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# Parent Handbook



Bloom provides all diapering and skin care supplies. We have hand picked our diapering and skin care products to ensure that they are composed of ingredients that are free from fragrances, elemental chlorine, natural latex, parabens, dyes and alcohol.



## Our Mission:

To provide a fully integrated preschool program to foster the child's social and emotional growth as well as their physical and mental development. We will provide the healthiest, safest and highest quality child care environment, both indoors and outdoors. Additionally, we will support parents in making healthy choices for their children and the environment.

## Bloom Academy Core Values:

**We Are Family** *We treat each other with respect and work as a TEAM.*

**We Put Our (little) People First** *We do what's best for our children and let that guide our decisions.*

**We Are Dynamic** *We never stop learning and growing as a school and as individuals to meet the ever-changing needs of our clients.*

**We Are Happy** *We are positive, supportive role models for each other and for our children.*

**We Are Determined to Be the Best** *We are never satisfied with ordinary, we are extraordinary.*

**We Work Hard & Play Harder** *We will create an environment that allows us to "PLAY" with a purpose.*

**We Are Professionals** *We present ourselves professionally in our actions and our attire.*

## Our Goal:

To prepare children for successful future academic achievements as well as prepare each child to become a socially conscious and global citizen.



This Preschool Parent Handbook has been designed to provide important information that parents need when selecting the childcare program for their child. Parents who desire an eco-friendly, healthy place for children to grow and learn will rest easy at Bloom Academy.

All the dedicated, caring staff at Bloom Academy would like to be certain that your child has the very best early childhood experience possible. Parents/guardians, future parents and family friends come to associate our child growing and learning center with being the finest in safety, eco-friendly consciousness, and sound early childhood education. We want to thank you for entrusting us with that privilege and responsibility.

Please take the time to read all the following information to help you better understand our program and philosophy. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the preschool Director.

### **General Admissions Requirements**

- Children must be of age for the class they are entering by September 1 which is in alignment with established requirements concerning age for public schools.
- Children may be retained at the parent's request.
- Children should be fully potty-trained to enter the three- or four-year-old program. If they are still "in process" we will work with them to continue what you've begun.
- Registration for the new school year begins in April before the fall start-up.
- Preschool classes are filled as openings are available in the following order of preference: Current students and siblings are given the opportunity to register first.
- Parent requests for specific class days will be considered. Specific teacher requests cannot be guaranteed.
- All children not placed will be put on a waiting list to fill vacancies as they occur.
- Children registering after April will be placed according to the above procedures as openings are available.

Upon registration, the Family Enrollment Packet must be complete and a current record of immunization and physical must be provided.

### **School Philosophy**

It is a mission of the Bloom Academy to provide a fully integrated preschool program to foster the child's social and emotional growth as well as their physical and mental development. We will provide the healthiest, safest and highest quality child care environment, both indoors and outdoors. Additionally, we will support parents in making healthy choices for their children and the environment.

The goal of the preschool is to prepare children for successful future academic achievements as well as prepare each child to become a socially conscious and global citizen. Areas related to physical, mental, emotional and social development are all given equal attention when preparing a curriculum to fit the needs of each child. A child's self-expression, creativity and analytical thinking are worked out in play. Through observations, the teacher may help a child succeed in areas where they do not excel. The teachers strive to aid each child in developing a positive image of them self.

### **Open door policy**

- Parents are welcomed and encouraged to visit the school.
- School conferences among parents and staff will be scheduled as necessary for evaluation of school time experiences.
- Informal communication between classroom teachers and parents is also encouraged.
- The announcement area "Bloom Tweets" located in each classroom describes the time and activities planned for each day to assist parents in their child's daily activities.

### **Video Surveillance**

Bloom is equipped with state of the art video surveillance technology. Each of our classrooms and playground areas are equipped with live streaming web cameras. This allows parents to rest assured that their child is being well cared for. Managerial staff is able to view cameras at all time. In order to maintain each child's privacy, parents are not permitted to view videos at any time. Staff and management can review videos as deemed necessary and will provide video footage as available to any necessary/approved governing agency. Video is only maintained for a maximum of 3 calendar days.

## **Non -Discrimination Policy**

Bloom does not discriminate against anyone (adult or child, staff or parent) on the basis of sex, age, religion, national origin, race, marital status, physical or mental disability, or veteran status.

Bloom includes children with special needs and makes accommodations as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

### **Infants/ Young Toddlers:**

Both Bloom locations accept infants who are at least 6 weeks. Our Infant and Young Toddler Rooms continue the learning process where each child is given the opportunity to explore, to satisfy his/her natural curiosity, and to develop their social graces. Children are given daily exposure to stimuli such as language activities, fine motor, gross motor, cognitive activities, dramatic play and learning through play.

### **Toddlers/Two's:**

What an exciting age to be! "Look at me! I'm not a terrible two". The classroom is arranged into activity centers to challenge the children, spark their enthusiasm, and continue their learning process. Areas covered are social-emotional, intellectual, physical development, as well as language, music art, crafts and cognitive activities.

### **Three, Four and Five-Year Olds:**

The preschool child will receive instructions in math, science, language art development, every-day life skills and fine-motor manipulatives. Learning centers develop skills such as social-emotional, intellectual and physical growth.

## **Curriculum**

Children are constantly learning through every day experiences and they are constructing their own knowledge and understanding of the world. It is important to be conscious of the whole learning environment such as time, utilizing classroom space (learning centers), resources, and ideas. Preschool is an important time to learn and develop life skills. At this age children are learning to be an individual as well as attaining social skills in order to be a successful part of a group setting. It is important to display a diverse curriculum to encourage non-stereotypical experiences so that children gain an appreciation of our society. The foundation of our curriculum is to teach children everyday morals such as, respect for themselves and others, resolving conflict, decision making and maintaining healthy relationships. To attain this goal we have several major components to our curriculum, which are listed below.

**Goals of the Curriculum:** To Develop the child as a whole.

- To provide a positive sense of identity and emotional well-being
- To develop age-appropriate social, physical, language and literacy skills
- To encourage thinking, reasoning, questioning and experimentation
- To provide exposure to the arts and encourage creative expression
- To demonstrate proper health, safety and nutritional practices
- To respect gender, age and cultural diversity.

**Core Beliefs:**

- Children learn best by a "hands-on" approach that is diverse in activity and purpose.
- Children need exposure to the beauty of the natural world in order to understand their place in the world.
- Children need exposure to gardening, the arts, and music in order for creativity to flourish.
- Each family is unique, and we celebrate differences.
- Learning can take place in many different forms and in many different settings.
- Children learn what they live therefore we aim to be a good role model for children at all times
- Children need sensory rich environments that include plants, sand and water.

## **Areas of Development**

Physical Development: Preschool children are constantly on the go developing their large and small motor skills.

Emotional Development: Preschool children are becoming aware of their feelings towards others and other people's feelings towards themselves. They are developing a sense of belonging to family, friends and their community.

Cognitive Development: Preschool children are becoming active learners who learn best through play and first hand experiences. They become curious of the world around them and their language and problem-solving skills begin to flourish immensely.

Social Development: Preschool children are beginning to understand the concept that their peers have feelings and often show compassion towards each other. They are learning how to share and take turns developing friendships.

### LANGUAGE

During early childhood children begin to speak and understand language. They start participating in conversations and forming sentences. Questions become more apparent in their quest of learning language. Children will be able to follow instructions, convey thoughts, tell stories, sing songs and begin to understand the concept of the alphabet and writing. In order to grasp language it is important to develop listening skills, introduce vocabulary, letter recognition, rhymes, songs, letter sounds (phonics), whole language (labeled classrooms), and most importantly social interaction.

Encouraging a love for reading:

Reading is the window that opens up the doors to all areas of development. In order for a child to develop an interest and love for reading it is important to lead by example and show them your love for reading. Reading to children is one of the most important ways to encourage children to read. It is also an opportunity to teach them many different things about our world. By keeping a variety of books in the school and in the classroom children have many options of books to choose from, maintaining their interest. It is important to let them choose books that they are interested in and to let them read their favorites again and again. Reading is one of the most important parts of our program and the children are read to several times a day.

### WRITING

Writing is a skill that is learned primarily through small motor activities. Activities in the classroom such as, crayons, markers, pencils, paint brushes, play-dough, tearing, scissors, puzzles, tweezers ...etc., are developed so that children can improve their fine motor abilities.

### MATHEMATICS

Math is taught through play and is seen daily in learning centers. Activities consist of: classifying, sorting comparing, graphing, differences, measuring, building, shapes, tracing, large-small, number recognition and meaning, same and opposite, patterns, constructing, counting, and time concept.

### SCIENCE

Although children wonder, explore and question our environment they do not yet have the ability to think abstractly; therefore, children need hands on experience for them to grasp the concept of science. When children are taught science through the five senses they begin to ask questions, observe, develop critical thinking skills, making predictions and experiment.

### GARDENING

Gardening with children is a fun way to have the children try foods that they normally wouldn't be interested in and also to teach about nutrition. Gardening can also help develop essential skills such as math, language, measuring, counting, following directions, vocabulary, sequence, problem solving and science.

### ARTS & CRAFTS

Art encourages children to explore and to use their imagination. It is important to realize that the whole process that goes on while creating art is more important than the end product. Art develops children in all major areas. Children learn from creative experiences: to be an individual, sensory, fine motor, eye-hand coordination, color, size, formation, sharing, problem solving and decision making.

### MUSIC

Music develops a child's physical, cognitive and emotional well-being. Through song young children develop vocally. Music also develops children's listening skills and they are able to differentiate between different genders, tones, rhythms, instruments, and so on. Music also encourages a child to move creating body awareness and expressive motion.

## DRAMATICS

A child's family, school, and home life are a very important part of their life, making it natural for a child to imitate what they know. Children act out the world around them and explore people by acting out their work, feelings and their words. By playing dramatically children are able to encounter situations that they may not understand and are able to develop their problem solving skills and gain new knowledge.

## LARGE & FINE MOTOR

Motor skills are the physical abilities children develop that help them control the movements of their bodies. Both skills are encouraged inside the classroom and outdoors at the school. There are many opportunities for the children to develop their large muscles such as reaching, crawling, walking, climbing, throwing, running, skipping, galloping, etc... There are many opportunities for the children to develop their fine motor as well, such as, eye hand coordination, self-feeding, buttoning, zipping, manipulative toys, etc...

### **Learning Centers**

Learning centers are set up for children to use as free choice time or for teacher directed activities. The centers consist of blocks, dramatics, quiet area, science, and math. The centers are changed periodically to bring in new elements to the classroom. By giving the children free choice time they are developing cognitive and motor skills they are also practicing planning, time management, decision making and problem solving.

### **The Importance of Play**

Play enhances language development, social behavior, creativity, imagination and thinking skills. During play children have the chance to practice what they already know and the time to develop new skills.

#### Five Types of Play:

- Onlooker behavior: Playing passively by watching or conversing with other children engaged in play activities.
- Solitary independent: Playing by oneself.
- Parallel: Playing, even in the middle of a group, while remaining engrossed in one's own activity. Children playing parallel to each other sometimes use each other's toys, but always maintain their independence.
- Associative: When children share materials and talk to each other, but do not coordinate play objectives or interest.
- Cooperative: When children organize themselves into roles with specific goals in mind (roles of doctor, nurse...etc.).

### **Transitioning to a New Room**

For a child to be moved to the next room, a number of factors are taken into consideration. Some of these factors include the child's age, developmental progression, and availability in the next room. In some cases, input from the teachers and parents are discussed prior to the room change. When it becomes time for a child to move to a new room, parents will receive notice through a Transition Letter. This letter will give parents important information about their child's new daily schedule, items requested to be brought, and who the child's new teacher will be. In the weeks prior to the actual room change, we will have the child meet the new teachers, visit the room, and even participate in activities in the new room in small time increments.

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Parent conferences can always be held upon request. Additionally, scheduled parent conferences are offered at least 2 times per year for our VPK children and as needed with all other children enrolled. These conferences are designed to keep communication lines between parents and teachers open. During the conferences, teachers and parents will discuss developmental assessments of the child, possible transitions to a new room, day to day concerns, and any other issues the parent would like to discuss with the child's teachers.

### **Screenings and Referrals**

Individual assessments from Bloom Academy will be done on your child during their first month of attendance with us. This will help us in knowing what areas your child is strong, and what areas may need some additional attention. Results for this assessment will be sent home to parents. We repeat this assessment process mid-year. This allows us to know how your child is progressing and at what pace. Our final assessment will be done prior to the end of the year. Conferences will be scheduled as need/as requested. Future goals and objectives will also be discussed at this time.

Additionally, children may be screened using the Ages & Stages ASQ Developmental Screening Tool. If a screening is returned on a child showing a delay, the child is then referred for additional services. The progress of this child is reviewed weekly to assure that any differences in cognitive, physical, emotional, social, and/or developmental milestones are being supported.

## Termination of Enrollment

In certain circumstances, it may be necessary for the Administrator to decide to discontinue a child's attendance. Such a decision would be based on whether it is in the best interest of that child. Every effort will be made to correct a problematic situation before a final decision is made. Termination of enrollment may be the result of the following:

- Abuse of other children, staff or property
- Disruptive or dangerous behavior
- The center's inability to meet the child's needs

If you decide to terminate enrollment for any reason, you must provide written notice two weeks prior to the last day of enrollment. If written notification is not given two weeks prior to termination, two weeks of full tuition will be billed and due on the final day of enrollment. **Bloom reserves the right to terminate a child's enrollment at any time for any reason without notice.**

## Parent Role and Influence

Parents are a vital component to the Bloom philosophy. Parents are viewed as partners, collaborators and advocates for their children. Our staff respect parents as each child's first teacher and involve parents in every aspect of the curriculum. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to volunteer in the classroom and participate in our outer curricula activities. We also encourage parents to volunteer within our school from time to time. Please ask the director at your Bloom location for information regarding our Busy Ladybug Parent Volunteer program. Parents volunteering within the school must complete an Abuse and Neglect Form as well as a Volunteer Form outlining the volunteer requirements.

**\*\*\*Be sure that you have received, read, understand and agree to the Parent Code of Conduct included in your Family Enrollment or Renewal Packet. If you have any questions, please be sure to ask prior to enrollment.**

## Separation from the Parent

The process of separation from the parent as the child enters and attends preschool is one of the most important accomplishments of the preschool child.

At each age level, a child will react differently. As children mature, they begin to identify themselves as independent personalities. In separating from you, the parent, your child is learning:

- To develop an interest in the activities of the preschool
- To feel comfortable with others at preschool
- To understand that his/her parent will come back and pick him/her up

## Additional Parent Information

As school progresses and the children adjust to their new classes, we will try to provide you with continuing information regarding our program at Bloom Academy. We will keep you informed of field trips, holidays, curriculum and other important information through our Kid Reports application.

## Operational Policies/Procedures

### Forms

To comply with the state regulations, all registration papers must be completed and placed on file before your child can attend Bloom Academy. **These forms are:** Registration Form, Current Physical (form 3040), Current Immunization Form (form 680). Acknowledgement of Discipline policy (included within the Family Enrollment Packet).

### Hours of Operation

The school opens at 6:15 am Punta Gorda/7:00 am Founder's Square and closes at 5:45 pm Monday through Friday. Varies by location. If your child is picked up after their scheduled end time, there is a \$1.00 per minute late fee, per child. (See Fees)

### Tuition

Bloom Academy tuition is paid **every FRIDAY, prior to the week of attendance.**

Enrollment will be terminated at the discretion of the school for non-payment of tuition. There are no discounts, credits or refunds given for any reason.

If tuition is not received by 5:45 PM on the due date, a late fee of \$25.00 will be assessed.

If a check is returned for any reason, a \$25 bank charge will be assessed. Any person with 2 checks returned will be asked to make payment in the form of cash only.

If payment is not received for services/products rendered, attorney fees, and/or if court costs are incurred to secure payment, you will be obligated to pay all costs associated with collection of fees owed.

If your child participates in any other optional program made available through Bloom, payment is said to be between you and the appropriate provider.

### Fees

#### Registration:

A registration fee of \$200.00 is due upon enrollment and renewable yearly. The sibling registration fee is \$125 per sibling. School Age registration is \$50 per child.

This registration fee is non-refundable for any reason. The registration fee is applied towards supplies, insurance and non-consumable goods.

#### Late Pick-Up:

A fee of \$1.00 per minute, per child, will be applied for children who are picked up after their scheduled end time.

### Tuition Policy

Tuition is due every week, regardless of attendance.

### Discounts for Siblings

A five percent (5%) discount on the tuition fee is given to the 2<sup>nd</sup> child enrolled at Bloom Academy. Sibling discounts are only applied to FULL TIME ENROLLMENT.



## Sign-In and Sign-Out

Every child must be signed in and signed out each day. There are no exceptions to this rule. It is a State requirement. You must sign in and out at the sign in kiosk/key pad located in the sign in area. When someone, other than yourself picks up your child, please be sure to inform him or her of this requirement. Children will not be released to a parent/guardian or pick up person that appears to be intoxicated. If a pick person exhibits behavior that the Bloom staff perceives may denote that the person is intoxicated, the child will be retained at Bloom until an alternate authorized pick up person can report for pick up.

## Dismissal Authorization

Please inform us in writing or by telephone if someone other than those originally authorized will be picking up your child. If the staff has not been informed of any different arrangements, we will not have the authority to release your child without your permission.

## Tardiness

Our class session starts promptly at 9:00 a.m. It is important that your child not be tardy as it is very disruptive to the class. We have also found that any child who is brought in late takes longer to adjust. **We are unable to accept a child into school after 10:30 a.m.** Please call the office if your child will be late so we can include him/her in our lunch count.

## Parking

Please use caution when driving through our parking lot. We have parking spaces for your convenience and ask that you enter and exit using appropriate driveways. Please do not leave small children unattended in your car. Do not leave purses in parked cars. We are not responsible for any loss or damage while in our parking lot. Please ensure that children are properly buckled in an age/size appropriate car seat prior to take off.

## Use of Technology

Television and technology use and viewing by children is not part of our daily practice at Bloom. Teachers may use technology to present relevant content related to our curriculum or learning goals from time to time as they see fit. If used in the classroom setting, technology time is limited to a 20-minute time frame per occurrence. On special occasions, we may use our projection equipment to have a movie day experience with prior parent notification. During a movie day experience, other activities will be set up and available for children to participate in as an alternative should they decide not to view the movie.

## Vacations and Holidays Observed

Bloom follows the public-school system for a weather related closings. Tuition credit is not given for the closed days.

Bloom Academy is closed on the following holiday days:

Labor Day  
Thanksgiving Day  
Day After Thanksgiving  
Christmas Eve  
Christmas Day  
New Year's Eve  
New Year's Day  
Martin Luther King Day (teacher work day)  
Good Friday  
Memorial Day  
Independence Day  
1 additional day during the summer for a teacher work day

\*If any of these holidays fall on a weekend, they will be observed on the business day before or after the holiday. \*

\*\*Calendar is subject to change\*\*

**There is no tuition credit allowed for these days. Full Tuition is expected during holiday weeks.**

## Health and Safety Policies

### Weather Emergencies

Bloom follows the Charlotte County School System. If the Public-School System is closed due to weather, Bloom will close and re-open based on the public announcement of the elementary school schedule. Tuition credit is not given for any reason.

### Emergency Contacts

Current phone numbers for all people authorized to pick-up your child from school must be provided. If you are not readily reachable by phone, a pager number must be provided. In case of injury, emergency medical care will be given. In the event Bloom cannot reach the parent immediately, parents will be responsible for any medical bill incurred.

In case of emergency, Bloom Academy staff is authorized to seek medical treatment and physicians are authorized to provide all necessary emergency medical treatment.

If the school needs to evacuate or close, parents will be notified by a phone call from a Bloom administrator or teacher.

### Injured Child

If your child becomes seriously injured while at Bloom, the Medical Emergency Plan will be followed (see next page). You will be contacted by phone immediately by the person in charge.

### Disaster Preparedness

All schools have an emergency disaster plan in place (see below). Staff members are First Aid and CPR certified and prepared to handle an emergency. In case of a general power outage, you will be contacted by phone to pick up your child.

### Accident/Injury Financial Responsibility Statement

Bloom Academy is not responsible for medical bills related to or in conjunction with any accident, injury or illness that occurs while attending child care at Bloom. Parent or guardian is responsible for all bills related to medical treatment of their child/children. Bloom will make every effort to prevent any accident or injury from occurring while in care.

### Emergency Preparedness Plan

Our standard procedures include safety drills, teaching children to listen and to follow their teachers. At all times, emergency supplies are maintained. These include food, water, battery, radio, cell phones, flashlights and first aid supplies.

In the event that an emergency occurs during school hours, be assured that we will do our utmost to protect the safety and wellbeing of all of the children entrusted in our care.

Person In Charge: Casey Kennedy

If the above staff member is not present, the following is next in charge: Brittany Denby or Kimberly Coleman (Punta Gorda), Ashlee Warner (Founder's Square).

### Fire Evacuation

Take Tablet (containing emergency contact information) and follow the emergency route map located in the classroom. If we can't go back towards the building, children will be kept in the parking lot area furthest from the building. Parents will be contacted by administration to pick up the children.

### Tornado / Hurricane Alert

Gather all children as close to the interior wall as possible. Have children lay face-down as flat as they can. Cover children with rugs & napping mats when the need arises. Try to grab soft toys (dolls, stuffed animals, etc...) to soothe the children. Read a book or sing songs to keep panic to a minimum. If evacuation is required, the same process will be used as in the Fire Evacuation.

## Lockdown: Terrorism / Intruder

Entry into the school is controlled by a locked door. If the school is notified about a suspicious person in the area, teachers will be notified to keep the doors locked & children in the classroom.

Punta Gorda: In the event we need to evacuate the building, the children will be walked/transported to the Sallie Jones Elementary School located at 1230 Narranja Street, Punta Gorda FL 33950.

Founder's Square: In the event we need to evacuate the building, the children will be transported to Lee Health Fitness Center (across the street).

## Medical Emergency Plan

Follow the 3 C's prescribed by the American Heart Association:

- 1) **C**heck (Assess vital signs)
- 2) **C**all (Director, Asst. Dir. OR qualified staff member, call 911)
- 3) **C**are (Qualified person administer CPR or First Aid as necessary)

## Illnesses

If your child becomes ill while at Bloom, he/she will be isolated from the other children. If these symptoms of possibly contagious conditions are observed in your child during the day, you will be called to retrieve your child immediately.

### General Guidelines

- A temperature of 100.5 degrees or higher
  - Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool with a school day).
  - Vomiting
  - Rashes not diagnosed by a physician
  - Impetigo, a skin infection consisting of blisters surrounded by a reddened area, when the blister breaks the surface becomes raw, weeps and oozes. The lesion eventually becomes crusted and yellowish.
  - Conjunctivitis, an eye infection commonly referred to as "pink eye".
  - Severe coughing causing the child to make a whooping sound
  - Pediculosis (head lice)
  - Difficulty or rapid breathing
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We are required to notify local county health units within 48 hours of any outbreak of communicable disease as per appropriate Florida Code. A suspected outbreak occurs when three or more children and or employees have the onset of similar signs or symptoms (such as diarrhea, rash, etc.) within a 72-hour period or when one or more cases of a serious communicable disease is diagnosed or suspected.

### Head Lice

This is a very common occurrence in young children. This has nothing to do with cleanliness. They are very easily transmitted by leaning back in an upholstered chair where someone had previously sat who had head lice, sharing caps or helmets, hair accessories, brushes, combs, even sitting close and touching heads. Random lice checks are conducted by office personnel. If head lice are found on a child, the following steps are taken:

- Parents are notified, and child must be picked up from school.
- That child's head must be treated with a product formulated to remove head lice.
- Nits must be removed with a special nit comb included in product.
- The child will be excluded from school the following day.
- Upon returning to school state health laws require examination of hair and scalp by office personal before returning to school
- A handout of additional information regarding lice is given to parents at the time of pick-up.

To avoid infestation, it is important to inspect all family members for two weeks and treat if infected. Nits on the scalp may be seen more easily on the hair at the back of the neck and above the ears.

Please be assured that we will do everything possible to prevent infestation in our center. With your support, we will stop the lice from spreading.

### Some Other Common Contagious Diseases:

Disease:

- Fever
- Chicken pox
- Impetigo
- Measles
- Pink eye
- Streptococcus
- Pediculosis

Period of Exclusion from School:

- Temperature normal for 24 hours**
- Until all scales are dry**
- Until all lesions have healed**
- Until cleared by physician**
- Until 3 doses of medication has been administered**
- Antibiotics administered for at least 24 hours**
- Until head treated and nits are not present**

When your child has a fever, please keep him/her at home an additional 24 hours after the temperature returns to normal. This will help to ensure that the illness has actually passed and that your child will be well enough to resume school activities.

Please keep in mind Bloom will not administer medication.

### Medication

Bloom Academy does not administer medication, with the exception of an EPI pen for potentially lethal allergies. Please see the director for more information about EPI pen procedures.

### Discipline

#### Measures to Produce Acceptable Behavior:

To maintain a happy, healthy, disciplined environment, the children are taught the importance of safety, care of property, good habits, rules of conduct and consideration and respect for others.

Constructive methods of discipline are used to maintain group control and handle individual behavior. Our main focus on discipline (teaching/training) is preventative in nature, as we aim to build self-discipline in the child.

#### Measures to Extinguish Unacceptable Behavior:

When a child exhibits unacceptable behavior or attitudes, he/she is instructed as to what is wrong and then directed to a positive alternative approach/behavior. Along with these new attitudes and behaviors, the child is guided in the direction of self-discipline by encouraging him/her to make as many decisions as possible within limits.

#### Our Goals Are To Help the Children Learn To:

- Show respect, kindness, consideration and courtesy toward others.
- Develop a strong self-esteem, confidence and independence.
- Take care of the material provided to them.
- Understand what socially acceptable behavior is, and what is not.

Helping the children learn appropriate behavior is a partnership process between the child's home environment and school. **EXAMPLE IS THE BEST TEACHER.** A child will tend to emulate what he/she sees demonstrated around him/ her.

The majority of children will utilize inappropriate behavior as a normal part of development process. All children need to learn over- time the desired behavior. Positive reinforcement: Children need to be caught doing something right and rewarded with praise, attention a special privilege or other non-food reward. The disciplinary method of choice is intervention and talking to the child. The child is told why the behavior is inappropriate. Apologies to the offended are encouraged. Quiet times in Cozy Corner are utilized when intervention and /or talking with the child is not effective. Length of time spent in Quiet Time is never to exceed 2 minutes, and with an older child is determined when the child is ready by his/ her own decision.

Under no circumstances is a child ever hit, spanked, shaken or otherwise disciplined physically. In addition, no child should be disciplined physically inside the school. If a child exhibits consistent behavior, which is injurious to the well-being and or education of others, Bloom will request a conference among the child's parents and the staff at Bloom. If the behavior cannot be corrected within a reasonable time, the child will be dis-enrolled from the school.

## **Nutrition / Meal Time Policies**

The children will be served breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack (Punta Gorda & Deep Creek). The children will be served morning and afternoon snack (Founder's Square). The Founder's Square location will offer a meal plan for purchase from Slater's Provisions to include healthy lunch options. Please be aware of the children's eating times as we will not be able to serve the early childhood aged children meals at times other than the scheduled meal times. Infants and Toddlers are on more individualized schedules. If you are planning on bringing your child after the scheduled meal time, please plan on feeding your child before you come to the center. We ask that you do not send fast food, soda, sports drinks, candy donuts, etc... to the center with your children unless it is a special occasion and you have discussed this with the Director.

Good eating habits and positive attitudes toward food should be established at an early age. At Bloom Academy, we provide a well-balanced hot lunch which includes items from the 4 basic food groups with an emphasis on fruits and vegetables. We also provide nutritionally balanced morning and afternoon snacks. You may choose to send food from home as long as it adheres to the USDA guidelines for nutrition for children.

Menus are available to parents at the beginning of each month and are posted in every classroom.

Meals are prepared on-site.

## **Food Brought from Home**

When children bring food from home, we ask that parents adhere to the recommended USDA guidelines for children's nutrition. This information will be provided to parents if they are sending food from home that is not healthy, nutritious, and well-balanced.

We ask that parents do not send candy, soda, chocolates, donuts, sports drinks, or other unhealthy food choices in their child's lunchboxes. We will not permit children to eat these items and will supplement these foods with healthier choices for the child for that day.

## **Birthdays**

Birthdays are special and important occasions. You are welcome to bring store-bought cupcakes, cake, cookies, or pizza to share with your child's class. Please keep in mind that every item you bring must be store-bought, home-made items are not permitted. Please make arrangements with your child's teacher for any special plans to make your child's birthday special.

## **Allergies and Food Reactions**

If your child has food allergies, please ensure that you have included all details and instructions in the Family Enrollment Packet. If a child requires a special diet, the family is responsible for providing the child's food each day.

Children's food allergies will be privately posted in each classroom.

## **Parent & Child Confidentiality**

Bloom Academy will not share any of your child(ren) or your family's information with anyone outside of our school without your prior written consent, except for required information requested by state agencies.

## **Nap Time**

There is a rest period during the day for 12:15 – 2:30 p.m. for all children. Each child is to bring his/her own sleeping mat to sleep on. Parents are responsible for providing 1 sheet/1 blanket daily (one for the child to lie on and one for the child to cover up with), and picking up those linens every Friday for laundering. Bloom provides all infant linens.

## **Lost and Found**

Please mark all items of personal property that your child brings to school. Items collected without names will be brought to the office. If your child loses an item, please check with the office or your child's teacher. We are not responsible for lost or damaged items.

## Complaints Procedure

Bloom welcomes any suggestions, concerns, or complaints. The Director has an open-door policy and is available to discuss any concerns, suggestions, or complaints from the parents or caregiver.

## Dress Code

Children must be fully dressed when they arrive at school. Because play activity is such an important part of the curriculum, clothing should be practical and comfortable. No open toed shoes, sandals, or jellies are permitted. Little toes are easily hurt and children have a difficult time on the playground. We also prefer that children do not wear jewelry.

Every child needs to always have a complete change of clothing including socks & underwear. If your child has changed clothing during the day, please take home the soiled items and replace them the next day. All clothing must be labeled with the child's full name.

## Biting

As with any behavior, how biting is dealt with depends upon the ages of the children involved, the reason for the biting, (if it can be determined), frequency of the biting, and many other specific circumstances. General guidelines for biting include:

- Helping the bitten child feel better or providing appropriate first aid, if warranted.
- Completing an *incident/accident report* for the parents of the biter and the bitee.
- Discussing the situation with the biter's parent(s).

Depending on the ages of the children and the circumstances involved, additional actions might include:

- Discussing a better solution for all children involved.
- Separation of involved children.
- Showing/giving the biter something appropriate to bite on.
- Ensuring that the environment provides enough challenging activities.
- Carefully observing the involved child to identify precipitating events and prevent recurrences.
- Maintaining a log to track when the behavior occurs.
- Conferences with parents to discuss the child's actions at home, parental discipline techniques, search for outside resources, etc...

Just as any other behavior issue regarding a child is confidential, the name of the child that has bitten another child is also confidential, in order to ensure the privacy of the child and family and prevent bias from others enrolled in the center. We will keep you informed as to what steps are being taken and if bites are from the same or a different child. Informative handouts are given to parents regarding biting.

**\*\*Children under 3: Children that bite more than 1 time in a day or are making continuous attempts, will be sent home for the day. Children exceeding 5 bites in any 30 days period will be subjected to enrollment termination.**

**\*\*Children 3 & older: Children that bite 1 time in a day or are making continuous attempts, will be sent home for the day. Children exceeding 3 bites in a school year will be subjected to enrollment termination.**

## What Your Child May Bring From Home

Please do not allow your child to bring in personal items on other days. Violent toys, DVDs, violent books, guns and swords may not be brought to school at any time.

**Abuse &/or Neglect Reporting Requirements** ALL staff employed by Bloom Academy are mandated reporters. In the event that abuse and or neglect is suspected or witnessed, staff is required to report all information to the FLORIDA ABUSE HOTLINE.

On behalf of all of our Bloom staff, welcome to the family!!! Please do not hesitate to reach out to us with any questions, concerns or comment now or in the future. Communication is the foundation of our success!