



Parent Handbook

Great Beginnings Preschool

Located at:
12052 Emelita St.
N. Hollywood, CA 91607

Hours of Operation:
Monday- Friday 6:30am to 6:00pm

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Dear Parents,

We want to give you a very warm welcome to the Great Beginnings Preschool family. We are excited and thrilled that you chose us to be part of your family. We look forward to being partners with you in the cultivation and success of your child in this crucial informative time in his/her life.

Great Beginnings Preschool believes that in order to succeed, each child must first and foremost feel safe, happy, comfortable and secure in the school environment.

From years of experience, we feel and have witnessed that parents play a pivotal role in a child's ability to succeed and achieve their greatest potential. Showing interest and support for children proactively attending school and actively being involved in school programs and functions, almost always guarantees that the child will have positive feelings towards current and future schooling. We have also noticed that this drastically decreases school discipline problems not only during these formative years but in later stages of development as well.

We stress that communication amongst children, parents, and teachers is vital in our partnership. Please share any helpful information about your child with your child's teacher. No matter how small or insignificant you may think it can be, at this stage, children are sensitive to even the smallest changes. This information might explain the change in attitude and/or help the teacher deal with any special needs or concerns in order to best assist and support your child. From our part, we will be informing you about your child's day at drop-off and pick-up times. You are welcome to ask any questions or express any thoughts or suggestions. We will also be sending you reminder notes of various events throughout the year.

The following handbook contains necessary information in order for your child and your family to successfully transition and thrive in the Great Beginnings Preschool family. You may have questions beyond the information presented here, so please feel free to ask the Director about any concerns or inquiries that you might have. We are a team working towards the same end goal and we will do whatever it takes to achieve it. If you have any concerns or needs, we will work with you in an ethical and respectful manner to make sure they are met.

Many special bonds are created during this precious time. Your children can create lasting friendships with their peers, their teachers and most importantly with you. At this stage, children are pure treasures of innocence, simplicity, goodness, forgiveness and belief beyond the impossible. As a family, we need to work together to preserve these remarkably special traits that seem to dissipate from us as we become older.

Sincerely,

Great Beginnings Preschool

Great Beginnings Preschool

MISSION STATEMENT

Great Beginnings Preschool draws on a developmental curriculum which includes basic academic knowledge, development and mastery of social, emotional and physical skills, and learning centers for children to express their own ideas. We believe in creating an environment that is not only fun and safe but one in which a child's self-esteem, independence, critical thinking and creativity are able to flourish. Children are active learners who learn through play. Their world is one of discovery and exploration. Our teachers observe the children and respond to activities initiated by the child. Through our loving, innovative, and supportive staff, we lay the foundation for each and every child to grow into and become well-rounded individuals. We keep in mind and have respect for the wide individual differences and encourage each child to develop and learn at their own individual pace. Attention is given to the special unique qualities of each child to help them become compassionate, caring, respectful participants who are socially competent in their family, school, community and the global community. Our nurturing environment is a place where every child feels valued and where diversity in culture is celebrated. Our purpose is to nourish a foundation that promotes well-rounded students who live with the values of mutual respect, high self-esteem and self-worth, effective communication skills, consideration for objects as well as being mindful of other people's feelings, taking responsibility for one's actions, and creating trusting relationships amongst peers, with teacher's and parents, and in their communities. We want to give our part in making a positive contribution to helping you raise the leaders of tomorrow.

PHILOSOPHY

A common thread that runs throughout Great Beginnings Preschool is the idea that we set up every child to succeed.

We understand that everything starts with a comfort level and learning takes place best when a child is first and foremost comfortable in his/her environment. Great Beginnings Preschool is adamant about creating a warm, loving, and nurturing atmosphere in order to bring out each child's full potential while encouraging freedom of choice. We have a strong sense of belief that who we teach needs to come before what we teach. At the same time, we feel that these are the pivotal years to instill children with the knowledge of how to live well with others and appreciate the differences that we all have. We understand and value that each child's individuality is something to be celebrated rather than neglected. Our program empowers children to express their emotions ranging from feelings of happiness and joy to anger and frustration through the use of their words. We facilitate individuality by providing different forms of socialization, multiple types of motivational activities, learning centers (including dramatic play and art), times dedicated to creative and critical thinking, and age appropriate play.

We believe in hands on learning and are always trying to find new ways to present the information to the children. Our innovative curriculum is constantly unfolding where different learning styles are accommodated into the classroom and our teachers are constantly trying to find different modalities of teaching. Seeing how much of the

curriculum can be child directed, our teachers try to turn everything into a teachable moment.

OUR VIEW OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

The famous quote “a child’s brain is like a sponge which absorbs everything you teach them,” holds true especially in these pivotal early years. At Great Beginnings Preschool, we understand the value of providing as many experiences as we can so the children can soak in as much information as possible to help them become successful, self-assured positive contributors to society.

We believe in a multifarious method of teaching. This diverse approach gives children a great variety of activities to do and multiple situations that they encounter on a daily basis in order to broaden their knowledge and learn what works for them. Every child is different and each one has his/her own learning style. The multifarious approach helps children, parents and teachers see what each child’s learning style is, as well as the child’s likes and strengths and dislikes. Every area/activity is different but they are all important to the overall development of the child. An example would be one child loving to play with puzzles and blocks, while another child loves to be in the dramatic area, while the third enjoys story time the most.

The major categories that we focus on would be the development of gross motor skills, fine motor skills, and language and cognitive skills. According to the many studies that have been done throughout the years and the way educators in today’s day look at early childhood education, it has shown that a developmental program is the best way to prepare a child for his/her future education. It is pretty much a consensus that the early childhood education community thinks that there is absolutely no reason to “push” children academically during the preschool years. Gross and fine motor skills, language and cognitive skills in combination better prepare the child for academics later in life when it is important for them to focus on education.

Gross motor skills are very important for children to develop and grasp at this age. Gross motor involves co-ordination, large muscle development which includes arms, torso, legs and feet. Large muscles are used in activities such as jumping, climbing, walking on a balance beam, skipping, swinging, running, hopping, catching a ball, clapping, etc. Research has proven that there is a direct correlation to gross motor development and reading ability. Children need to feel comfortable with gross motor skills because it gives them a sense of independence, and confidence when they engage in certain physical activities and organized sports with their peers, and a strong sense of comfort and control of their bodies when they play with their friends. Fine motor skills focus on small muscle groups, which mainly focus on the development of the use of the hands, wrist and fingers. Fine motor skills are crucial to living every day life. Anything from zipping a jacket or manipulating buttons on a shirt, to such practical things as using a pencil/pen to write or crayons and markers to draw or cutting something, to playing any musical instrument are all examples of the use of fine motor skills. In school, fine motor skills begin to develop through playing with blocks, puzzles, board and pegs, and different types of toys. For both gross and fine motor skills practice makes perfect. By the muscles repeating the same motions over and over they tend to remember the movement which eventually becomes automatic. This is called muscle memory and applies to all motor skills. We don't believe in pushing children to learn to write. It's amazing to see that given a pen/pencil/crayons and paper what they can do and where their imagination takes them. The more freedom that is provided to the children with just being given access

to writing/drawing utensils and paper, the greater the opportunity for fine motor development takes place. It becomes a process that they enjoy and do not feel pressured into. After all, for children at this age their job is to play, and through play they learn a plethora of information about themselves, their capabilities, their friends, their family and their environment.

Stories are the key to reading and language development. Our teachers love to incorporate stories into much of the curriculum. This is done through a variety of ways including puppets and flannel boards, storybooks, encouraging each child to verbalize a story and the teacher helping them write it amongst others. Research shows that there are overwhelming rewards to reading to children on a daily basis ranging from academic success, creating better communication skills, mastery of language, develops greater knowledge and intelligence to stimulating imagination, improving attention span and concentration, nurtures a stronger sense of emotional development amongst many others. This is why we stress that parents and/or family members read to your child on a daily basis. Remember that the more you read to your child, the more enthusiastic your child will be when the time is right and don't underestimate that your relationship will be much stronger. Just to change it up a little, a great idea would be to take a drawing that they made at home and you ask them to tell you a story about the picture and write it down. Then they can send it to a grandparent or a friend for a special occasion. It will be a very treasured gift and rewarding to your child.

Our teachers are here to create a physically safe and emotionally loving environment that helps each and every child develop to their best potential while acquiring the trust that is necessary to become successfully independent human beings. Our teachers love what they do and do their best to keep your child feeling safe, warm, loved and cared for each and every day.

**EVERY ACTIVITY IN SCHOOL PROGRESSES A CHILD'S LEARNING IN
MULTIPLE WAYS**

A. VALUES AND SPIRITUAL AWARENESS

1. These concepts are incorporated into every aspect of the curriculum. Through every opportunity that the staff can use, we model behaviors such as respect, kindness, caring for others as caring for oneself, forgiveness, love, congeniality, patience, cooperation, attentiveness, and sharing.
2. We also place great emphasis on learning to appreciate parents, family, teachers, friends, physical things, community, neighborhood, and environment, through treating everyone and everything with consideration and care.

B. FREE PLAY

1. Children develop and expand on their gross and fine motor skills.
2. Learn how things work and how things need to be cared for and placed back when the child is done using them.
3. Learn how to play together and how to share materials and toys.
4. During free play there are different learning centers which allow the child to choose to play in group areas (where and when a child wants to play with their friends) and quiet areas (where and when the child prefers to play alone).
5. Critical thinking is also incorporated into free play.
6. An example of a free play activity would be blocks. While a child is playing g with blocks, he/she is engaging in the process of learning how to count, matching, sense of balance and spatial awareness of objects, how to build, and learning different shapes that exist.

C. GROUP/CIRCLE TIME

1. Language development is a big part of circle time as well as self expression, problem solving, critical thinking, sharing and being responsible for others.
2. During circle time there is a great emphasis placed on the improvement of the children's listening skills, learning how to wait for their turn, and understanding that what their friends have to say is just as important as the his/her own, and developing patience.
3. It is proven that when a child participates in group settings, he/she gains an increase in their self-image and an assertiveness of themselves.

D. DRAMATIC PLAY

1. Through drama, children are able to express themselves, their creativity and their thoughts.
2. This time allows children to expand their minds and their learning of many types of information and it allows them to discover new experiences through direct tangible ways.
3. Dramatic play also challenges the child to think, make choices, to problem solve, as well as to learn that tasks have to be completed.
4. Children learn to expand on their vocabulary.
5. Through the activities that are presented in dramatic play, children gain competence, confidence, and a sense of self-assurance.

E. ART TIME

1. Art is a time of fun, creativity, critical thinking and self-expression through various outlets. It is a time when the children get to explore and experience different types of writing, shapes, colors, and more.
2. An important life lesson that children can learn from art is that sometimes the process is more significant than the end result. In respect to art, the experience of actually making it is sometimes more important than the finished product.
3. All different types of art allows children to use their small muscles in different ways.
4. Through art, children express what they feel about their family, friends and their environment.
5. Art also challenges the mind in ways of language development and creative storytelling by talking about their work and expressing their creation to the teacher and to his/her peers.

F. ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

1. Dance Class
2. Music Class

Both will be taught by professional teachers which will be beneficial to your child's well rounded education.

Great Beginnings Preschool offers full, or part time, care for children ages two through Pre-K.

HOURS

Great Beginnings Preschool is open from 6:30 am to 6:00 pm., Monday through Friday. **All children must be picked up before 6:00pm or we will unfortunately, have to charge \$5 for each fifteen minutes after 6 p.m.**

ADMISSION PROCESS

Our top priority in admission eligibility, regardless of any other factors is the child's emotional readiness to be separated from his/her parent and the willingness of the parent to share the care of their child with our loving staff. As an applicant to Great Beginnings Preschool, we ask that the parent/guardian and the child visit the school in order to allow the child to explore and familiarize with the new environment, as well as to determine whether our school facilities and programs fit the child's physical, emotional, and developmental needs. According to your schedule (either on the same day or a different one), the director will introduce you to the program and answer any questions or concerns you may have about any procedures or policies that are part of the program. Both the parent and the director will decide your child's place in the program. We will discuss our plan for helping your child feel as comfortable as possible in his/her new environment and inform you of items that your child needs at school. To complete the registration process, you will be asked to pay a non-refundable annual registration fee. This secures your child's place in the program. At this time, parents will be given an Enrollment Packet with all the necessary papers and instructions for completing the forms as well as the Parent Handbook. When returned to the school, the director will review, and if complete, the child can then be enrolled.

MEDICAL ASSESSMENT

Each child must have a health screening by a licensed physician prior to or at the latest within thirty days of admission. Those that wish to refrain from this requirement due to religious and/or personal beliefs may do so if they make the request in writing (usually by signing the back of the blue PM286 Immunization card). In addition, each parent must provide a health history. Medical history needs to be updated annually at registration. Parents must provide proof that children have received all necessary immunizations prior to enrollment.

CHILD'S PRE-ADMISSION HEALTH HISTORY -PARENT REPORT

This form is provided by the State of California and is complete in its entirety (LIC 702) and allows the parent to share personal information regarding the child's normal daily routines to assist teachers in getting to know the student better and to help with any special needs. Please be as descriptive and detailed as possible in order for the staff to get to know, connect and build strong healthy bonds with your child.

PHYSICIAN'S REPORT- DAY CARE CENTERS

This health evaluation is required by state law (Title 22 Sec 101220a-b). State form number LIC701 meets this requirement. This is crucial to us and we ask that parents get this form filled out as soon as possible upon registering your child into the program.

CLIENT RIGHTS/PERSONAL RIGHTS

Department of Social Services forms: “Notification of Parent’s Rights” and “Personal Rights” must be given to each parent enrolling a child (enrollment packet). Parents have the right to enter and observe the facility at any time the school is in operation without any advance notice. All services are provided on a non-discriminatory basis.

INCLUSION

Every child is welcome into the program. Great Beginnings Preschool has a non-discriminatory policy in which we provide equal access and treatment without regard to religion, race, natural origin, sex, disability or special needs for as long as we can accommodate and provide the best treatment for the child.

ATTENDANCE & ABSENCES

To make the most out of a child’s experience and education, punctual and regular school attendance is necessary. This helps the child continue to build on each day’s learning from that of the previous day, gain the most from teacher-directed activities, and in general to learn the basic necessities to grow and become a productive individual in society. Especially at this age, children rely on daily routines. It lets them adapt to the program, creates order, and eliminates confusion. Please be mindful of the above for the many benefits of your child.

At Great Beginnings Preschool, attendance is checked on a daily basis. We ask that the parents notify the school when your child will be absent or tardy from school and we also request that the parent inform the school prior to 8:30 a.m. on that specific school day. We understand sometimes it can be difficult to arrive at school on time, but for your child’s benefit and the overall respect of their classroom routine we ask that you not drop them off any later than 11:00 a.m. If you miss the morning program but would like your child to socialize that day, you are welcome to drop them off after nap beginning at 3:00 p.m. If a parent does not call and we see that your child is absent, we will give the parent a call to make sure that everything is okay and that your child is safe and secure with you at home. Please notify the school if your child is absent due to illness and the specific symptoms that he/she has. This helps us control infection in the school. If your child is absent due to any form of sickness and was treated by a doctor we ask for a doctor’s note for re-entry to the school. **If your child is absent due to a contagious disease, please let us know right away.** We need to let the other parents know that their children might have been exposed to it. At times when you know that your child will be absent from school (in advance), please inform the Director prior to an absence as soon as possible. This allows your child to pick up assignment’s in advance so he/she does not feel lost when they come back to class. **No tuition refunds or allowances are given for any days missed or any school holidays.** If your child is enrolled on a part-time basis and misses a day, that day can not be made up for an alternate day unless you receive the Director’s permission. All permissions are based on daily class and school ratios.

DAILY SIGN-IN AND SIGN-OUT

The Department of Social Services requires that a parent/guardian must sign your child in and out daily with a full clear legal signature (not initials). Parent’s/guardians are also required to provide the time they arrived, as well as the time of departure. A child will only be released to a person that was designated by the parent on the Identification and Emergency Form. Without **written** permission from the parent the child will not be released to any other person. Please make sure that the

people provided on the Identification and Emergency Form are people that we can contact locally and include an out-of-state relative on your list in case of any emergency.

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

A child will never be released to any person other than the parents, and/or those persons designated in the identification and Emergency Information Form LIC 700, unless special arrangements have been made. Only parent/guardians or authorized people whose names are on the Identification and Emergency Form and who have proper picture identification are authorized to take the child from school. Please let the individual who is picking up your child know that he/she will be asked to show their identification, so that they do not get offended. The staff member will photo copy the identification and place it in your child's file for future reference. We can not and will not release your child to anyone who is under the age of 18. A child should never be left by him/herself to find their own way to their classroom. Parents are kindly asked to never drop off their child and leave them to walk in alone. The State requires a sign-in and sign-out signature, but more importantly, your child needs to feel that their parents care enough to take them personally to and from school. This also provides the teacher, who is with your child all day, to update you on your child's progress and inform you of any situations that may arise.

LATE PICK-UP

Picking up your child past 6:00 p.m. creates a difficult situation for everyone involved. For children who see that their friends have left it can create separation issues and a sense of abandonment. For teachers who have prior obligations and their own responsibilities and commitments, it can create a stressful situation. If you know that you will be late, please try to arrange for another authorized adult to pick-up your child. If no other authorized adult can pick up your child, inform the school as soon as possible so that we can reassure your child that you are on your way to pick them up.

If you are late picking up your child, you will be charged \$5.00 for every fifteen minutes per that you arrive late after 6:00 p.m. You are required to pay the staff member in cash at the time of pick-up.

EMERGENCY FORMS

The school requires there to be emergency notification information on file. These forms help us reach you as soon as possible whenever there are certain unexpected issues that arise, from your child feeling an illness coming on, to any sort of accident, to contacting you if your child has not been picked up after 6:00 p.m. **Parent's should keep emergency care information up-to-date. Parent's phone numbers as well as the numbers of other responsible adults who are in the emergency forms must be kept current.** We can not stress the importance of keeping this information updated. In case an accident or injury occurs where medical attention is required, this information is imperative. Physician and dentist numbers and addresses should also be on file.

If no one can be reached in the event of an emergency, the school will have on file a signed consent form for emergency medical treatment. In the case of a major illness or injury, the staff will call 911 and the child will be taken to the hospital,

accompanied by a fully qualified teacher, parents will be called. All charges will be covered by the parents. An unusual incident report will be filed with the Department of Social Services after any emergency medical occurrence. Please do not forget to notify your child's teacher and the Director if there are any changes in phone numbers, emergency contacts, or home address so we can update our file.

HEALTH POLICY

Medical Exams

All children are required to have an annual health screening check-up and up-to-date immunization record (including TB) on file at the childcare center. Parents need to provide documentation of immunization annually.

Health Services and Illnesses

We know that it is inevitable for children to catch various illnesses from one another. When you walk in and see a sick child at school, how does that make you feel. We ask that every time you make the decision to bring your child sick to school, you remember that feeling. We depend on you to help prevent the spread of disease and trust that your judgment will be correct when it comes to bringing a sick child to school. If both parents are working, we ask that you have an "emergency back-up" relative to come and pick up your child if he/she is feeling sick. We provide WELL child care only because we do not have facilities that can accommodate sick children. We do not want to risk any exposure to any other children or the staff. With your help, we can keep all our children healthier.

We reserve the right to send your child home if we deem him/her contagious. If your child will become ill during the day at school, we will isolate him/her from the classroom and we will immediately call you to come and pick them up. We can only provide temporary care and it is critical that the child be picked up as soon as possible. **Please Please Please have a current working number and or cell phone where we can contact you at all times.** By law, we CAN NOT give any medication to children which has not been provided by/from you and accompanied with a signed Medication Form.

Severity and frequency varies from one child to another. It is very important to have good sanitary practices in order to control disease and illness. Staff members take "universal precautions" in working with the children: wearing gloves and hand washing at every opportunity. We stress the importance of this in school and we would appreciate for the parents to place emphasis at home as well. Even with ideal sanitary practices some infections are airborne and viral and cannot be prevented.

Daily Health Checks

The teachers do an informal Health Check of each child as they arrive in the morning.

Notification of Illnesses

If your child has symptoms of a communicable disease (head lice, measles, conjunctivitis, chicken pox, etc.) or if he/she has been exposed to one, please notify us right away (including the exact date of exposure). We need to inform the other parents. Parents will be informed either through a note, phone call or an email.

Symptoms of Illnesses/Staying at Home

If your child exhibits any of the following symptoms he/she cannot come to school that day and must stay at home until the symptoms have subsided for at least 24 hours. These are also the symptoms in which the parents will be called to pick up their child from school.

- **FEVER OF 100.4° (degrees) FAHRENHEIT OR HIGHER (OR HAS HAD ONE IN THE PAST 24 HOURS)**

If your child is sent home with a fever, plan on keeping them at home for the following day. **Your child must be without a fever for 24 hours before he/she can return to school without the use of Motrin, Tylenol or other drugs of this nature.** The only exception to this is fever due to immunizations

- **DIARRHEA**

Within the context of diarrhea, we are referring to a change in frequency, consistency, decreased stool form that is not contained by clothing or diapers, and odor or color of the stool

- **VOMITING**

Vomiting is when two or more episodes have occurred within a 24 hour period. When the child is ready to eat a light meal he/she is okay to return back to school

- **RASHES**

A rash is an un-identified rash or eruptions of an unknown origin. Rashes that cover the body should be evaluated by a doctor. When the physician examines and determines what it is and the cause, and that it is non-contagious, the child can return to school with a note from the physician.

- **EYE INFECTIONS**

This includes conjunctivitis (pink eye) and any thick purulent discolored discharge from the eyes. The child can only return 24 hours after he/she has been on antibiotics for at least 24 hours or with a doctor's note stating that the child is safe to come back to school.

- **INDICATIONS OF A COLD (ESPECIALLY THICK YELLOW OR GREEN NASAL DISCHARGE)**

If the child shows signs of a persistent cough, ear pain, soar throat, fever, and/or watery eyes accompanied with a yellow or green nasal discharge that stays for more than three(3) days, he/she will not be allowed back to school until we receive a note from the physician that the child is okay not contagious and may return to school.

If your child is home with a cold, we recommend that he/she stays home for several days after the onset of the symptoms. Often, if a child returns too soon, cross-infection has a greater possibility of occurring.

- **SIGNS OF SEVERE ILLNESS**

When the child has a persistent congested or hacking cough with a soar throat that is red or blistered and uncontrolled, cough associated with infectious rhinitis or respiratory infection, breathing difficulty or wheezing, poor food/fluid intake, or seizure (please document if your child has history of this), we ask that he/she go and be evaluated by a doctor and when the doctor allows the child to come back to school, we ask for it in writing.

- **HAND-FOOT-MOUTH DISEASE**

Is a common viral infection that usually affects young children (especially for this age group). Doctor's note is necessary upon child's return to the school.

- **PARASITES**

Parasites include but are not limited to nits, crab lice, scabies, pinworm, giardiasis, etc... Consult with the child's physician and when he/she is allowed to return to school.

- **OTHER COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

Symptoms may include sniffles, reddened eyes, sore throat, abdominal pain, headaches, and a fever. These infections include head lice, hand foot and mouth disease, conjunctivitis (pink eye), chickenpox, measles, mumps, etc.

Head Lice- has to be treated at home and all nits have to be removed.

Prior to the child returning to school, parents need to bring a note from the doctor indicating that your child is allowed to return to school.

Chickenpox- the child must stay at home until all sores are dry (usually 5-7 days). If siblings have been exposed we also ask that you keep them home in order to prevent exposure to other children.

Almost all communicable diseases need to be treated with antibiotics.

Your child may not return to school until he/she has been on antibiotics for at least the past 24 hours for any communicable disease given that there is a doctor's note provided.

- **JAUNDICE**

Jaundice is when a person's eyes, skin or mucus membranes have a yellow color. Jaundice can be a sign of other health problems. In order for your child to come back to school the parent needs to take the child to a physician to find the cause and provide the school with doctor's permission to come back to school.

If a child has a runny nose due to allergies, this must be expressed in his/her file. Otherwise, we need a note from his/her physician stating that your child has allergies.

In addition to the symptoms listed, the staff will evaluate the behavior of the child. If your child is very irritable, cranky, fussy, lethargic, or generally out of sorts and feeling tired, he/she may need special attention. In this case, you may be asked to care for your child at home, regardless of whether any or all of the criteria are met.

INJURY OR ACCIDENT

When you pick up your child, we will do our best to let you know about any minor accidents that he/she had during the day. If it is not too serious we will verbally say it to you and when it becomes a little more serious we will give you an "Ouch Report." In case a serious emergency (accidents, illness, injury) happens, we will contact you immediately (by phone or email). If we cannot reach you, we will call your child's physician and will contact the person you designated on your Emergency Contact and Parental Consent form. If it is necessary, we will call for an ambulance or paramedics to arrive. The parent/guardian is expected to take responsibility for any resultant expenses such as transportation and medical fees. We do not carry health insurance for any of the children. **Again, we cannot stress the importance of keeping all emergency contact information current.**

MEDICATION POLICY

Great Beginnings Preschool administers prescription medications pursuant to the instructions indicated on the label of the medication, at the instruction of the parent. A medication form must be filled out daily, indicating the prescribing physician and the appropriate dosage. Medications must be in the prescribed container, and will be stored in a box in the refrigerator. If a child has to take medicine, the school will take the responsibility of administering such medicines if the parents sign an authorization form each day such medication is needed. All medication must have a prescription label. All medication will be administered by the head teacher of your child's class. If there is a discrepancy between parents' instructions and the prescription label, we will contact you prior to administering any medication and ask that you provide a written verification from the prescribing doctor of the proper dosage. All prescriptions given will be documented. A medical and dental emergency release form as well as an identification and emergency information sheet will be signed by each parent prior to a child's admission to the school. All unused medicine, or expired prescriptions will be returned to the parents.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Your child's safety is our primary concern. Due to this, all our staff members are trained in CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) and First Aid. We require that the staff members keep their certifications up to date by attending CPR and First Aid classes bi-annually.

According to state regulations, we hold earthquake and fire evacuation drills on a monthly basis. This requires the children to practice following teacher's instructions in case of an emergency, among other important things such as turning away from windows and dropping and covering on command.

We ask that parents pay a check in the amount of \$38 for emergency kit supplies. We ask you to provide a family photo with some kind, sweet words that you usually express to them. You will be asked to pay the amount annually to keep the emergency kit updated. The emergency kits will be stored close to an exit and will be wheeled out to the designated evacuation location in case of an emergency.

In the event of a real emergency, the teachers will take the children and the class backpack (first aid, basic emergency supplies) out of the building. Certain staff members are assigned to different duties including taking the sign-in sheets, taking the main first aid-kit, search and rescue, and managing the group amongst others. The sign-in/sign-out sheet is of critical importance in situations like this, so please make sure to sign your child in and out daily. The children will be evacuated. The staff will remain with the children in a safe area until it is safe to re-enter the school or until the children are picked up. In case of a major disaster and in order to prevent panic, there will be a runner to bring your child to you. Parents/ guardians will not be allowed to enter the school grounds. We ask that you be patient with us if this process occurs.

REST TIME

A quiet time for rest is necessary for children at this age. It provides them the necessary rest for growth and rejuvenation both physically and mentally and it helps them from becoming exhausted and worn out later in the day, which can affect their mood and makes it more difficult for them to fall asleep at night. The majority of the time, most children fall asleep on their own, but when needed teachers gently pat the children who have difficulty falling asleep while staying close and helping the child relax and feel comfortable until they do. If a child can't sleep, he/she is expected to stay on their cot quietly. During rest time there is soft soothing music playing. If a child wants water or needs to go to the restroom he/she is allowed at any time they desire. Please be sure to provide a labeled crib/regular sheet and blanket that fit our cots/mattresses. Soft napping toys that do not create noise are at your own discretion to bring for your child. **Remember to take these items home weekly to launder and return to the school the next school day** (preferably from Friday to Monday).

SCHOOLS BELONGINGS

Photos, video's and audio materials connected with the school, arts and crafts by the children as well as the teachers and staff members, become the property of the Great Beginnings Preschool at 12052 Emelita St. No. Hollywood, CA 91607. They are allowed to be used in displays, art exhibits, commercially in brochures, cards or flyers, in fundraisers and or promotional materials, etc. The school will not be held responsible for any stolen and or reproduced items without the school's knowledge and consent.

HOLIDAYS

We honor certain holidays which are **included in the tuition budget and payable**, since our rates are pro-rated throughout the entire year. Holiday information is listed in our brochure and monthly calendars. Regular tuition applies to all of these days.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

For our parent's convenience and peace of mind the school maintains an "open door" policy. This means that parents may visit the school at any time, without an appointment or prior notice, so long as the general rhythm of the program is not disrupted and the children are not disturbed.

TUITION

Tuition is charged weekly or monthly, in advance, and is due at the beginning of each week or month. Charges not paid by the end of the first week of the month will be subject to a \$15 late fee. We offer three different payment options (cash, check, money order). Please drop your tuition check in the mail box marked "TUITION." Be sure to ask for a receipt for all tuition paid in cash. Checks should be made out to Great Beginnings Preschool.

Rates change from year to year and are included on a separate rate sheet. The following charges also apply:

Anyone falling more than two weeks behind on tuition will be asked not to bring their child to school until tuition is paid. Any change in basic tuition rate will be given to the parents in writing thirty (30) days prior to becoming effective. In the case of prolonged illness, normal tuition applies for the first two weeks and half tuition for weeks there after.

Any check returned for insufficient funds will entail a charge of \$25.00 to the parent. If there are two (2) or more checks returned with insufficient funds received within a six (6) month period, we may ask that all future tuition payments be made in cash or by money order only.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Great Beginnings Preschool is operated as an equal opportunity employer and provides day care services on a non-discriminatory basis.

REGISTRATION AND WITHDRAWALS

A non-refundable annual registration fee of \$100.00 will be charged when you enroll your child. Withdrawals of the child from the school requires **two week written notice**. If notice is not given, parents are responsible for paying the **full** tuition for the two weeks.

TERMINATION POLICY

A child may be terminated by the school if it is determined that it is in the best interest of the child, other children in the class, and/or the overall operation of Great Beginnings Preschool. After EVERY effort to correct a problematic situation has been made, a child maybe terminated for non-payment of tuition, the center's inability to meet the child's needs, dangerous or disruptive behavior, or continued violation of school policies by the child or parent. The following are some of the situations where cause for termination is relevant:

- Parent/guardian has failed to sign all enrollment and registration documents.
- Parent/guardian has not met the policies outlined in the Parent handbook.
- Parent/guardian has failed to provide child's immunization information.
- Parent/guardian does not keep phone numbers and emergency contact information up to date(including job phone numbers). This is all necessary in case of an emergency.
- Parent/guardian is continuously failing to deliver payments on time.
- Parent/guardian is continuously picking up their child late.
- If the staff and other professionals see that the child is physically, emotionally, or socially unprepared to cope with the school setting.
- The staff and the Director determine that the school is unable to meet the child's particular needs.

Every effort to give one week notice will be made.

RULES OF DISCIPLINE

Great Beginnings Preschool strives to promote a healthy self-image in each child. We believe that in order to reduce disciplinary action, there needs to be a properly structured environment which we endeavor to employ daily. Through communication, cooperation, observation, and unity, our teachers try their best on preventing discipline issues from arising. The staff is constantly making an effort to be positive role models through demonstrating and modeling appropriate behavior, clarifying expectations, as well as placing great emphasis and attention when a child

acts in a positive way. Any discipline will be given in a positive direction. Since the bulk of the program is dealing with the youngest of children, a patient and loving attitude is given at all times. Redirecting the child's behavior into a more positive energy activity is the goal. Teachers will be given general guidelines and the children will be encouraged to use their common sense in interacting with their peers, their teachers and their environment. Great Beginnings Preschool believes that every disciplinary situation is a teachable moment where teachers guide children in responding appropriately to any situation that may arise.

NO CORPORAL PUNISHMENT WILL EVER BE PERMITTED, NOR WILL ANY VIOLATION OF CHILDREN'S PERSONAL RIGHTS BE PERMITTED TO DISCIPLINE CHILDREN.

Cooperation between school and parents is a must if we are to fulfill our goals. An ongoing dialogue should continue between the parent and the teacher. Any parent may request a special conference with the director and teacher. If the director needs to call a conference due to a child's negative behavior, both parents (if available) should attend and take the necessary steps to correct any problems. Continued misbehavior could result in dismissal from the school.

- Corporal punishment and other humiliating or frightening techniques are prohibited. This includes poking, hitting, pushing, pulling, or twisting of limbs.
- No verbal comments will be made which could be demeaning or embarrassing to any child.
- Discipline must not be associated with food, rest, isolation, or toilet training.
- Our approach to a misbehaving child is to behave in a calm manner. We discuss the reasons for the incident and the feelings involved. Offer reasonable resolutions to the situation. Speak in a low and calm tone.
- Establish eye-to-eye contact with the child who we are speaking to. Positively redirect the child's attention and behavior before permitting the child to return to the same environment.
- "Time Outs" should not be used as a form of discipline. A child will be removed from the group only when his behavior is dangerous or disruptive to the group. He will be spoken with, calmed, and returned to the group.
- When a child intentionally injures or hurts another child, the child should be encouraged to use his words to express his feelings. The hurt child should be asked to share how he/she feels to be hurt.
- If persistent misbehavior or a problem of a serious nature occurs, the director and/or teacher will schedule a conference with the parents.

Discipline

Children are given clear expectations and limits. Discipline takes the form of demonstrating appropriate behavior, clarifying expectations, redirecting, and limiting choices as necessary. We avoid punitive treatment because it engenders fear and anger rather than understanding. Physical punishment is not a viable option and is prohibited by law.

Inclusion of Special Needs Children

All children are welcomed into the program. Children who have individual needs not likely to be met by the regular program will be advised to obtain special complementary services. Cooperative arrangements with other programs or services may be worked out. If all attempts to work alongside appropriate complementary services fail to meet the child's needs and we determine that the child care arrangement is not in the best interest of your child, Great Beginnings Preschool reserves the right to give a two week notice of termination of service to your family.

WORKING WITH CONTINUING BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS

When a child shows a pattern of behavior which represents a danger to the other children or staff, we will ask for the family's cooperation in changing the behavior. A plan will be developed in conjunction with the parents that may include:

- suggested methods for dealing with the difficult behavior both at home and in school
- sending the child home for the remainder of the day when behavior is unmanageable
- consultation with the other agencies if appropriate
- communication between the staff and the child's/family therapist
- a timeline for implementation of this plan
- follow-up meetings to assess the child's progress

Parents will be expected to cooperate in the development and implementation of the plan. However, if the intervention strategies are not effective in creating a safe environment for all involved, and the child continues to have extremely disruptive behavior within the center, program services may be terminated.

PARENT CONDUCT

The childcare center is intended to be a physically and emotionally safe environment. All people-children, staff, and parents-can expect to be treated with respect and consideration. Adults are expected to model appropriate, verbal problem solving. Any adult exhibiting inappropriately loud, angry, verbally or physically abusive behavior with children, staff or parents will be asked to stop immediately and resume interaction calmly at a later time. If such behavior persists after a previous warning (written/verbal) Great Beginnings Preschool has the right to terminate service immediately. Be mindful of your children when they are outside the gate. We understand that you may want to socialize with other parents but be aware of where your child is at every second. We cannot accept any responsibility if you let them walk or run freely out into traffic areas as they please. And please drive in and out of

the traffic areas as cautiously as possible. If you need any help, we would be glad to assist you.

REFUND POLICY

The school is unable to allow make up or substitute days for times that a child is absent. There is no refund for days not attended. A refund of prepaid tuition will be made, provided two weeks written notice of intent to withdraw is given.

MEALS AND NUTRITION

Snacks

Nutritional snacks are provided by Great Beginnings Preschool in the mid- mornings and mid-afternoons from two or more of the major food groups. They are prepared on sight and include unprocessed ingredients, such as fresh fruits and vegetables, following the guidelines of the federal nutrition program. Snacks may change based on availability. Water is at hand throughout the day as needed. Milk and juice are also available to children during snack times and they are allowed “seconds” and sometimes more if they are particularly hungry. Food allergies are noted in each child’s enrollment packet as well as being posted on every room’s parent board for teachers to double check. No child will be given a food to which he/she has a registered allergy.

Lunch

Children may bring their own lunch or purchase our lunch on a daily, weekly or monthly basis. Please mark your child’s lunch box clearly with his/her name. A child’s first lunch box is really one of their first real official objects of ownership. It’s fun to make an event out of it because children get so much pleasure out of their first lunch box. They love to talk about it and show it off to their friends. Great Beginnings Preschool asks that you provide nutritious lunches: no sugar or candy will be permitted. We ask that you place your child’s lunch box in his/her cubby each morning.

We encourage your child’s independence in many ways during lunch. Hence, teachers try to minimize feeding children. Children are in charge of their lunches and choose what they like from their lunch box, though they are encouraged to focus on main lunch items first before moving on to snack items.

Be prepared for your child’s tastes to change as they notice what their friends are eating. Be aware that the beginning of lunch can be hectic so provide something your child can start eating without waiting for help from an adult. Cutting up large pieces of fruit to the appropriate size will aid in your child’s independence. Please limit the number of items needing to be warmed up so that teachers can be seated with the children rather than tending the microwave. Teaching your children to make wise choices in respect to food is a big part of our curriculum.

Great Beginnings is a sugar less school. We ask that you not include any cookies, candy, cake or other high sugar items.

Lunchbox ideas:

- Sandwiches: jelly sandwiches, tuna or chicken salad, egg salad, cheese. A fun way to change it up is to use pita or tortillas instead of bread.

- Left-overs: spaghetti, pizza, rice, noodle dishes.
- Protein: cubes of cheese, cooked meat& fish, yogurt cups, cottage cheese cups, eggs.
- Crackers: goldfish, soft crackers...
- Cereals: Kicks and cheerios are some good finger foods.
- Fruits: applesauce, fruit salad cups, pears, apples, grapes, berries, orange sections, melon chunks, banana...
- Vegetables: Sliced cucumber, carrots, zucchini, bell paper strips; try a dressing or a dip to make veggies more exciting to eat.

POTTY TRAINING

Just like in everything, success in toileting is assured with a coordinated effort from the home and the school equally. From our part, as responsive caregivers, we observe each child's development and let them set their own pace to begin the process of potty training. Some signs of this are when a child shows that he/she:

- Shows curiosity in bathroom activities.
- Communicates and displays recognition of body functions through different signs and words.
- Shows a growing sense of self independence.
- Gains an awareness of their clothing and how to manage it.
- Is physically capable and has the concept of when to release and retain bodily fluids.

This whole process and the above signs are typically seen in the second or third year. Remember, every child is different and this should be done at his/her own pace. Your child will be the leader in this process and we (the staff and parents) need to work together to plan when and how the move from diapers to underwear takes place. We acknowledge that accidents are to be expected and are necessary in order for the learning process to take place. Punishment is never used as a consequence to an accident because it can result in anxiety and resentment. Instead, we promote a reassuring supportive positive attitude to make sure that the child is always encouraged to keep trying and maintains an enthusiastic feeling for this process. Any soiled clothing will be placed in a bag and returned home. We will do what we can to help your child succeed and we will be there whenever they require any sort of assistance.

CLOTHING

Clothing

Keeping it simple is probably the best advice we can give parents. Comfortable, sturdy, and washable play clothes are the best choice. As your child will be actively exploring and experimenting all day long, you can expect that clothing will get stained with dirt, glue, paint, etc. At this age children's work is to play and sometimes they are bound to get dirty and messy. Please do not bring any article of clothing that is expensive and clothes that require tender care should be kept for activities outside school. Please do not bring clothing that will in any way limit their movement and activity. **All** articles of clothing (including coats, sweaters, jackets, hats) should be clearly labeled with your child's name.

Extra Clothing

A complete set of extra clothes are needed for each child [under garments (underwear, socks) and outer (pants, shorts, t-shirt, long sleeve shirt, sweater, jacket, hat...) garments] so that your child can be as dry and comfortable throughout the day. Please check your child's extra clothing (as well as diapers and baby wipes) periodically to

make sure that it still fits his/her needs. Also, check and verify that your child's extra clothing is appropriate for the time of year and the weather conditions that accompany it. A child who is in diapers should have extra diapers or pull-ups, diaper rash ointment, and baby wipes in the school at all times. If an accident occurs and there are no extra clothes for your child it is a very frustrating experience both for your child and the staff.

Shoes

Before you put shoes on your child in the morning we want you to think about all the fun activities that he/she will be involved throughout the day. They will be running, jumping, climbing, pedaling, chasing, and for some trying to find their balance. So we ask that you send your child to school with either tennis shoes or closed toed rubber soled shoes that provide children greater support and protection for their growing motor skills. Please do not bring any jellies, thongs, crocs, clogs as well as many kinds of sandals, and many boots that have heels which are slipping and tripping hazards. The only exception is during summer camp water days when closed toe water shoes are allowed for water play only.

Jewelry & Other Personal Small Objects

We ask that jewelry and other small objects be left at home to be worn and or used for different occasions besides preschool due to these items being broken or lost in school and also for safety reasons. It is in the best interest of your child because when a certain necklace or play watch gets broken or lost the child feels sad, upset, and disappointed. What happens is that the teacher spends time looking for the certain piece of jewelry and comforting the child which takes away from class activity time. So we ask that you please try to explain to your child when he/she really wants to bring jewelry to school that it is safer at home. If objects like these are brought to school, they will be placed in a box for parents to retrieve at the end of the day.

On a separate note, if you happen to have any costumes or costume jewelry that you no longer need, we would love if you could donate them so we could use them in our dramatic play area. Anything from costumes to hats to princess veils to any jewelry. Toys that your child is not interested in playing with anymore or has outgrown would be greatly appreciated as well. Since these items are not personal and belong to a certain child is not affected if they get broken or lost as much as if it would be their own.

TOYS FROM HOME

During the process of separation and transition from home to preschool, many children need a certain object that reminds and relates to them of comfort and security. This may be anything as long as it is meaningful to your child (i.e.: small blanket, stuffed animal, dolls). Please choose something that will not become a tripping or safety hazard---something that the child can manage (not so small it constantly gets lost, or so big it interferes with their activity). At this young age, the concept of sharing is not fully understood so we ask that you keep all toys, except the comfort toys, at home. Sharing is a concept of social development that the staff works on creating in each child on a daily basis. We expect the children at Great Beginnings Preschool to share school toys. Every Friday is share day, this is a good opportunity to bring appropriate share toys to school. If a child is not willing to share and let others to use their "share toy," the toy will be returned back to his/her cubby after showing them. Please be mindful that there is a good possibility that the toys

can become broken or lost so please send toys that your child is willing to have damaged. We cannot be responsible for any items brought to school.

BIRTHDAYS

Children love birthdays. It is a very exciting time for them and we focus our best effort to make them feel as special as they can on their special day. We believe that talking and reinforcing that birthdays and celebrations where children tend to get presents (i.e. Christmas, Hanukkah...) are not just about getting gifts but rather about the love that people feel towards the child and the appreciation for who he/she is as a person. This helps build a positive image for viewing presents in a better more proactive way than the usual greedy way most of us tend to look at presents at a young age. Because Great Beginnings is a sugarless school we ask that you keep items like birthday cake or cupcakes for home celebrations. Instead we encourage everyone to get creative! Past examples of birthday treats include: French toast, pancakes w/ berries, fruit skewers, smoothies, yogurt and granola cups, etc. To make your child feel extra special on his/her special day we ask him/her what their favorite activity is in school and we dedicate a certain amount of time to it. If you wish to donate a book in honor of your child's birthday to our library we would appreciate it. If you choose to do so, we will read the book on the day of your child's celebration. If you would like to join in and read the book to the children we welcome that too. If you have any questions regarding which books to donate, your child's teacher can give you great suggestions.

WAYS TO HELP YOUR CHILD DO WELL IN SCHOOL

- Make sure that your child is getting enough sleep and eating well. Especially, eating breakfast on a daily basis.
- Get your child to school on time every day.
- Require that your child treat school staff with respect as well as themselves and their peers.
- Stress the importance of obeying school rules.
- When a concern, question, or compliment arises, call, leave a note or (best) talk to the Director.
- Review any school newsletters and other information from the school. Take active participation in any school fundraisers.
- Attend parent-teacher conferences to discuss any potential issues as well as the progress of your child.
- Monitor your child's work and read to your child every day.

- **SOME GREAT TIPS FOR PARENTS TO KEEP IN MIND:**

- Once a year please update your child's immunization record. We need everything to stay current.
- Every couple months please check your child's amount of extra clothing and make sure that what clothing they have is conducive with the season.
- Weekly, make sure not to forget to take home and wash your child's blankets and other nap things and return them on the following school day.
- If your child is in diapers, please check the amount of diapers and wipes your child has in school on a weekly basis to make sure they are never left without.
- Daily, check your child's files and cubbies to make sure you stay current with what is happening in school.
- Please Please Please sign your child in and out daily. We cannot stress this enough.
- Every day make sure to pack and bring your child's lunch and any extra clothing that he/she might need in school.
- At any time that there is any change to your address, phone number, or any change to your emergency back-up or their phone numbers please notify us as soon as possible. We will need you to fill out a new emergency card of any if the above changes occur.

Release and Consent Form for Student's Photos and Acknowledgement and Receipt of Parent Handbook

Release and Consent Form for Student's Photos

Great Beginnings Preschool website, pamphlets, and advertising are tools to communicate with school families, teachers, prospective students, and the larger community. To enhance this experience we use photos to show student and family involvement in various activities.

In order for students' images to appear on the Great Beginnings Preschool website or any publication, it is required, that we obtain parental permission.

Please check the box and sign below to authorize the acceptance or rejection of permission to publish your child's photograph on Great Beginnings Preschool's website, pamphlets, and advertising.

Note: Group photos of students and their work (artwork, writings, etc.) may be published, but it is against Great Beginnings Preschool's policy to publish any individual student photos without permission.

Name of Student: _____ Age Group _____

Please indicate your acceptance or rejection of permission to publish your child's photograph:

- Individual photo may be published. Yes No

I hereby give authorization, indicated above, and release Great Beginnings Preschool from liability resulting from connection with the publication of this information.

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Acknowledgment and Receipt of Parent Handbook

I have received and read the Great Beginnings Preschool Parent Handbook. I understand and agree to comply with all school policies and regulations as outlined in the handbook. I further understand and acknowledge that the Preschool may change, add or delete any policy or regulation in this handbook at the sole discretion of the administration.

Name _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

