats for snack or lunch time to celebrate your child's birthday. Families should **always consult with their child's teacher before sending food** to ensure there are no precautions needed regarding

food allergies and/or food sensitivities of children in the classroom. According to state regulations, **all food brought into the classroom must be store-bought.**

### **Field Trips**

BRIGHT BEGINNINGS does not participate in off-site field trips unless families are providing transportation for their child. Guest speakers will be invited from time to time to come to the School. Previous guest speakers have included doctors, dental assistants, horse trainers, border patrol officers, and fire department and police department representatives.

## **CHILD & PARENT BEHAVIOR**

### **Guidance/Redirection Policy**

BRIGHT BEGINNINGS rules addressing unacceptable behaviors are designed to promote the health, safety, and well-being of each child. Consistent with our philosophy of healthy relationships, our focus is on making good choices and respecting others and ourselves. This approach allows the child to learn and grow from negative experiences while gaining respect for themselves, other people, and property.

Whenever possible, positive reinforcement will be given so the student receives immediate feedback when desirable behavior is demonstrated. Students displaying unacceptable behavior will be redirected and/or removed from the offending activity. In some cases, age-appropriate reflection time may be used (approximately 1 minute per age, i.e. 3 mins for a 3-year-old).

Punishment that is humiliating, shaming, or frightening to a child is **strictly prohibited**. This includes:

- Spanking, hitting, pinching, or other forms of corporal punishment
- Verbal abuse, threats, or derogatory remarks about the child or their family
- Restricting movement or enclosing in a confined space
- Withholding or forcing meals, snacks, or naps

### **Incident Reporting**

Toddlers and Preschoolers are all learning appropriate social skills and emotional behavior control. Therefore, it is not unusual in a preschool setting for children to exhibit occasional inappropriate behaviors such as hitting, taking toys, throwing sand, and biting (to name a few). Teachers will always attempt to intervene to avoid serious incidents, but occasionally incidents cannot be predicted or prevented. So that you are aware of any such behaviors affecting your child, teachers routinely write up Incident Reports that must be signed by the parent of the child exhibiting the behavior, and by the parent of the child on the receiving end of the behavior.

In most cases Incident Reports are intended to be a source of information regarding the behavior and experiences of your child. However, repeated Incident Reports of inappropriate behavior by your child should be taken seriously, and the family of the child should do

everything in their power to curb ongoing inappropriate behavior. This can be a frustrating time for many families. BRIGHT BEGINNINGS is here to partner *with* you, including collaboratively developing a Corrective Plan of action and/or providing relevant resources and information.

### **Corrective Plan**

BRIGHT BEGINNINGS will attempt to work with the family and child to take constructive steps to find a solution that resolves a problem before a suspension or disenrollment is considered.

When a child's teacher or an administrator has concerns about a child's ongoing behavior or other circumstances, he or she will document such concerns. The family will be contacted to set up a parent-teacher-administrator meeting\* to determine what steps can be made to support the child. Together, BRIGHT BEGINNINGS and the family will develop strategies to address a child's particular needs. During this time a variety of options may be considered, depending on the child's individual and/or developmental needs. Options may include, but are not limited to, changes in:

- the physical environment
- the daily structure of activities
- transition times
- redirection

Staff will inform the family of progress as needed via notes, phone calls, the SIS, or meetings, to maintain a collaborative environment. If, after one to two weeks (depending on the individual situation and the risk to the welfare and safety of others) the behavior does not improve or if improvement is temporary and behaviors return, BRIGHT BEGINNINGS may determine it can no longer accommodate the needs of the child, the child will be disenrolled.

*\*Failure of the family to schedule and/or participate in a Corrective Plan meeting, or failure to actively support implementation of an agreed upon Corrective Plan may lead to suspension and/or disenrollment of the child.*

### **Suspension/ Disenrollment Policy**

BRIGHT BEGINNINGS strives to provide quality care and instruction to ALL students entrusted to our care. We strive to create a safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate environment for each student. While this philosophy cultivates individual needs and respects diversities, it may be necessary on rare occasions to suspend (short-term removal) or disenroll (permanent) a child from our program.

We will do everything reasonable to work with the family of a child in order to prevent suspension or disenrollment. When unavoidable, the family should be given a minimum of two weeks' notice to find a new childcare provider prior to disenrollment. However, *BRIGHT BEGINNINGS reserves the right to disenroll a child immediately, or with less than two-weeks' notice if it determines it is necessary to ensure the safety and/or wellbeing of other children or adults who interact with the child, or it is in the best interest of the School.*

The following are reasons that may require us to suspend or disenroll a child from our School:

#### Child's Actions

- The child is at risk of causing serious injury to other children or themselves
- Uncontrollable violent tantrums/angry outbursts
- Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children
- Excessive biting
- The school cannot adequately or reasonably meet the needs of the student
- For any other reason in the best interest of the School

#### Family's Actions

- Failure to complete required forms (i.e. child's immunization records)
- Parent/guardian threatens physical or intimidating actions towards staff members
- Inappropriate behavior towards staff members or children at the center
- Failure to make payments or making arrangements to do so
- Failure to make provisions for the student's personal needs
- Failure to cooperate with the School to correct a child's ongoing misbehavior
- Recurring late pickups
- Failure to comply with policies and protocols described in the Registration Packet and/or the Family Handbook
- Failure to comply with all check-in/check-out procedures

## HEALTH & SAFETY

### Health & Safety Policy

Please keep your children home, as directed, if they exhibit any of the symptoms below. Children who develop or exhibit these symptoms at the School will be sent home immediately. A parent/guardian or the designated emergency contact/authorized pick-up person will be called. **Please ensure that all Emergency Contact/Approved Pick-up information is kept current with correct phone numbers. You are required to inform BRIGHT BEGINNINGS in writing, if and when, any Emergency Contact information changes.**

- Runny nose with green or yellow discharge
- Severe coughing and/or sneezing – a child who is making a high-pitched whooping sound after coughing, or who turns red or blue in the face when coughing should remain home
- Fever – a child who has had a fever of 100.5-degree F orally or 99 degrees F under the arm in the last 24 hours, or a child on fever reducing medication such as Tylenol, should remain home until they are fever free (without medication) for 24 hours
- Vomiting – a child who has vomited twice within 24 hours, or who has vomited once and displayed other symptoms of illness (e.g., low-grade fever or headache) should remain home for 24 hours *after* symptoms have passed

- Diarrhea – a child who has had 2 abnormally loose stools, or 1 loose stool with other symptoms of illness should remain home for 24 hours *after* the symptoms have passed
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Pinkeye – a child who has symptoms such as tears, redness of eyelid lining, irritation, swelling and/or discharge should remain home until the discharge has stopped completely, or until they have been on medication for 24 hours *and* have a physician’s written permission to return to school
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Sore throat and/or trouble swallowing
- Infected skin patch(es) – crusty, bright yellow, dry or gummy areas of skin.
- Unusually dark, tea-colored urine
- Headache and stiff neck
- Unusual spots or rashes, undiagnosed skin outbreak
- Severe itching of the body or scalp – evidence of head lice, mites, scabies, or severe itching/scratching of the body or scalp
- Other signs or symptoms – a child with symptoms that are compatible with a communicable disease, especially if the student has been exposed to a communicable disease (i.e. chicken pox), should remain home until symptoms disappear

### **Notification**

Families of children who become exposed to certain contagious diseases will be notified through a flyer sent home and/or through a SIS message to all families. **If your child should become infected with a contagious disease, please notify BRIGHT BEGINNINGS immediately** so the Executive Director can notify families of other children who may have been exposed.

If your child has an allergy or any other chronic health problem, you are required to inform the Executive Director and the child’s teachers.

### **Medications**

Medications will not be given to a student unless it is related to a preexisting condition, severe allergies requiring emergency treatment, or other medical condition that may require emergency treatment. In all cases medications, will **ONLY** be given when a signed Medical Authorization Form is provided.

With written permission from the legal guardian of a child as provided in the Registration Packet, BRIGHT BEGINNINGS may apply sunscreen and insect repellent to the child if deemed necessary.

### **Serious Illness, Accident, or Injury**

School and playground rules are established to keep students and staff safe. Staff members trained in CPR and certified in First Aid and will be present at all times in case of an emergency or accident.

In case of serious accident or illness, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) will be called. They will advise whether or not the child should be taken to the nearest hospital or doctor's office by ambulance. A BRIGHT BEGINNINGS staff member will accompany the child in the ambulance. Once EMS is contacted, the staff will call a parent/guardian and inform them of the situation. An accident/injury report will be filled out and one copy will be kept in the student's file and one copy will be provided to the family. In any case that an injury needs medical attention outside of basic first aid a copy of the accident/injury report will be sent to CYFD with any additional treatment measures from the attending medical personnel.

## **EMERGENCY**

### **Emergency Notification**

BRIGHT BEGINNINGS is working to secure an emergency notification system that would notify family members via text, in case of emergency situations. We anticipate a new SIS will have this capability, and we will implement its use as soon as it is available. Until then, families will be notified through a message via the current Student Information System (SIS) of any emergency situations.

### **Emergency Evacuation and Disaster Preparedness**

In the event of a disaster or emergency evacuation from BRIGHT BEGINNINGS and University United Methodist Church, the health, safety, and well-being of our students is our primary concern. The following actions will be taken:

1. Students will be evacuated from the building per the Emergency "map" in their classroom.
2. Administrators are responsible for "sweeping" the building to make sure every child is evacuated and for being first contact with designated relocation areas. This responsibility will be handled by the Executive Director or Assistant Director or delegated by such persons to other appointed staff.
3. Students will be taken to either First Church of the Nazarene at 1900 S. Locust or University Hills Elementary School, 2005 S. Locust. In the case that further relocation is required, BRIGHT BEGINNINGS will follow the instruction of Las Cruces Police Department (LCPD) or other law enforcement agencies. Families will be notified of the new relocation area as soon as possible.
4. We will attempt to contact families as soon as students are safely evacuated
5. Families are urged to follow the instructions of the local authorities under such circumstances regarding when it is safe to pick their child up.

### **Emergency Lock-Down Procedures**

In the event of an emergency that would require BRIGHT BEGINNINGS to go into **lockdown**, the following actions will be taken:

1. The building and all classrooms will be locked.
2. Students will be supervised at all times.



3. We will attempt to contact families, guardians or emergency contacts via the Student Information System (SIS) or by phone as soon as it is safely possible.
4. Families are urged to follow the instructions of the local authorities under such circumstances regarding when it is safe to pick their child up.
5. If needed and possible, students will have access to a spare set of clothing in their backpacks/cubies.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

### **Confidentiality Statement**

Student files may not be taken off site. Families may view their child's educational file by contacting the Executive Director or Assistant Director to make arrangements. Copies of student files are available outside of BRIGHT BEGINNINGS only with a release signed by a parent/guardian. Only authorized certified personnel, authorized government officials, or appropriate authorities in a health or safety emergency may access a student's educational records without the approval or notification of the family.

BRIGHT BEGINNINGS's public records may be viewed by contacting the Executive Director or Assistant Director to make arrangements to view as soon as practical.

### **Child Abuse & Neglect**

BRIGHT BEGINNINGS staff members are mandated to report to the proper authorities any reasonable suspicion that a child has been or is being abused and/or neglected. Staff are trained annually regarding how to determine child abuse/neglect, and how to report. To report such a claim, the phone number to Children, Youth and Families Department is: 1-800-797-3260.

### **BRIGHT BEGINNINGS Committee Contact**

The BRIGHT BEGINNINGS Committee is always happy to speak with you about our School. Contact information is available from the Executive Director and/or the University United Methodist Church (UUMC) office, at 575.522.8220.