

# *Bright Kids* *Montessori* Parent Handbook

## **Mission Statement**

Bright Kids Montessori's mission is to provide a safe and happy environment and learning center for your child to grow intellectually, emotionally, socially and responsibly. By giving hope to the children and by providing them an opportunity to succeed, they grow into the talented, motivated and contributing members of our society.

Bright Kids Montessori  
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## **Our Goal**

BKM strives to provide a developmental program that includes experiences which meet the needs and interest of your child. Each day your child will enter a loving and warm atmosphere.

## **Diversity of Students**

BKM embraces diversity. All children, regardless of race, religion, gender or disability have opportunities and access to BKM without discrimination. Prior to enrollment of a child with special needs, special consideration will be given to the capability of BKM to accommodate the child's needs. If another facility would be more appropriately suited to the developmental needs of a child, the center director will inform the child's parents at that time.

## **Diversity of Staff**

BKM is an equal opportunity employer. Our staff is loving, friendly, professionally and highly trained. Our staff is trained in CPR and First Aid, knowledgeable in child development and is of good moral character. They have chosen this profession because they have a desire to see children grow in caring and nurturing program.

## **Operations**

The hours of operation are 6:30am - 6:30pm, Monday through Friday. Convenient, year-round programs include spring, summer and Fall Semesters.

## **Communication and Conferences**

We understand that communications is essential in creating a good relationship with your child's teacher, director and child care center; therefore there are many opportunities to do this.

### **Avenues of Communication**

- \* Infant and toddler charts - each child in an infant or toddler class will be given a daily, individualized information sheet with detailed information of the child's day.
- \* Conferences: formal conferences are scheduled twice per year for all children. From time to time, the parent or the teacher may ask for an additional conference to discuss issues that may arise.
- \* Visits: parents are invited to visit their child from time-to-time to have a meal, to participate in holiday parties, share an activity, or simply observe the class.
- \* Accidents & Mishaps: minor scrapes or bruises will be handled at school and an accident report will be given to the parent at pick-up detailing the incident. Other injuries will be reported to the parent by phone and an accident report will be given to the parent at pick-up detailing the incident. All accident/incident reports must be signed by the parent to be kept in the child's student file.

## **Confidentiality**

To ensure the respect and privacy for children, families and staff in dealing with all areas of running the school, only those required to know for the performance of their duties will have access to confidential information. Staff, relief staff and parents or guardians BKM are expected to respect the privacy of each child, family and staff member. All must maintain confidentiality with information that may come to them during the course of the day.

Access to each child's records will only be given to -

- \* Members of the permanent staff working with that child
- \* A substitute teacher working with that child
- \* The Director, Assistant Director and Administrator
- \* A member of the Texas Department of Family & Protective Services
- \* The parents or guardians of that child

### **Court Orders affecting Enrolled Children**

A certified custody order and/or any other legal document regarding your child's guardianship must be provided to BKM's directors prior to enrollment. In the event that a court order is issued stating or changing the custody status or other legal issues concerning a child, the directors must be furnished a copy of the court order authorizing the changes. Letters from attorneys are not acceptable substitutions for court orders signed by the judge. In the case of sole custody orders, BKM reserves the right to ask that exchange of the child or children be conducted off of BKM's property.

### **Open Door Policy**

All parents are welcome to observe their child from the observation windows during business hours. Open communication between staff members and parents is essential. If, at any time, questions or concerns arise, we urge parents to bring these to the attention of the classroom teacher &/or the administrative staff at the facility. All parties will do their best to find appropriate resolution to the situation in the timeliest manner possible.

**Drop-off/check-in procedure:** Parents will need to park and escort their child into the building. The parent must sign in at the front desk each morning upon drop off, and sign out upon pick up every evening/departure. We are required by DFPS to keep these records for minimum of 90 days.

### **Pick-Up**

Parents should pick up their child before 6:30 pm. Any children left after 6:30 pm will be charged \$1.00 a minute there after. Only those persons authorized on the enrollment form will be permitted to pick your child up. If it becomes necessary for someone else to pick up your child, you will need to contact the office and give us their names and drivers license number. Please note that this person will be expected to provide their ID before exiting the building with your child.

### **Curriculum**

The term "Montessori" implies both philosophy and a method of education philosophy based on the research of Dr. Maria Montessori – an Italian physician and educator. At its heart, the Montessori Method emphasizes independence, freedom within limits, and a respect for the child. Multi-aged classrooms provide benefits that are readily apparent when visiting the classroom. Younger children in the classroom have an opportunity to observe and imitate the older students as they work. Older students have an opportunity to reinforce their own knowledge by explaining what they are doing and assisting and mentoring younger children. Each child can learn and develop at his own pace within a classroom that accommodates many levels of ability and

complexity. Our curriculum involves Practical Life, Sensorial Exercises, Language, Math, Science and Cultural Studies.

### **Behavior Management**

We use positive discipline. Our teachers strive to consistently give praise for earned success and positive encouragement. Prior to expecting good behavior children must know what is expected of them. Standards for good behavior are clearly communicated to the children at their level of understanding. In all discipline we will use guidance methods in an atmosphere of love and acceptance. The child could be asked to leave the activity to help the child regain control of him/her. Time away is not a time when a child is humiliated or shamed. Typical discipline procedures will include-

- \* Redirection
- \* Talking with the student about their behavior
- \* Time away from activity
- \* Talking with parents

### **Corporal Punishment**

No staff member shall subject children to punishment of a physical nature such as shaking, striking, spanking, swatting, thumping, pinching or any cruel treatment. It is very important that we speak to all the children in a positive manner that shows respect. We do not speak harshly or yell at them.

### **Child Abuse**

Texas state statute defines child abuse as “harm or threatened harm to a child’s health or welfare by a person to a child”. This includes non-accidental physical or mental injury, sexual abuse or neglect. Any care giver that has a reason to believe that a child has been abused will report it to the director, who will promptly contact the Child Protective Services of abuse/neglect.

### **Inclement Weather**

In the event if Farmers branch ISD closes due to inclement weather, BKM will be closed. However, if there is an inclement weather day in which BKM feels the safety of the students &/or staff members are at risk, we reserve the right to close. If delayed openings are announced, we will make every effort to open BKM following the ISD’s designated time, but since our staff commutes from different locations, we may not be able to do so.

Fire, severe weather, and evacuation drills are practiced regularly. You can be sure your child is always in the best hands while he/she is at BKM. We have our evacuation routes for fire escape and tornado evacuation posted and available for viewing in each child’s classroom.

### **Health & Illness Policies**

Prior to enrollment, proof of immunizations as required by the state must be provided. Other medical forms must be presented as needed. When your child’s immunizations are updated, we must have a current copy at all times.

### **Exclusion from care**

There are circumstances which may call for a child to be excluded from care at BKM

- The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities (including outdoor play).
- The illness results in a greater need for care than caregivers can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children in care.
- The child has a temperature of 100.01 degrees or greater.
- The child is breathing abnormally.
- The child has two or more vomiting episodes in 24 hours.
- The child has diarrhea.
- The child has rash with fever.
- The child has mouth sores with drooling.
- The child has eye discharge or eyes are pink or red
- The child has head lice.
- The child's behavior changes or the child exhibits other signs that the child may be severely ill.
- A health-care professional has diagnosed the child with a communicable disease and the child does not have medical documentation to indicate that the child is no longer contagious.

### **When a Child Becomes Ill While in Care**

If any one of the previously listed signs or symptoms occurs, the following procedure will be followed:

- The child will be removed from the classroom and taken to the office.
- The child's parents will be called to pick him/her up.
- The child will be given appropriate attention and supervision until the child's parents arrive.
- Extra attention will be given to hand washing and sanitation.

### **Medication and Prescriptions**

Parents will be expected to complete a Medicine Authorization Form if their child is to receive any prescription medicine, over the counter medicine, lotions, creams, inhalers or breathing treatments while in the care of BKM. All medicine must be in its original container and be dropped off in the office. No medicine should be taken to the classroom by the parents or students. All medication will be given according to the label provided. The center only administers one dose per day. For example: If your child is required to take a medication 3 times a day, we ask the parent to give the first dose of medicine at home, the center will give the second dose at lunch time and the third dose is again given by the parent as evening/night dose.

### **Medical Emergencies**

Procedure for minor injuries:

- Parents will be notified via telephone
- Parents will receive written documentation of the event upon arrival

Procedures for major injuries:

- Administrative staff members will call 911
- Parents will be notified via telephone
- Parents will receive written documentation of the event upon arrival
- A staff member will accompany the child to the hospital and will stay until the parent arrives.

### **Meals**

Breakfast will be served from 7:45am-8:45am. No exceptions will be made if your child comes to school late after breakfast has been closed. After breakfast has been closed, you must feed your child before he/she arrives at school. A nutritious lunch is served at 11:30am. An afternoon snack is served between 2:30pm-3:00pm. Meals are served family style. The teachers will serve the meals where good table manners will be taught and encouraged. If your child requires any special diet, the parent will be responsible for their meal. Please note that BKM takes part in the government food program.

### **Naps**

Maintaining compliance with the minimum standards for the state of Texas, all students will have a nap each day while in care. Infants will nap according to their schedules. Toddler and primary students will nap from 12:30pm – 2:30pm Monday through Friday. School age children are required to rest as well, however no child is forced to sleep but, they must remain quiet. Students should bring a roll-up nap mat for use at nap time. All nap items should be clearly labeled with the child's first and last name & will be sent home each Friday to be washed.

### **Clothing**

Because of the wide range of activities it is recommended that children be dressed in washable, comfortable clothing. Outdoor play and occasional bathroom accidents necessitate that an extra set of clothing be kept at the school at all times. All extra clothing should be marked with the child's name and placed in a labeled plastic bag. Clothing should include underwear, socks, pants, and shirt. If wet or dirty clothes are sent home, please return a clean extra set of clothes the next morning.

### **Holidays**

School will be closed all major holidays. An annual calendar will be published at the beginning of each academic year. Monthly tuition will be due regardless of the number of days closed each month.

### **Outdoor Play**

Outdoor play is essential to the healthy development of children. The children will go out daily, weather permitting. These children will enjoy the play equipment as well as the open field. On inclement weather days, students will engage in physical activities inside the classroom, library or dance as a substitute for outdoor play.

### **Water Play/ Splash Days**

During summer, BKM will celebrate "Water Play Days" on the playground with water hose, wading pool, buckets, cups etc. All the students (except infants) will need a labeled towel, swimsuit and water shoes for such days. Please inform the staff if your child has ear tubes or would need ear protection.

### **Holiday Celebrations**

Celebrations including birthdays, religious, cultural and national holidays are celebrated at BKM. We respect all traditions and celebrate and discuss many holiday that might not be a part of every family's lifestyle. This will allow the students to understand other cultures and become more accepting to the diverse world around them.

### **Birthday Celebrations**

Parents are welcome to send cookies, cupcakes or cakes to share with their child's classmates on birthdays or special occasions. Please inform your child's teacher in advance about what kind of treat you plan on bringing. This is for the safety of all of the children. Please do not bring in any treats that contain peanuts or peanut products. If a birthday is to be celebrated away from school and the entire class is not invited, please mail the invitations. If the entire class is invited, you may distribute the invitations into the cubbies. BKM will not distribute mailing lists or phone numbers.

### **Transportation / Field Trips**

No staff member will be allowed to transport any student at any time without expressed, written authorization from the parent. Likewise, no student will leave the facility for the purpose of a field trip without the prior, written consent of their parent. BKM will provide Field Trips offsite - some places may be frequent trips to the park, periodic trips for children activities and discovery. The notice would be posted a week in advance. Children will travel in vehicles driven by responsible employees of BKM with prior 2 hour training for each driver.

### **Gang Free Zone**

Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1,000 feet of a child care center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized gang-related criminal activity are subject to harsher penalty.

Texas law requires parents, teachers, and administrators to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the TDFPS or law enforcement. Call the Child Abuse Hotline number, 1-800-2525400, to make confidential reports. Failure to report suspected child abuse or neglect is a crime. Employers are prohibited from retaliating against employees who make reports in good faith.

### **Tuition & Payment Methods**

**Tuition** is due every Monday at the start of the workweek of each week that your child attends in advance. If tuition is not paid by Monday 6:30 PM, there will be a \$15.00 late payment fee assessed and added to your bill. If the current week tuition is not paid by Tuesday morning, your child will not be able to attend the school until full week's tuition is paid. Tuition is not based on attendance. We are reserving a space for your child and tuition must be paid whether your child is in attendance or not.

**Registration Fee:** Registration fee is \$75.00 for each student member. This registration fee is due upon enrollment. If the child is withdrawn and comes back to the school again, registration fee will be charged again as well as new enrollment papers would be needed to be completed.

**Returned Check Fee:** A \$35.00 fee will be charged for any returned check. This fee must be paid along with the replacement payment for the returned check in cash or with a cashier's check or money order. The total amount must be paid in full in order for your child to attend BKM.

**Withdrawal:** The obligation for full payment of tuition continues until the date indicated by the parent or guardian as the date of withdrawal. The parent or guardian agrees to furnish BKM with at least 2 weeks written notice of such date of withdrawal.

**Dismissal:** BKM reserves the right to discontinue care for any student. These decisions will be made based on the child's ability to succeed in the environment. Furthermore, if the student presents a danger to him/herself, the teacher, or other students or if their needs are out of the range of BKM is able to provide, we reserve the right to ask the family to make alternative arrangements.

**Payment Methods:** BKM accepts Cash, Check, Money Order, Zelle, PayPal, and cashier's checks.

### **CCMS Financial Assistance**

BKM is contracted with CCMS. However, CCMS does not pay our full tuition cost. It is the parent's responsibility to make up for the difference plus pay their co-pay. CCMS require that balances are paid in full upon disenrollment and we are required to report any outstanding balances to CCMS. We require parents to renew their paper work and keep CCMS informed about any job changes, address change etc. It is parent's responsibility to keep the CCMS well informed, failure to do so will result in termination of CCMS benefits and therefore making the parent responsible for any tuition charges.

### **Minimum Standards & Licensing Office**

The Minimum Standards are the regulating documents that provide a framework for how childcare facilities are to operate in the state of Texas. At any time, a parent may request from the administrative staff a copy of these standards to review. These may also be found online at [www.dfps.state.tx.us](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us).

At any time, a parent may request to view the most recent inspection from the Licensing Office. To view this document in its entirety, please ask the administrative staff at BKM. This report as well as previous inspection results may also be found online at [www.dfps.state.tx.us](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us).

At any time, a parent may wish to contact the local childcare Licensing Office. The Licensing Office contact information can be found below:

Childcare Licensing Office  
Texas Department of Family & Protective Services  
8700 North Stemmons Freeway, Suite 104  
Dallas, Texas 75247  
(214) 583-4253, (800) 582-6036

Report Suspected Child Abuse  
24 hours per day / 7 days per week  
Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400  
[www.txabusehotline.org](http://www.txabusehotline.org)