

Beacon Learning Academy Parent Handbook



Where we guide your child's love of learning in the right
direction!

Mission Statement and Philosophy

Children learn in many varied ways. It is important to provide a loving and safe environment first and foremost. Every child deserves the opportunity to experience the world around them using all their senses and abilities. Our school provides a balance of teacher-directed activities and “hands on” play activities to teach the children in our care. The children will learn to respect themselves and others. They will experience nature, science, and cooking first hand. Their inner artist will shine through with daily art and we'll explore math, writing, and cognitive skills. We read to the children daily and explore song and dance. Our curriculum expands the many varied learning objectives from letters, numbers, and colors to gross/ fine motor skills, self-help, and social studies.

Open Door Policy and Parent Participation

Beacon Learning Academy welcomes and encourages the participation and support of all parents. It is always wonderful when parents are able to volunteer their time and talents to the program. Feel free to stop by anytime to visit, read a story, help with a project, or share your special family traditions with the children.

Drop-off and Pick-up:

Only authorized individuals will be allowed to pick-up your child from Beacon Learning Academy. You must designate pick-up individuals on your application, or in writing prior to pick-up. Anyone picking up a child in our care should expect to provide a form of photo identification. Our entry door is equipped with a coded key pad lock and only authorized individuals will be given the entry code. All others need to ring the doorbell and provide ID to enter. Please do not open the door for anyone you do not recognize.

Tuition Fees and Payment Schedule

Payment is expected on the first of each month. Tuition is charged one month prior to service, so for example: in November you will pay for the month of December. Tuition is expected to be paid in full. The yearly registration fee is charged in February and due by September 1st of each year. The registration fee is non-refundable. Late payment fees of \$25 will apply to all accounts with outstanding balances not paid by the 5th of each month. Payment for drop-in days will be expected on the day of service.

Tuition Information:

The obligation of tuition is expected for each month regardless of a child's attendance in the program. Any change to attendance due to illness, holidays, vacations, weather-related closings, or the likes will not result in the credit of payment.

A sibling discount of 10% will be provided to families of multiple children for the second child enrolled, and also to a third child if applicable.

All returned NSF checks will be subject to a \$25.00 fee and if two NSF checks occur, cash payment will be required going forward.

Inclement Weather Policy:

If Beacon Learning Academy has to close or delay for inclement weather or an unforeseen emergency, we will post our closing on WRAL TV 5 news/ website. There are several schools which begin with Beacon so be sure to look for BEACON LEARNING ACADEMY only. We will also post the closing or delay on our Face-book Page. We do not follow WCPSS, but in general if WCPSS does have a delay, we have to delay our opening so that our teachers can get their own children to school, prior to coming to work. If WCPSS closes for the day, we will make our own decision based on the safety of the roads. If your child misses their scheduled day because of the delay or closing, there is no make-up option.

Hours of Operation:

Beacon Learning Academy is open from 9:00-1:00 on weekdays. Children must be picked up between 12:45-1:00pm. Late pick-ups fees will apply for any child left after 1:00pm at the rate of \$5.00 for the first 5 minutes and \$1/ each additional minute. Payment for late pick-up will be expected no later than the next month's tuition is due.

Calendar and Activities:

Our program runs year-round with the following exceptions:

Our program is **closed** on the following dates each year:

New Year's Day

Good Friday

Memorial Day

The week of July 4th (Monday-Friday)

Labor Day

Thanksgiving and the Friday after

Christmas Eve-New-Year's Day

In addition, Beacon Learning Academy will close during a Spring break week (usually in March), and a fall break week (usually at the end of August). A calendar of days the school is closed is provided to all parents. Tuition is still expected for the times that the school is closed.

If one of the days occurs on a Saturday then Beacon Learning Academy will be closed on the Friday before and if it occurs on a Sunday the school will close on the following Monday.

All weather-related closing will be announced on WRAL TV 5 or MIX 101.5 on the radio. We will make our decision based on the safety of all customers and teachers.

Snack and Lunch

A snack may be brought from home and will be served between 9:00-9:30am. Lunch is brought from home and will be served mid-day. It is important for you to notify Beacon Learning Academy of any food allergies or special diets your child may have. Please bring in a well-balanced meal packed in a lunch-box and include an ice pack if needed in order to keep the food at a safe temperature. We are unable to heat or refrigerate the items. Water is offered to children through-out the day via the water fountain or you can bring in a water cup in your child's back-pack.

What to bring to School:

A regular-sized backpack with the following items should be brought to school daily:

- Healthy snack, lunch, and water bottle/drink
- Complete change of clothing including: shirt, pants, socks, and a pair of underwear
- Diapers if needed

All items should be labeled with your child's first and last name. Our school provides a wide-variety of toys and learning materials so please do not allow your child to bring toys from home unless specifically requested by their teacher.

Application paperwork will be required prior to your child's first day of attendance.

Behavior Management

Praise and positive reinforcement are effective methods of the behavior management of children. When children receive positive, non-violent, and understanding interactions from adults and others, they develop good self-concepts, problem solving abilities, and self-discipline.

Health

All children enrolled in our program are expected to be in good health on any day they attend Beacon Learning Academy. No child with a communicable disease will be permitted to attend while they are exhibiting any signs of illness.

If a child becomes ill during the day, a parent will be contacted to pick up their child immediately. If an injury or illness occurs, we will notify each parent first, and then emergency contacts if you can not be reached. If we find it necessary to contact you and are unable to contact anyone, then we will attempt to secure the necessary medical service and care for your child. We will also notify you if your child has been exposed to a communicable or infectious disease while at Beacon Learning Academy.

Any child with any of the following symptoms is considered **too sick** to be in child care and must be **excluded** from the program:

- ❖ Inability to participate in regular activities regardless of symptoms
- ❖ Fahrenheit temperature over 100 degrees when taken under the arm
- ❖ Sudden onset of diarrhea characterized by an increased number of bowel movements compared to the child's normal pattern and with increased stool water
- ❖ Two or more episodes of vomiting within a 12 hour period
- ❖ Red eye(s) with white or yellow eye discharge until 24 hours after treatment
- ❖ Scabies or lice
- ❖ Chicken pox or a rash suggestive of chicken pox
- ❖ Tuberculosis, until a health professional states the child is not infectious
- ❖ Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment has started
- ❖ Pertussis, until five days after appropriate antibiotic treatment
- ❖ Hepatitis A virus infection, until one week after onset of illness or jaundice
- ❖ Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment
- ❖ When a physician or other health professional issues a written order that the child must be separated from other children

Any child exhibiting any contagious symptom must be excluded from our program until they are symptom-free *without* medication for 24 hours. This allows the child an appropriate amount of time to recover and prevents the spread of illness.

Medication Policy

Beacon Learning Academy is not required by the child care law to administer medication to children. Administration of medication will only be allowed under the following conditions.

Prescription medication, over the counter medication, topical ointment, repellent, lotion, cream, and powder will only be administered with specific instructions from the child's parent, a physician, or other authorized health professional. Prescription medication must be stored in the original container, containing a pharmacist's label which includes the child's name, date the prescription was filled, the name of the prescribing physician or other health professional, the amount and frequency of dosage and the name of the medication or the prescription number. Prescribed medications will only be given to the person for whom they are prescribed.

Over the Counter medications must also be in their original containers, and labeled with the child's name. Over the counter medication needs to be accompanied by a doctor's note, stating the frequency, time, and amount to be given.

In most cases, medications should be given at home since we are only in operation for 4 hours. Sunscreen should be applied at home prior to arriving at school. Bug sprays should also be applied at home, but in extreme allergic conditions, Beacon Learning Academy will apply bug-sprays as long as prior written consent is given by a parent using our school's proper form.

Special Event Celebrations

Beacon Learning Academy celebrates the many various holidays that our diverse customer base may celebrate. We focus on the customs and traditions of these holidays. We also allow families to celebrate the birthday of your child here at school. You may bring in a store-bought treat for them to share at snack or lunch. We are happy to celebrate their special day! Our only restrictions for safety reasons are that we do not allow latex balloons and we are not able to light candles.

Curriculum

Your child will receive a well-rounded preschool experience in a loving environment. Children will be introduced to colors, shapes, numbers, letters, opposites, and character education, in addition to other concepts and skills. When appropriate, the children will be introduced to reading, writing, math, cooking, social studies, Spanish, and science concepts. Themes and Activities will be provided. These will include, but not be limited to such activities as: pajama day, cooking projects, gardening, library day, Author day, science experiments, game day, and more. Additional activities will be planned according to themes, seasons, and the learning interests of the children.

Objectives of Preschool Activities

- ❖ **Circle time** is a group gathering during which we share our ideas, plans, and observations. Circle activities are designed to stimulate children's thinking, enrich their social skills, and expand their attention spans.
- ❖ **Gross-motor activities** give children the opportunity to use their muscles—as well as their imaginations—as they engage in fun, healthy exercises, such as running, jumping, and climbing.
- ❖ **Fine-motor activities** help improve small-muscle development and eye-hand coordination. Some common items found in the fine-motor manipulative area include puzzles, beads and laces, pegboards, crayons, and scissors.
- ❖ **Art activities** help children creatively express their thoughts and feelings. They help reinforce fine-motor skills and concept development in areas such as colors, shapes, and size relationships.
- ❖ **Dramatic play activities** help children express themselves, practice life skills, improve social skills, increase self-esteem, build vocabulary, and solve problems. And, dramatic play is just plain fun!
- ❖ **Music activities** promote children's listening skills, creative expression, and social skills. In music, children can explore sound, volume, tempo, and rhythm.
- ❖ **Science activities** offer children many hands-on opportunities for observation, exploration, investigation, making predictions, and experimentation.
- ❖ **Sand and water activities** allow children to experiment with textures and the properties of different substances. These activities also promote the development of other skills, such as math, science, and language.
- ❖ **Block play** gives children experiences with many different concepts, such as shape and size discrimination, spatial relationships, number skills, balance, organization, cause and effect, and classification. Cooperative play skills, problem solving and creativity are also promoted in block play.
- ❖ **Story time** is designed to help youngsters develop an appreciation and enjoyment of literature. Reading activities enhance children's vocabulary and comprehension skills, and also expand their knowledge base.

Communication:

Communication between our school and parents is key in the success of your child's education! Our monthly newsletter and calendar will be distributed to all families. These two forms of communication will inform you of the activities that your child will engage in while here at Beacon Learning Academy. Teachers will give you periodic verbal updates on your child's progress and will alert you immediately if there are concerns involving behavior or the need for skill intervention. Our preschool program (3-5 year olds) will receive developmental assessments in the fall and spring. The results of these assessments will be provided to you. Parent conferences can be requested by either the parent or teacher at any time. We strive to work together in the best interest of each child.

Parents can always call the school during school hours to talk to the owner, director, or teachers. After hours communication can be done via email. All voice-messages left on our main number will be returned promptly during business hours.

Our school provides a Facebook page on which we will share school-related news, pictures of activities we engage in while at school, and important reminders. Many of our parents and staff enjoy this way of communicating, and we encourage you to join and see all the fun we have here at school! Parents are given the option to choose if you would like your child's photo shared on this site via your application paper-work.

