



# **Great Beginnings Preschool**

Parent Handbook 2023-2024

## PHILOSOPHY

For nearly 50 years we have provided a warm, caring and nurturing preschool program for the children of our community. We strive to nurture the development of each individual child.

- \* to build trust, confidence, and a sense of family in the classroom
- \* to encourage cognitive learning
- \* to foster social and emotional maturation through interaction with peers
- \* to begin a personal awareness of the love of God

Preschool classes provide the necessary preparation for entrance into Kindergarten. Attention to the specific needs of each child is priority. Our teachers ensure that each child is welcomed into a loving classroom environment where the children can explore and develop socially and emotionally.

Our children go to a weekly music class and chapel class. They are provided opportunities to learn through play, movement, music and art. The preschool day is 3 hours long (9AM-12PM). Preschool office hours are 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM.

Great Beginnings Preschool is an unincorporated association of Leesburg United Methodist Church and meets the requirements set forth by the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Social Services as a religiously exempt child day center. It is a non-profit preschool for two to five year olds. GBP is operated as a service to members and friends of LUMC, as well as residents of the community. The school is open to children of all faiths.

## OUR STAFF

Pastor - Seungsoo 'RJ' Jun

Director - Heather Gonzalez

2's Teachers - Chrissy Dugger, Michele Minderlein and Vicki Jackson

3's Teachers - Meghan Fensterwald, Kelly Wright, Diane DeNuccio, Kim vanWeezendonk

4's Teachers - Celesta Miller and Laura van Leliveld

Betsy Carroll and Janice Kaiser

Fabulous Friday Teachers: Kelly Wright and Celesta Miller

Music and Chapel - Heather Gonzalez

Preschool Committee Chair- Megan Patrick

Preschool Committee— Alison Turner, Sarah Hodgins, Townley Davidson, Whitney Graff, Emilie McLister

## SCHOOL INFORMATION

**Address** - 107 W. Market Street  
Leesburg, VA, 20176

**School phone number** - 703-777-9859

**Church phone number** - 703-777-2056

**Email** - greatbeginningsleesburg@gmail.com

**On the web** -

[www.greatbeginningsleesburg.com](http://www.greatbeginningsleesburg.com)

[www.facebook.com/gbpleesburg](http://www.facebook.com/gbpleesburg)

[www.gbp.ptboard.com](http://www.gbp.ptboard.com)

## CALENDAR AND SNOW DAYS

A calendar will be given to parents in the beginning of the year. GBP follows the Loudoun County Public School calendar for opening and closing during severe weather. In the case of a 2 hour delay, GBP will be open from 10:30am-12:30pm. If the preschool is closed more than 12 days due to inclement weather, the school year will be extended one week (graduation date will not change).



## REGISTRATION

Registration for the coming year opens in January/February. Preschool children will be placed with Kindergarten entry age group (the cut off date is September 30th). There is a non-refundable \$75 registration fee for current families and church members and a \$100 registration fee for new enrollments.

## ENROLLMENT INFO

Each child must submit the following forms prior to the first day of school. The forms include but are not limited to the following:

- Original birth certificate (new students)
- Health form (including all up-to-date vaccinations)
- Registration/Emergency Contact Forms (on [gbp.PTBoard.com](http://gbp.PTBoard.com))
- Written Medication Consent Form—if necessary, for Epi-pens

## WITHDRAWALS

If a child must be withdrawn from the Preschool because they are moving from Loudoun County, May tuition is refundable **ONLY** if the Director has received written notice 30 days prior to withdrawal and if tuition payments for the school year prior to withdrawal have been paid in full.

## TUITION INFORMATION

Tuition is payable in advance. It is due on the **first of the month** (September-April), and it is delinquent on the eighth. A late fee of \$25.00 will be assessed to all delinquent accounts. After the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, unpaid accounts will be referred to the Preschool Treasurer. If a student's account remains unpaid for 2 months' time, that student is subject to expulsion. Monthly tuition is one-ninth of the total tuition. Holidays observed during a month will cause no exception in amount due. Thus, tuition is the same each month. Absence from class shall cause no exception in the amount due. Days cannot be made up or exchanged. The tuition payment box is located in Preschool hallway outside the Director's office. Checks are to be made out to Great Beginnings Preschool.

GBP uses Brightwheel accounting software. Parents may use a credit card or checking account to set up their automatic monthly payments. Tuition batches are run on the 8th of the month (Sept-May) or closest business day. Ledgers are created for each student/family attending at GBP.

Monthly Tuition: 2's - \$190  
T/TH 3's - \$150  
MWF 3's - \$215  
4's - \$270  
Enrichment Fridays - \$75

## SNACK

A nut-free snack is provided by the preschool daily. Students must bring in a water bottle filled with water each day and labeled with his/her name. Please send in a water bottle that closes and that your child is familiar with using.

## FOOD ALLERGIES/SPECIAL FOOD NEEDS

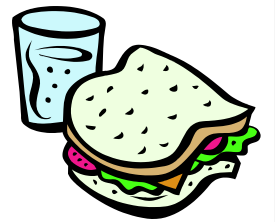
Food Allergies and Snacks will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Depending on the severity of the allergy, children who have been diagnosed with a food allergy may be asked to supply their own daily snack. His/her parents should also send a bag of special snacks for their child when food for a special occasion is served. Please send each nut-free snack in a bag or container with the child's name on it.

In addition, we must have an emergency plan, signed by your child's doctor, in place in the event that your child is inadvertently exposed to a food allergen. Please note that a classroom with an allergic child may have additional restrictions, as necessary, to insure the safety of that child.

## LUNCH BUNCH/ENRICHMENT

**Lunch Bunch** is a chance for the children to stay after school and eat lunch with their friends and play. Lunch bunch is on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 12:00-1:30. The cost is \$12/lunch bunch session. Please send a **nut-free** lunch in with your child.

Parents register their child for Lunch Bunch using a school-generated Sign-up Genius page. Parents may register their children for as many or as few Lunch Bunch sessions as they would like. Payment for all scheduled Lunch Bunch sessions is due on the first of the month and will be included in your monthly tuition payment. Lunch Bunch payments may be made in advance. After the 8<sup>th</sup> of the month, your account is considered delinquent for any unpaid pre-scheduled sessions and a \$25 late fee will be assessed. After the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, your account will be referred to the preschool Treasurer and your child may not attend Lunch Bunch until that month's fees are paid.



Drop-in Lunch Bunch sessions scheduled after the first of the month must be paid no later than the day of that session. If payment is not made on or before the scheduled Lunch Bunch session, the student may not attend Lunch Bunch that day.

You may receive a credit for a missed Lunch Bunch session, if the preschool is given enough notice to fill the spot or the preschool cancels Lunch Bunch and is not offering a make-up day.

**Fabulous Fridays** is an enrichment opportunity available every Friday this year for an additional \$75 per month. It will run on Fridays from 9-12.

### Special Chapel / Programs

Once a month parents are invited to join the children for a special chapel lesson and program or music class. Special Chapel will begin at 9:15AM on the designated day in the Sanctuary. We will also be recognizing the children who celebrate a birthday during the month. Typically, Busy Bee Special Chapel falls on Wednesdays and Owls on Thursdays. Special Chapel and Program dates can be found on our calendar. Our school calendar can be found at the end of this document as well as our on website under FORMS.

## DAILY PROCEDURES

### ARRIVAL

- Drop-off procedure (8:50-9:10 AM): Last name beginning with A-G-drop off at 8:50am, H-Z-drop off at 9am. If you would like a speedy drop-off, please pull through to the front of the Wirt Street loading zone and bring your child into the classroom and promptly return to your car to allow for other parents to bring their children into school. **Please do not block or park in the parking lot next to the Wirt Street door. This is not church property.** Feel free to park in the parking lot off of Liberty Street behind the church, in the Town garage, at meters in front of the church or in the lot between Blossom & Bloom and the Exxon Mobile Station to walk your child into his or her classroom.
  - \* To avoid arrival apprehension, parents/caregivers should exhibit an attitude of happiness, confidence, and anticipation. Bring your child to the classroom, make a positive statement of leaving with an assurance of your prompt return at pick up time, and leave. Distress at your departure is usually over within minutes of your leaving. Be assured the staff will call you if the need arises. Do make sure that you are on time for pick up so that you build a feeling of trust with your child. Visiting with other parents is best done away from the classroom so that children may feel free to settle in and begin their school day.



### DISMISSAL

- Pick-up procedure (11:50-12:00 for 2's and 3's and 12:00-12:15 for 4's and siblings) - Parents/caregivers pick up their child at the Wirt Street door. GBP Staff will dismiss the children individually to each parent/caregiver. We encourage you to park in the parking lot and take time to visit with the other parents and children. However, you are free to use the Wirt Street loading/unloading zone for a speedy pick-up. Feel free to bring a lunch and play on the playground; just remember that you will be responsible for watching after your child(ren). We ask you to take care of the equipment and clean up your trash.
  - \* Children are released **ONLY** to the parent or other individuals specifically listed in the child's file. Anyone who is not recognized by GBP Staff will be asked to show their driver's license for identification purposes. Please notify the teacher/director if someone different will be picking up your child.

### LATE ARRIVAL/EARLY PICK-UP

Parents who bring their child after the school day has begun or need to pick up a child before regular dismissal time are asked to come to the office with their request. The director will assist you in collecting the child to avoid disturbing the class.

## ORIENTATION

A parent orientation will be held one evening before school begins its regular session of classes. A general session will be held in the sanctuary to introduce parents to the staff and review school policies. The child's teachers will conduct the second part of the orientation in the classroom. They will inform parents of specific classroom procedures and collect required paperwork. Children will be invited to visit their classrooms one morning before school starts. At this time, the children will meet their teachers and the other children in their class.

## PARENT INFORMATION

A newsletter will be sent home weekly to keep your family informed of school and church activities. Please read these carefully. Also, note the parent information boards in the hall and outside the individual classrooms. Classroom updates will be sent home via Brightwheel.

## PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parent participation is encouraged. Parents should feel that they are part of Great Beginnings Preschool and parents and teachers are working in partnership for the best development of the child. We have many ways parents can volunteer in our Preschool. At orientation parents will be given an opportunity to sign up as a volunteer. You may choose to help with parties, special events or celebrations, or share your skill, interest, or hobby with children in your child's classroom.



## PARENT COMMUNICATION

Communication is very important to the success of our school. Please feel free to discuss ideas and concerns with the director, teachers or preschool committee at any time. Please inform your child's teacher of any changes in your child's daily routine, such as family illness, death, or separation that may affect your child's day at school. **Please call the preschool office to let us know if your child will be absent (703)777-9859.**

## PARENT CONFERENCES

Parents are invited to set up a conference time with the classroom teacher or with the director at any time during the year. Teachers will initiate parent conferences for every child in January.

The teacher, parent, or director may set up other conferences as the need arises.

## BIRTHDAYS

We do not have parties to celebrate birthdays in the classes. We will honor the individual as a class, but we ask parents not to bring in any treats for birthdays. Instead, each child has a special star day when parents can come in and share with their child's class. There will be a sign up sheet early in the school year. Your child will also be honored in a Special Chapel session during the month of his/her birthday.

## SCHOOL DIRECTORY

We publish a school directory once a year. The directory is a private source of information provided for the convenience and use of our preschool parents. Distribution of the information contained in the directory to any business or individual for solicitation or commercial use is strictly prohibited.



## HEALTH

Documentation of up-to-date immunizations, and a current "well-child" check are required to be in the individual child's folder before the child's first day of school. It is the responsibility of the parents to keep the school informed of changes in the child's medical records throughout the school year.

Parents are expected to keep their child home when the child:

- Gives evidence of a fresh cold (nasal discharge yellow or green in color)
- Has had vomiting, diarrhea or fever (99 F or higher) within 24 hours
- Has sore or discharging eyes
- Hacking or continuous cough



- ◇ A child will not be admitted to school with a rash unless accompanied by a note from a physician stating that the rash is not contagious.
- ◇ Should a child have an illness diagnosed by the doctor as a contagious disease, parents are expected to notify the office so that the other parents may be alerted.

If a child becomes ill while at school, parents will be called to pick the child up as soon as possible.

**Please call the school if your child is going to be absent (703)777-9859 or email [greatbeginningsleesburg@gmail.com](mailto:greatbeginningsleesburg@gmail.com).**

## MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

In the event of a serious illness or injury that requires the immediate attention of a physician the following will be done.

- ◇ Contact emergency medical services (911) and/or take the child to the nearest emergency facility
- ◇ Give the child CPR or First aid until EMS arrives.
- ◇ Contact the parents, or emergency contact if the parents cannot be notified
- ◇ Contact the physician identified in the child's records
- ◇ Ensure the safety and supervision of other children

## EMERGENCY EVACUATION

If there is an emergency that requires us to evacuate the building we will take the children to the Leesburg Town Hall lobby until the emergency has passed or you are able to pick up your child.

## IMPORTANT INFO FOR 2's and 3's - POTTY TRAINING/DIAPERS

- All children in the 3 year old class must be potty-trained. NO PULL-UPS or DIAPERS
- Potty-training is not required for children in the 2 year old classes. Parents must provide diapers/pull-ups and wipes for their child each day.

## DISCIPLINE

Great Beginnings Preschool uses a positive approach to discipline by directing children toward age appropriate behavior. Teachers help the children to develop self-discipline by:

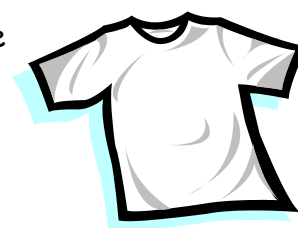
- \* Redirecting the child when necessary
  - \* Using patience, love, and understanding
  - \* Setting clearly defined limits
  - \* Talking about acceptable ways of handling situations as they arise (STOP-WALK-TALK next page)
  - \* Using positive reinforcement of appropriate behavior choices.
  - \* Using brief supervised separation from the group when appropriate
  - \* See PBIS (next page)
- \* Incident reports will be sent home in the event of hitting/biting to all children involved (not using names) so that parents are aware of what has happened.
  - \* Great Beginnings Preschool reserves the right to request the withdrawal of a child who is unable to adapt to a group situation.



A Child Abuse/Neglect Prevention Policy is available for review at any time. Please see the director if you have any concerns or would like to review the policy.

## CLOTHING

- Children should wear clothing that is: comfortable, washable, suitable for play, simple enough for the child to manage alone; especially in the bathroom, appropriate for subjection to paint, glue, etc.
- Children should wear shoes that: fit correctly and are closed. Sneakers are most appropriate.
- Children should bring a backpack or bag (large enough to hold school projects) to school each day.
- Please put a change of clothes in your child's backpack in case of accidents.



## OUTSIDE PLAY

Dress your child so that he/she will be comfortable to go outside to play. Children will be taken outside every day unless temperatures are extreme or it is raining. On cold days, children should wear warm, outside clothes. Staff is not available to allow a child to stay indoors while the rest of the class goes outside. Before returning to school after an illness, your child needs to be well enough to play outside. When weather is inappropriate for outside activity, we will play indoors. Please label all outdoor clothing.



## Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support (PBIS)

As most of our students will attend Loudoun County Public Schools (LCPS) after graduating from GBP, we have adopted LCPS' PBIS. During the school year, GBP staff will implement the "STOP, WALK, and TALK" response as well as integrating Positive Behavior instruction into our curriculum. Below is the definition of bullying used by LCPS.

*"Bullying" means any aggressive and unwanted behavior that is intended to harm, intimidate, or humiliate the victim; involves a real or perceived power imbalance between the aggressor or aggressors and victim; and is repeated over time or causes severe emotional trauma. "Bullying" does not include ordinary teasing, horseplay, argument, or peer conflict. (Code of Virginia § 22.1-276.01)*

*A school may add to the definition of bullying acts that occur outside a school setting, if those acts*

*-are persistent or pervasive;*

*-are directed at another student or students; and*

*-have the effect of doing any of the following:*

*-substantially interfering with a student's education,*

*-creating a threatening environment, or*

*-substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.*

*Bullying behavior is a subtype of the broader concept of peer aggression and victimization; bullying prevention approaches must focus more broadly on reducing all forms of aggressions and victimization, regardless of the intent, frequency, and power differential.*

### BP-PBS

*Bullying Prevention in Positive Behavior Support is a program used at the Elementary School level throughout LCPS. LCPS' Behavioral Support Counselor shared the framework for "STOP, TALK, WALK" which will be implemented at GBP.*

*Students will be taught positive behavior and how as a community at GBP, we can prevent bullying or quickly stop such behaviors.*

*STOP: all students and staff will be taught the sign for STOP. If a student is experiencing unwanted behavior or sees it, they are to use the STOP sign and say "STOP".*

*WALK: a major part of BP-PBS is walking away from unwanted behavior or encouraging your classmate to do so.*

*TALK: If the unwanted behavior continues after using the STOP and WALK steps, students are encouraged to TALK to an adult or speak on a friend's behalf. Teachers will ask students if they have used the STOP and WALK steps in order to reinforce these steps if needed in the future. Any suspicions of bullying or related behaviors will be reported to the Director and communicated to the parents of children involved. The Director will follow up with the teachers, students and parents per the BP-PBS guidelines.*

*By highlighting positive behavior and empowering our students with the skills detailed above, we are creating a community where children learn appropriate behavior, how to STOP unwanted behavior, and how to help members of their community WALK away and TALK it out.*

*Great Beginnings Preschool*

*Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS)*

*Our Sunbeams SHINE bright!*

*Share*

*Help others*

*Include everyone*

*use Nice words*

*Everyday*

*like Jesus*





## 2023-2024 School Calendar

\*Dates and Times are Subject to change

September 5	9-11AM	Back to School Kick-off
September 5	6:30PM	Parent-only Orientation – Sanctuary and Classrooms
September 6	9AM-12PM	First full day of school
September 25	No School	LCPS Student/Staff Holiday
September 27/28	9:15 AM	Special Chapel (Bees Wed/Owls-Thurs) (August/September birthdays)
October 9	No School	Holiday
October 11/12	9:15AM	Individual and Class pictures (taken outside)
October 15	TBD	6th Annual GBP Recess Run
October 18/19	9:15AM	Picture Day Rain Date
October 25/26	TBA	Halloween parade and class parties
October 30/31	No School	LCPS/GBP Student Holiday
November 8/9	TBD	5th Annual GBP Vendor Fair
November 20/21	9:15AM	Special Chapel/Friendship Feast (Bee- Mon/Owls – Tues) (October/November birthdays)
November 22-24	No School	Thanksgiving Holiday
December 10	TBD	Preschool Sunday and Bake Sale LUMC/GBP Christmas Pageant
December 18/19	9:15 AM	Special Chapel/Christmas programs (Bees-Mon/Owls-Tues)
December 21-Jan 1	No School	Christmas Holiday (classes resume January 2)
January/February	TBA	Registration for 2020-2021
January 8/9	8:55AM	Parent Appreciation Breakfast (Asbury Hall)
January 15	No School	MLK Day (GBP conferences may be held)
January 22	No School	LCPS Student/Staff Holiday/planning
January 24/25	9:15AM	Special Chapel (Bees-Wed/Owls-Thurs)

February 13/14	TBA	Valentine parties
February 19	No School	President's Day
February 28/29	9:15 AM	Special Chapel (Bees-Wed/Owls-Thurs)
March 20/21	9:15 AM	Easter Special Chapel (Bees-Wed/Owls-Thurs) (March and April birthdays)
March 25-29	No School	Easter Break
April 5	No School	LCPS/GBP Student Holiday
April 15-19	TBD	Scholastic Book Fair
April 17/18	8:55 AM	Pastries with Parents (Bees-Wed/Owls-Thurs)
May 15/16	9:15 AM	Special Chapel (Bees-Wed/Owls-Thursday) (May, June, July birthdays)
May 22		Last day of school M/W 2s
May 22	6:30 PM	Graduation 4s
May 23		Last day of school TTH2s/TTH3s/4s 4s Graduation Party
May 24		Last day of school MWF 3s/Fab Friday Frogs