

# **Bloom Pediatric Academy**

## **Parent Handbook**



**1112 Carroll Rd.**

**Paragould, AR**

**72450**

**(870) 444-6822**

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# **Welcome**

The staff of Bloom Pediatric Academy welcome you. We are committed to providing a quality program that will provide a warm, nurturing experience for your child.

We provide an environment that not only meets those needs, but also fosters children's independence and self-esteem, teaches basic life skills, promotes communication and interaction, and helps them become enthusiastic learners. We provide a flexible curriculum that will enable children to develop individually.

Parents/Caregivers play a primary role in their child's growth and development. Our program is a supplement in this very important process. Our role is a partnership with you and your child. We strongly encourage parents/caregivers to stay informed and actively involved in your child's learning process. We welcome any questions, comments, and visits. We look forward to working together with your family in your child's educational journey.



## **Mission Statement**

To provide high-quality care that focuses on physical, cognitive, and language development as well as nurturing the social and emotional needs of every child through play, love, and a safe environment.

## **Rule**

It is our job to keep all children safe. It is the job of parents/caregivers and children to help us keep them safe.

### **Staff Qualifications & Training**

Quality staff is a key ingredient in a quality child development program. We are very proud of our diverse team, which has an outstanding level of education and experience. Our team members are selected for their education, experience and demonstrated ability to work well with children. In addition, our staff participate in ongoing mandatory training in CPR, first aid, health & safety procedures, positive guidance, and the recognition and prevention of child abuse and/or neglect. We perform criminal, child maltreatment and FBI background checks on each employee before hiring. Each team member is required to be registered with Professional Development Registry to attain their minimum of 15 hours of continuing education each calendar year.

## **Admission Policy**

### **Enrollment**

Enrollment will not be denied because of gender, race or religious preferences. The following information is required for your child's file:

- Completed enrollment packet
- Copy of social security card
- Copy of birth certificate
- Copy of current immunization record

Please notify the office if any of your child's contact information changes (i.e., phone number, address, etc.).

### **Attendance**

We encourage consistency with your child's attendance. One way to be consistent is keeping arrival/departure times the same. We understand that life happens and there will be days when your child will be dropped off/picked up at differing times. The second way to be consistent is bringing your child every day of their scheduled week upon enrollment. Children on the voucher program are only allowed a specified number of absentee days per quarter. Bloom Pediatric Academy will assess fees to your account when/if this happens. Private payers will be charged tuition weekly whether your child attends or not. Yearly scheduled holidays will be listed in the next section.

## **Hours of Operation**

Our facility is open 6:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. Monday-Friday. We close our facility on the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

Bloom Pediatric Academy reserves the right to be closed up to five (5) additional days along with the above holidays. If this occurs, you will be given plenty of advance notice. Tuition will not be prorated.

## **Inclement Weather**

Bloom Pediatric Academy will post school closings due to inclement weather on KAIT 8 as well as our Brightwheel app. If our center closes due to inclement weather, your tuition will be prorated the following week.

## **Arrival & Departure**

All approved persons over the age of 18 must sign their child in/out through the Brightwheel app. Until our teaching staff recognize your child's regular caregiver, everyone will need proof of identity. To discourage late pick-up, Bloom Pediatric Academy will assess a \$15 late fee per 15-minute intervals beginning at 5:30 p.m.

## **Meals**

Our facility participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). It is a federal program that provides reimbursements for nutritious meals and snacks to eligible children and adults who are enrolled for care at participating childcare centers, day care homes, and adult day care centers. This means we must follow strict guidelines concerning portions and provide healthy meals using five food components which make up the meal service requirements: grains, fruits, vegetables, meats/meat alternates and milk. All the children will be served breakfast, lunch and snack. Children with food/milk allergies must have a physician's note in their file.

## **Infant Bottles & Feeding**

We are required by law to label all bottles with your child's name. Please discuss feeding schedules, normal routines and anything else that will help your teacher care for your child. We do not prop bottles. Infants are held when fed until they can hold their own bottle. Older infants will be confined to a highchair or their bed when feeding. Once your child has teeth and can tolerate table food, we will provide them with breakfast, lunch and snack along with their scheduled bottle feedings.

## **Dress Code**

Please send shoes with your child if they can walk. We take the children outside, weather permitting, at least 30 minutes daily. Please bring an extra set of clothing for your child and a jacket/coat in fall/winter. You are responsible for providing diapers, wipes and any cream for the diaper area.

## **Health & Medical**

If your child has any of the following symptoms, you will be notified to pick your child up from the facility and not return until 24 hours after the symptoms end:

- 101-degree temperature (infants under 12 months, 100-degree temp)
- Skin rash, other than diaper or heat rash, without a physician's note
- Diarrhea, defined as watery/runny stools-cannot exceed 2 stools. Exclusion from childcare is required if diarrhea cannot be contained in the diaper or causing soiled clothing in toilet-trained children.

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- Vomiting-cannot exceed 2 episodes in 24 hours
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye) Child only excluded if accompanied with fever, eye pain, redness/swelling,
- Parasitic infestation (lice, scabies, etc.)

### **Medications**

All medication must be in the original prescription container and can only be administered by the site director, assistant director and/or lead teacher. A medication consent form must be filled out by parent/caregiver and left in child's file.

### **Safety**

Our facility conducts monthly fire and tornado drills. They are logged and documented for review. We also practice shelter in place drills periodically.

### **Behavior Guidance Policy**

Our goal is to help children learn acceptable behavior and develop self-control. Our program is designed to promote positive and enjoyable learning experiences and build trusting, respectful relationships. A well-planned schedule, classroom arrangement, age-appropriate curriculum and well-trained staff significantly reduces instances of inappropriate behavior. We use the following guidelines when addressing children's behavior:

- State what the child CAN do.
- Give choices when possible.
- Support children in learning to problem-solve and manage conflict.
- Redirect child's attention.
- Teach children how to play with friends.
- Teach boundaries/limits and consistently implement boundaries/limits.
- Notice desirable behaviors.
- Teach social skills and calm-down routines as preventative measures.
- Overlook minor incidents that aren't dangerous or disruptive.

There shall be no physical punishment or threat of physical punishment. Each child's dignity will be maintained, and incidents handled with a calm tone and positive reinforcement.

## **Biting Policy**

Bloom Pediatric Academy will not exclude or deny any child for biting. We will do our best to educate the child and parents/caregivers on reasons some children bite.

### **A child might bite to**

- Relieve pain from teething.
- Explore cause and effect (“What happens when I bite?”).
- Experience the sensation of biting.
- Satisfy a need for oral-motor stimulation.
- Imitate other children and adults.
- Feel strong and in control.
- Get attention.
- Act in self-defense.
- Communicate needs and desires, such as hunger or fatigue.
- Communicate or express difficult feelings, such as frustration, anger, confusion, or fear (“There are too many people here and I feel cramped”).

### **What can families do to prevent biting?**

There are a variety of things that families can do to prevent biting. It helps to

- Have age-appropriate expectations for your child’s behavior based on his or her current skills and abilities.
- Make sure your child’s schedule, routines, and transitions are predictable and consistent. At meal and bedtimes, try to do things in the same way and at the same times. Young children thrive when they know what will happen next.
- Offer activities and materials that allow your child to relax and release tension. Some children like yoga or deep breathing. Offer playdough, foam balls, bubbles, soft music, and other stress-reducing items.

- Use positive guidance strategies to help your child develop self-control. For example, offer gentle reminders, phrased in a way that tells them what behaviors are expected. “Be sure to hang up your coat on the hook.” “You can each have a bucket to use in the sandbox.” “Put a small dot of toothpaste on your brush. You won’t need much to get your teeth clean.”
- Provide items to bite, such as teething rings or clean, wet, cold washcloths stored in the refrigerator. This helps children learn what they can bite safely, without hurting anyone else.

### **How should I respond when my child bites?**

While every situation is different, here are some general guidelines for responding when a child bites.

#### **Infants**

Infants learn about the world around them by exploring it with their hands, eyes, and mouths. But infants often need help to learn what they should and shouldn’t bite.

If your infant takes an experimental bite on a mother’s breast or grandpa’s shoulder, stay calm and use clear signals to communicate that it is not okay for one person to bite another. A firm “no” or “no biting!” is an appropriate response.

#### **Toddlers and Preschoolers**

Toddlers have many strong emotions that they are just learning to manage. Toddlers may bite to express anger or frustration or because they lack the language skills needed to express their feelings.

Biting is less common in preschoolers than toddlers. When a preschooler bites, it may be due to something at home or at their child care program that is causing the child to be upset, frustrated, confused, or afraid. A preschooler may also bite to get attention or to act in self-defense.

Follow the steps below with both toddlers and preschoolers.

1. If you see the biting incident, move quickly to the scene and get down to children’s level. Respond to the child who did the biting. In a serious, firm tone make a strong statement: “No biting. Biting hurts. I can’t let you hurt Josie or anyone else.”



2. Next, offer a choice: “You can help make Josie feel better, or you can sit quietly until I can talk with you.” Help the child follow through on the choice if necessary.
3. Respond to the child who was hurt by offering comfort through words and actions: “I’m sorry you are hurting. Let’s get some ice.” Perform first aid if necessary. The child who did the biting can help comfort the bitten child—if both parties agree. Help the child who was hurt find something to do.
4. Finally, talk to the child who did the biting. Maintain eye contact and speak in simple words using a calm, firm tone of voice. Try to find out what happened that led to the incident. Restate the rule, “Biting is not allowed.” Model the use of words that describe feelings: “Kim took your ball. You felt angry. You bit Kim. I can’t let you hurt Kim. No biting.” Discuss how the child can respond in similar situations in the future.

### **What if biting becomes a habit for my child?**

If biting becomes a habit for your child and ongoing positive guidance is not effective, it is time to set up a meeting with your child’s teacher(s). Together, you can plan an approach for addressing the behavior that can be applied consistently at home and at the program. Together, you can discuss and define the behavior and find the cause behind it. Next, you and the teacher(s) can develop a plan to address the causes and help your child to replace biting with acceptable behaviors. Try the plan for several weeks, but be patient. It takes time to change behaviors that have become habits. Keep in touch with your child’s teacher(s) to share information about changes in behavior. After several weeks, evaluate the plan’s effectiveness and make changes as needed.

### **What strategies can I use to help my child overcome a habit of biting?**

Here are some strategies for addressing a child’s biting habit.

- Observe your child to learn where, when, and in what situations biting occurs. Sometimes an adult may need to stay close to the child to prevent biting.
- Pay attention to signals. Stay close and step in if your child seems ready to bite.

- Suggest acceptable ways to express strong feelings. Help your child learn to communicate her wants and needs (“Amy, tell your sister you were still playing with the truck”).
- Use a reminder system to help your child learn to express strong feelings with appropriate words and actions (“Tell Manuel that you don’t like it when he gets that close to you”).
- Reinforce positive behavior by acknowledging child’s appropriate words and actions (“You didn’t like being tickled so you used your words to ask me to stop”).
- Provide opportunities for your child to make choices and feel empowered.
- Be sure your behavior expectations are age-appropriate and individually appropriate for your child. Expecting a child to do something he or she is not able to do can cause children to feel stress. Stress can lead to biting.
- Offer foods with a variety of textures to meet your child’s sensory needs.
- Teach your child words for setting limits, such as “no,” “stop,” or “that’s mine.”

### **What strategies are not helpful?**

These strategies should not be used to address a child’s biting habit.

- Avoid labeling a child as a “biter.” Negative labels can affect how you view your child, and even affect the child’s feelings about him- or herself.
- Never bite a child back to punish or show him how it feels to be bitten. Biting a child sends the message that using violence is an acceptable behavior that can be used to solve problems.
- Avoid getting angry, yelling, or shaming a child.
- Avoid giving too much attention to a child who bites after an incident. While this is usually negative attention, it can still reinforce the behavior and cause a child to repeat it.
- Do not force a child who bit and the child who was hurt to play together.

- Do not punish children who bite. Punishment does not help children to learn discipline and self-control. Instead, it makes children angry, upset, defiant, and embarrassed. It also undermines the relationship between you and your child.

Please do not hesitate to contact someone in our office if you have any questions.

(870) 444-6822

You can visit our website @ [bloompediatricacademy.com](http://bloompediatricacademy.com)

Thank you,

Bloom Pediatric Academy