

## **Beacon Learning Academy RTP Parent Handbook**

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## Welcome to Beacon Learning Academy, RTP!

Dear Parents,

We understand that choosing a quality preschool program is an important and sometimes challenging endeavor, and we are proud and excited that you have chosen Beacon Learning Academy, RTP!

One of the many goals of Beacon Learning Academy, RTP is to offer our families and students the opportunity to grow together under the care of our dedicated and nurturing teachers. Our engaging facility, and educational curriculum will help us in achieving this goal. However, it also takes families such as yours to make our program grow. We work together with our families, as a team, to offer what each individual child needs and wants to learn and grow.

Please remember that we do have an open-door policy at our school; parents and families are always welcome. We encourage your involvement in your child's education, and we look forward to working with you to ensure the total successful development of your child.

Thank you again for choosing Beacon Learning Academy!!

Sincerely,

Beacon Learning Academy Administration and Owners

## **PHILOSOPHY**

Children will learn and develop in an environment that is highly enriched with positive guidance, experiences, and interactions. Through play, children will have the opportunity to explore their surroundings and expand their imaginations and skills. Beacon Learning Academy provides classroom materials and activities that are age appropriate, as well as, challenging to engage children in active learning. Children require positive social interactions to develop holistically. Our highly trained staff will ensure that children are given varied opportunities to interact with their peers, teachers and their environment. When children are allowed to explore, they begin to build a stronger sense of self-worth.

Children will be provided a respectful, loving, and safe learning environment. Surrounded by respect, the teachers are a guide to foster the children's interests and model appropriate behaviors.

Beacon follows a play-based approach to learning.

### **What is play-based learning?**

Children are naturally motivated to play. As a play-based preschool, Beacon builds on this motivation, using play as a context for learning. In this context, children can explore, experiment, discover and solve problems in imaginative and playful ways.

A play-based approach involves both child-initiated and teacher-supported learning. The teacher encourages children's learning and inquiry through interactions that aim to stretch their thinking to higher levels.

For example, while children are playing with blocks, a teacher can pose questions that encourage problem solving, prediction and hypothesizing. The teacher can also bring the child's awareness towards mathematics, science and literacy concepts, allowing them to engage with such concepts through hands-on learning.

Involvement in play stimulates a child's drive for exploration and discovery. This motivates the child to gain mastery over their environment, promoting focus and concentration. It also enables the child to engage in the flexible and higher-level thinking processes deemed essential for the 21st century learner. These include inquiry processes of problem solving, analyzing, evaluating, applying knowledge and creativity.

Play also supports positive attitudes towards learning. These include imagination, curiosity, enthusiasm, and persistence. The type of learning processes and skills fostered in play cannot be replicated through rote learning, where there is an emphasis on remembering facts.

The inquiry-based nature of play is supported through the social interactions of teachers and children. Teachers take an active role in guiding children's interactions in the play. Children are supported in developing social skills such as cooperation, sharing and responding to ideas, negotiating, and resolving conflicts.

Teachers can also use children's motivation and interest to explore concepts and ideas. In this way, children acquire and practice important academic skills and learning in a playful context.

Research shows play-based programs for young children provide a strong basis for later success at school. They support the development of socially competent learners, able to face challenges and create solutions.

### **Mission Statement**

Beacon Learning Academy aims to provide a diverse educational community built on a balanced learning approach that fosters respect, creativity, and critical thinking.

We partner with parents to create life-time learners who respect themselves, others, and the environment. Our goal is to guide each child's love of learning in a positive direction that serves them well as they grow.

### **Equal Enrollment Policy**

Beacon Learning Academy is a preschool and a child development center, caring for children ages six weeks through twelve years. Beacon Learning Academy will work with all families to ensure a successful transition into our program, as well as a positive, meaningful, and educational experience while participating in our program.

Beacon Learning Academy does not discriminate regardless of race, gender, creed, color, or national origin. Beacon Learning Academy does accept children with special needs who are able to participate within our class ratios, and physical environment. Beacon Learning Academy reserves the right to determine if a child's needs exceed our abilities and will assist in referring the student to an organization with the capabilities to handle differing abilities.

### **Confidentiality**

Beacon Learning Academy will work with all families and staff members to ensure confidentiality regarding the care of the children in our program. As North Carolina State Law specifies, all details regarding a specific child are to be kept confidential and private in regards to that child. In other words, any information about your child will be discussed with you and your family only. Details in regard to other children will not and cannot be discussed with anyone other than that child's family members. Beacon employees are to uphold this policy at all times. We thank you for understanding and supporting the confidentiality policy that Beacon has designed.

## **II. Licensing & Accreditation**

### **A. North Carolina Voluntary Rated License**

As of September 1, 2000, all licensed child care centers and homes in North Carolina were assigned a rating of one to five stars. One star means that the center or home meets basic licensing requirements. More stars signify higher standards are being met. All licensed centers and homes receive one star and must then apply for additional stars, if they so choose.

Receiving two, three, four, and five stars is based on the following three criteria:

1. Program Standards: “The Division shall provide for The Infant/Toddler Environmental Rating Scale, Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale, etc. to be completed...” (p. 89) these rating scales examine the quality of the program and the environment of each center. Higher scores signify higher standards and therefore better quality.
2. Staff Education & Experience: The Division examines the early childhood education and experience of the staff members of each center. More experienced and educated teachers ensure higher quality and therefore higher star ratings.
3. Compliance record for licensed visits both announced and unannounced.

Beacon Learning Academy is dedicated to being the best Early Childhood Program available; therefore, meeting high standards to ensure a high quality program is of great importance. All facilities will focus on achieving and maintaining high standards, ensuring that each receives the highest rating possible.

### **III. Operational Policies**

#### **A. Enrollment Process**

All families are encouraged to tour Beacon Learning Academy prior to enrolling. During the tour, parents are welcome to ask any questions, address any concerns, and visit the classrooms, kitchen, and outdoor playing areas. Parents may also bring their child to tour, giving their child the opportunity to see the classroom and meet the classroom teacher. During the tour, parents receive an information packet, which includes the current fee schedule and specific information about Beacon Learning Academy locations.

When a family is ready to enroll their child at Beacon Learning Academy, they must complete the following steps:

1. Tour the facility
2. Feel confident & comfortable with the program, staff, and facility.
3. Complete the Beacon Registration Form. Pay annual Registration fee.
4. Receive the New Student Enrollment Packet and Parent Handbook (via email).
5. Complete **ALL** forms in the New Student Enrollment Packet **prior** to their child’s start date (\*this includes a current medical physical and an updated list of all of the child’s vaccinations).
6. Return the Enrollment Packet to Beacon Learning Academy **prior** to their child’s start date (at the Getting to Know You Conference). Pay the deposit fee and first month’s tuition.
7. Schedule a one-hour mini-visit for their child at the school, this time allows the student to become comfortable and confident with the classroom and teachers **prior** to his/ her first day.
8. Visit the classroom and meet the teachers; talk with the teacher (s) regarding personal items to bring to school, the daily schedule, and any questions that they may have.
9. Start school at Beacon Learning Academy!

#### **B. Waiting List**

Beacon Learning Academy utilizes waiting lists when classrooms are filled to capacity. A

registration fee is required to place a child on a waiting list. As openings become available, parents will be notified according to the order in which they were placed on the waiting list. Priority is given to siblings of current attendees.

Once notified by telephone and/ or email, parents have 48 hours to notify Beacon Learning Academy as to their enrollment decision. If they fail to return the call/ email within 48 hours, they will forfeit that opening and be placed back on the waitlist as next in line, and the next family on the waiting list will be notified.

When a family chooses to accept an opening, they must complete the New Student Information Form, as well as submit the security deposit within 48 hours of being notified by Beacon Learning Academy. Failure to complete these steps will result in losing the opening.

### **C. Move/Transition Policy**

- Children will be placed in one of the following age groups:

- Infants (6 weeks-12 months)
- Toddlers (12 months-24 months)
- Twos (2 years-3 years)
- Preschool (3 years-4 years)
- Prekindergarten (4-5 years)
- School Age (K-5<sup>th</sup> grade)

- Children are developmentally assessed throughout their enrollment at Beacon. Based upon a child's age, they will be evaluated twice per year.
- Children's placement will be guided by their developmental level, age, and state licensing requirements.
- Administration will make every effort to move every child to the next classroom during *the first week of the month immediately following the child's birthday*. Room transitions are based on the child's developmental stage and availability in the school.

\*Please note: Families with children who have turned three years old, but who are not yet fully potty trained are not able to move to the preschool classroom. Some schools may have a transitional room allowing 3 year olds who are not potty trained to move into the preschool environment. In general, the preschool classrooms do not have diapering areas; therefore, children who are not potty trained may not be in the preschool classrooms due to health and safety regulations. These children will remain in the Two's classroom, benefiting from the lower teacher-child ratio until they are fully potty trained. Tuition will not be adjusted until the child is moved to a different classroom.

- To make the transition from infants to toddlers as smooth as possible the following goals need to be accomplished prior to transitioning:
  - Use sippy cups instead of bottles
  - One long nap versus several short ones
  - Walking or mobile.
  - Eating table foods and drinking whole milk
  - Please note that Toddler-age children do go outside twice daily so shoes are

required.

- When a child is scheduled to transition/move to a new classroom, the Director notifies each child's parents. They will send a Transition Letter to each family, which outlines the transition (i.e., the dates of the transition, the date of the move, the new classroom, and the new teachers' names).
- When children are ready to move to the next classroom, they must be transitioned to that classroom. The Director will arrange for children to visit their new classroom for a one week timeframe. Children will visit their new classroom according to the following schedule:

Monday: 9:00-11:00  
Tuesday: 9:00-11:00  
Wednesday 9:00-3:00  
Thursday: 9:00-3:00  
Friday: entire day

- Children will move to their new classroom beginning on the Monday following the one week of transitioning. Transitions are the last week of the month prior to the child's move date. For example, if a child is scheduled to move to another classroom the week of October 1st, then the child will transition on the last week of September.

#### **D. Programs & Ratios**

Infants (1:5; group size 10): Full time and Part time  
Toddlers (1:6; group size 12): Full time, Three-day, & Two-day  
Twos (1:9; group size 14): Full time, Three-day, & Two-day  
Preschool (1:10; group size 18): Full time, Three-day, & Two-day  
Prekindergarten (1:12; group size 24): Full time, Three-day, & Two-day  
School-age: K- 12 years (1:15; group size up to 15): Full time for summer camp, After school care only

#### **E. Hours of Operation**

##### **1. Opening & Closing**

Beacon Learning Academy RTP opens from 7am to 5:30pm, Monday through Friday. Staff members are scheduled for these hours only. No child should be dropped off prior to 7 am as no staff member will be available to supervise him/her. Also, staff members are only scheduled to 5:30pm; therefore, children should be picked up no later than 5:30pm.

##### **2. Child Attendance**

Beacon Learning Academy offers an educational program in which all children participate and learn. Therefore, it is very important that all children attend the program according to their predetermined schedule (i.e., full time or part time). The requested time to bring your child to the school is by 10 am. If for some reason a child will be late or absent, parents are required to notify the school with this information. Parents should notify the school by 9:30 am when their child will be late, as attendance is checked at this time, and the lunch count is finalized.



### 3. Holidays & Teacher Work Days (Revised Jan 2022)

Beacon Learning Academy locations will be CLOSED for the following Holidays (H) & Teacher Work-days (TWD):

Martin Luther King Jr. Day (H)	Monday of Presidents Day (TWD)
Good Friday (H)	Memorial Day (Monday) (H)
1 Day for July Fourth (H)	Labor Day (H)
Veteran's Day (TWD)	Thanksgiving and Thanksgiving Friday (H)
Week of Christmas Break (H)	New Year's Day (H)

### 4. Late Pick-Up Policy

Beacon Learning Academy closes promptly at 5:30 pm. There will be a late fee charged when a child is picked up late:

- From 5:30 pm on, parents will be charged \$2.00 per minute.

Administrators will begin notifying parents at 5:30 pm if they fail to pick up their child. They will continue to try all of the authorized contacts for the child until they speak with someone who can pick up the child. However, if no parent, guardian, or authorized contact can be reached within one hour (i.e., by 6:30), Beacon Learning Academy at its discretion must notify the legal authorities.

Payment of the late fee is required at the time of pick up by either cash or check made out to the staff member who is caring for your child.

### 5. Severe Weather

Beacon Learning Academy's priority is to ensure the safety of its families, children, and staff. In the event of severe weather, administration will determine if the regular hours of operation need to be adjusted.

All closing information will be detailed on WRAL TV 5 and 101.5 fm. Please note that your school is: BEACON LEARNING ACADEMY RTP. Closings for Beacon Learning Academy Cary follow WCPSS.

If a center must close after the children and staff have arrived, closing information will be detailed on the local radio and television stations and the parents will be contacted by telephone and email. Tuition is not adjusted in the event that regular hours of operation are affected due to severe weather or emergency.

6. Hours of operation are subject to change in the event of a health-related pandemic. Beacon will strive to maintain hours that allow for as long a day as possible, while taking into consideration the ability to cover shifts based on staff available. Beacon has provided separate pandemic related policies in addition to this handbook which every enrolled family will receive and sign.

## **F. Tuition**

**Tuition is based upon an annual schedule and is non-refundable. Tuition is collected monthly, regardless of school closings (scheduled or unscheduled), holidays, or student absenteeism, teacher workdays, vacation, etc.**

- Parents are required to pay a deposit of \$300 as well as a prorated registration fee upon enrolling at Beacon Learning Academy. This deposit will be applied to the last month of tuition as long as a 30-day notice is given for withdrawal from the program.
- All tuition is due by the 5<sup>th</sup> of every month. A penalty of \$25.00 per week will be assessed from the 6<sup>th</sup> of the month for late payments.
- If payment is not received by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month, Beacon Learning Academy has the right to immediately refuse further child enrollment.
- If a child is absent or the center is closed for any reason, the parent is responsible for full payment of the child's tuition.
- A penalty of \$35.00 will be charged for all returned checks, and parents will be required to pay the total balance in cash. If two or more instances of returned checks occurs, cash payment will be required.
- A 10% discount off one child will be given to families with more than one child enrolled at Beacon Learning Academy. The discount will be applied to the lesser of the two tuitions.
- Annual tuition increases will occur yearly, typically in March.
- Parents may receive a receipt for their monthly tuition payments-please utilize your Procure sign-in and you'll be able to get receipts there.

## **G. Registration**

**All registration is collected annually and is non-refundable.**

- All parents are required to pay registration upon enrolling at Beacon Learning Academy. • Parents are required to re-register their child annually by completing a new Registration Form and submitting the registration payment no later than September 1<sup>st</sup> of every year. • There are no second-child discounts on registration.
- Registration fees are available on the Beacon Program Tuition Fees form located at the front desk.

## **H. Subsidized Child Care**

Beacon Learning Academy accepts subsidies from several agencies.

Subsidized parents must adhere to all policies and procedures regarding Beacon and the agency providing the subsidy.

Policies:

1. Subsidized families are responsible for the balance of their child's fees less the agency's payment.
2. Parents are responsible for notifying the school regarding all absences. Parents are responsible for any tuition balance not paid by the agency due to absenteeism from the school.

## **I. Termination of Enrollment**

### **1. If Beacon Learning Academy Terminates a Student**

Beacon Learning Academy does not discriminate regardless of a child/family's race, gender, creed, color, or national origin. Beacon Learning Academy will terminate a child's/family's enrollment for the following reasons:

- Disruptive or dangerous behavior
- Abuse to staff, children, or school property
- Inability of Beacon Learning Academy to meet the needs of the child
- Non-payment of tuition

Written notice of the termination will be given to the family. It will include the reason(s) for the termination and the date of the child's/families final day in the school.

### **2. If Parents Decide to Withdraw/ Terminate Their Child's Enrollment**

When parents choose to terminate their child's enrollment at Beacon Learning Academy, they are required to submit a **30-day written notice** of the termination to Beacon Administration. If a 30-day written withdrawal notice is not received, there are no refunds on registration or tuition when parents choose to terminate their child's enrollment from Beacon Learning Academy. If a 30-day written withdrawal notice is given properly, the family will receive the deposit fee back in the form of a pro-rated tuition for the last month of attendance.

## **IV. A Day at Beacon Learning Academy**

### **A. Learning at Beacon Learning Academy**

#### **1. Children Learn Through Play**

Young children are active learners. They learn naturally through play. It is through play that children welcome learning.

*Research and theory about how children learn show us that play contributes to children's development in a number of ways:*

- 1. Play provides the opportunity for children to practice new cognitive, social, emotional, and physical skills. As they master these skills, they can use them in other situations...*

2. *Play offers numerous opportunities for children to act on objects and experience events. Each interaction, each friendship built with children and adults (including some from different cultures), and each experience in building with blocks builds understanding about the world.*

3. *Play is an active form of learning that unites the mind, body, and spirit.* 4. *Play enables children to use their real experiences to organize concepts of how the world operates. For example, during a bowling game children may decide to keep count of how many pins each knocks down by keeping tokens or paper clips in a pile; older children may want to write the numbers on paper. Children's first attempts to read and write frequently occur during play.*

4. *Through play, children can see how new experiences are related to previous learning. Much of what we learn cannot be taught directly but must be put together in our own way through our experiences. We all know the feeling of "Ah-ha!" when something finally clicks.*

5. *As they play, children can develop a playful attitude-an attitude toward inventiveness that contributes to being able to think up many ideas, new ways to do things, and ways to solve problems. Children are open to a variety of solutions. They are quite inventive in solving problems such as how to delay taking a nap.*

6. *Art appreciation develops through play. When children make clay pots, they become potters. As they play with words, they develop a sense for the rhythm and sound of poetry and prose.*

7. *Play enables children to learn through curiosity, invention, staying with the task, and in a host of other ways. Children's attention spans are amazingly long when they are interested... Children become interested in learning when they learn through play. What's more, they learn to enjoy learning when they learn through play because it feels so satisfying.*

8. *Play reduces the tension that often comes with having to achieve or needing to learn. In play, adults do not interfere. Children relax.*

9. *Through playing with peers, children develop skills for seeing something from another person's point of view, cooperating, helping, and sharing, as well as for solving problems. They develop both leading and following behaviors, both of which we need to get along well as adults. Such experiences help children think about their social world and gain an understanding of them.*

10. *Children express and work out emotional aspects of everyday experiences as well as frightening events, especially through dramatic play. They delight in taking the powerful role of the doctor as they give the teacher a shot.*

*Every aspect of a child's life is interwoven with play. This is the nature of a child. (Sawyers, & Rogers, 1998, pp.3-5)*

### 3. The Educational Curriculum at Beacon Learning Academy:

At Beacon Learning Academy, providing a quality early childhood program, which is meaningful and educational for young children, is very important. The educational curriculum implemented was developed from *The Creative Curriculum* (Trister Dodge & Colker, 1996), The National Association for the Education of Young Children, and several other early childhood researchers and educators whose work is based on the findings of Piaget and Vigotsky.

The educational curriculum at Beacon is based on the belief that young children learn best through play. Current brain research supports and states this finding. Beacon teachers create and plan lessons, which focus on hands-on, concrete, integrated activities. Teachers are role models, facilitators, and evaluators, encouraging the successful development of every child. Individual, small group and large group activities are planned daily. Classrooms are designed for young learners with each room arranged in Learning Centers. Learning Centers include Blocks, Math & Manipulatives, Science & Sensory, Sand & Water, Language, Listening, Writing, Gross Motor & Music, Dramatic Play, and Creative Art. Teachers use the Learning Centers to encourage young children to play, explore, experiment, and create, which promotes emergent learning. The daily the schedule for each class includes the educational curriculum, the Spanish program, the optional movement & sports programs, nutritious snacks and meals, outdoor play, and quiet time. The schedule ensures an integrated, well-balanced, and developmentally appropriate early childhood program.

#### 4. Stages of Development:

##### a. Stages of Art Development

*1. Scribbling: Children use crayons, markers, and paint in zigzag fashion and circular motions. Later, the scribbles become more controlled. Their work is exploratory. Color is unrealistic. The child begins to draw symbols like circles, crosses and lines (3 and 4 year olds).*

*2. Preschematic Stage: At four, a child begins to show definite forms in representing a person, making a circle for the head and two vertical lines for legs. Sometimes there is a mouth, arms, hands, feet or shoes. Objects are drawn at random and they are not in sequence or proportion. At this stage, form is more important than color. As children progress through this stage size becomes more proportional, and they gain more brush control as their paintings begin to look more like illustrations. By age seven a child has established a mental picture of an object that is repeated with each painted repetition of the object. For example, each time the child paints a house it will look very much like all the other houses he/she painted (4 to 7 years old).*

*3. Schematic: At this stage, sky lines (usually blue) and base lines (usually green) appear on the top and bottom of drawings. Items drawn between these lines usually are proportional, and they are on the baseline as appropriate (6 to 9 years old). (MacDonald, 1997, p.6-Forms)*

##### b. Stages of Block Play

*1. Tote and Carry: Blocks are carried around to feel their smoothness, their weight and to hear what kind of sounds they make when they fall. Children like to fill containers, dump them out, and refill them. (2 to 3)*

*2. Building Begins: Children lay the blocks on the floor in rows, either horizontally or vertically with much repetition. Children may play alone or near other children, but rarely in a cooperative way. (3)*

*3. Trial and Error Bridging: Two blocks with a space between them, connected by a third a block. Children learn to bridge by trial and error. (3 to 4)*

*4. Enclosures: Blocks are placed in such a way that they enclose a space. Bridging and enclosing are among the earliest "technical" building problems that children learn to solve. As children work at building enclosures, they learn the spatial concept of inside and outside. (4)*

*5. Representational Building: At this stage, 4 and 5 year olds add dramatic play to their block building. They name their structures which relate to a function. Before this, children may also have named their structures but the names were not necessarily related to the function of the building.*

*6. Building Sociodramas: By age 5, group cooperative play is common. Children decide beforehand what they want to build, and they may reproduce structures that are familiar to them. Children may ask to leave their structure standing and may play with it again.*

### **c. Stages of Math Development**

*1. Two and three year olds: begin to understand the use of numbers as they hear others using them; understand the use of numbers through exploring objects; work large piece puzzles; understand direction and relational words; recognize geometric shapes, like a circle; and, sequence up to three items.*

*2. Three and four year olds: recognize and express quantities like some, more, a lot, and another; begin to have a sense of time; recognize familiar geometric shapes in the environment; sort objects by one characteristic; rote count to 5; notice and compare similarities and differences; and use words to describe quantity, length, and size.*

*3. Four and five year olds: play number games with understanding; count objects to 10 and sometimes 20; identify the larger of two numbers; answer simple questions that require logic; recognize more complex patterns; position words; sort forms by shape; compare sizes of familiar objects not in sight; and work multi-piece puzzles.*

*4. Five and six year olds: begin to understand concepts represented in symbolic form; can combine simple sets; begin to add small numbers in their heads; rote count to 100 with little confusion; count objects to 20 and more; understand that the number is a symbol that stands for a certain number of objects; classify objects by multiple attributes; and can decide which number comes before, or after, another number. (MacDonald, 1997, p.8-Forms)*

#### d. Stages of Motor Development

*Three Year Olds: At this stage a child has difficulty with independent limb movement, shows wide flexibility in range of joints, walks with automatic gait, runs with increased smoothness, walks on a balance board, balances on one foot for an instant, alternates feet going upstairs, jumps off a low box with both feet together, throws an object with total body involvement, catches an object thrown directly into stiff outstretched arms, and shows readiness for riding a tricycle.*

*Four Year Olds: At this stage a child controls independent movement of body parts, shows increased spatial orientation, has a near adult style walking gait, shows increased smoothness when running, turns corners quickly, accelerates, decelerates and stops running motion, begins alternating feet while walking on a balance board, begins mastery of galloping skills, throws with arm only, relaxes arms as they move to catch an approaching object, and begins to control a bouncing ball.*

*Five Year Olds: At this stage a child shows increased control of fine movements, has increased endurance, uses running skills in play activities, has improved motion balance, has refined climbing skills, skips, gallops and jumps with smoothness, attempts to master hopping with increased sense of balance, shows rapid improvement in throwing skills, begins to move body to catch an object, begins to control a bouncing ball with one hand, shows increased leg backswing, follow-through and appropriate trunk rotation when kicking. (MacDonald, 1997, p.9-Forms)*

#### e. Stages of Oral Language Development

*1. Infant: A child at this stage smiles socially, imitates facial expressions, coos, cries, babbles, plays with sounds, develops intonation, and repeats syllables.*

*2. 18 months to two years: A child at this stage responds to specific songs, uses two word sentences, depends on intonation and gesture, understands simple questions, and points and/or names objects in pictures.*

*3. Two to three years: A child at this stage begins to use pronouns and prepositions, uses "no", remembers names of objects, and generalizes. There is a high interest in language and an increase in communication. There is a large jump in vocabulary growth and articulation.*

*4. Three to four years: A child at this stage communicates needs, asks questions, begins to enjoy humor, has much better articulation, begins true conversation, responds to directional commands, knows parts of songs, can retell a story, speaks in three and four word sentences, is acquiring the rules of grammar and learns sophisticated words heard in adult conversation.*

*5. Four and five years: A child at this stage has a tremendous vocabulary, uses irregular noun and verb forms, talks with adults on adult level in four to eight word sentences, giggles over nonsense words, engages in imaginative play using complex oral scripts, tells longer stories, recounts in sequence the day's events and uses silly and profane language to experiment and shock the listener. (MacDonald, 1997, p.10-Forms)*

## f. Stages of Reading Development

1. *At this stage children: display an interest in handling books; see the construction of meaning from books as magical; listen to words read to them; play orally with letters or words; begin to notice print in an environmental context; incorporate letters in their drawings; and mishandle books, like "reading" them upside down (3 to 4 years old).*

2. *At this stage children: engage in reading-like behaviors; try to magically impose meaning on new print; "read" contents of familiar story books; recognize their names; recognize words in environmental contexts; construct word meaning from pictorial clues; pick known words from print inconsistently; rhyme words; speak words that begin similarly; display an increasing knowledge of book handling; recall key words from poems and stories; and, they begin to internalize story grammar (4 and 5 years old).*

3. *At this stage children can: write and read-back their own words; pick out individual words and letters; read familiar books and poems (that could not be repeated without the print); use picture clues to supplement print; read words in one context that may not be read in another; show increasing control over visual cueing system; enjoy chants and poems chorally read; detect the beginning/ending sounds in spoken words; blend phonemes; delete initial phonemes; recognize the letters of the alphabet; observe the differences between upper and lower case letters; and, match words in poems and chants that have been internalized (4, 5, and 6 year olds). (MacDonald, 1997, p.11-Forms)*

## g. Stages of Written Language Development

1. *Random Scribbling: Children make marks on paper randomly with little muscular control (2 and 3 year olds).*

2. *Controlled Scribbling: Children "write" across the paper in linear fashion, repeating patterns over and over again, showing increased muscular control (3 year olds).*

3. *Letter-Like Forms: Children make mock letters. These are written lines of letters that have letter characteristics but they are misshapen and written randomly, even covering the page. They like to pretend they are writing; and, in their work they separate writing from drawing. They have purpose to their letter-like forms (3 and 4 year olds).*

4. *Letter and Symbol Relationship: Children write letters to represent words and syllables. They can write their own name. They know the word that represents their name. They can copy words. Reversals are frequent (4 year olds).*

5. *Invented Spelling: Children make the transition from letterforms to invented spelling. This requires organization of letters and words on the page. They use a group of letters to form a word. Many of the letters will be consonants. They understand that letters relate to sounds. Some punctuation appears. They can copy words from their environment (4 and 5 year olds).*



*6. Standard Spelling: Most of the words the children use are written correctly, some add punctuation. They organize their words in lines with spaces between the words; and, they move from left to right and from the top of the page to the bottom (5, 6 and 7 years). (MacDonald, 1997, p.12-Forms)*

#### h. Stages of Social Development

*1. At this stage children wander around and watch others play. They do not participate or talk to the others playing.*

*2. At this stage children watch others play, ask questions and make suggestions but do not participate. They are likely to leave if asked to interact.*

*3. At this stage children play alone. They might act out a role alone with no apparent awareness of others. They select a toy with which to play but show no interest in other children's activities.*

*4. At this stage children play near other children and may play with the same objects but they do not interact with the other children. The children play side by side and at times they might make conversation with themselves but not with the other children in the same area.*

*5. At this stage children play with each other; are engaged in activities; and they may exclude some children. They rarely negotiate about the direction of their play. They interact with others at various times to share props, or to have a partner in play.*

*6. At this stage children organize their play, assigning roles, and negotiating turns. There is constant chatter about the roles the children are playing. They recognize the benefits of working together. They are able to share the materials and take turns using them. (MacDonald, 1997, p.13-Forms)*

#### **B. Classroom Schedules**

Each classroom at Beacon Learning Academy has its own daily schedule. Schedules are posted outside of every classroom, and provided to parents both online and within our classroom welcome packets.

#### **C. Healthy Snacks & Lunches**

Beacon Learning Academy provides healthy and nutritious snacks and meals, which are prepared fresh daily by our Cook, in a full-service kitchen. Special attention was given to the Beacon Monthly Menus. Each snack and lunch meets and exceeds the Meal Patterns for Children in Child Care, which was determined by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and adopted by the Child Care Commission. A table listing the Meal Patterns for Children in Child Care. Copies of the Beacon Learning Academy Monthly Breakfast/Snack & Lunch Menus are posted on every Parent Information board and copies are available at the front desk.

## D. Rest Time

Rest time is an essential part of a child's day at Beacon Learning Academy. While no child is forced to sleep, a scheduled daily rest time is provided. Children are required to rest on a cot quietly or work on a quiet activity while sitting on their cot. The daily schedules for all of the classes are very busy. Children are very active. Rest time is designed to allow children some time mid-day to relax their minds and bodies.

Rest time follows lunch each day. Infants follow their own individual schedules. toddlers, twos, preschoolers, and pre kindergarteners generally rest for two hours. Rest times may vary due to the needs of the children. It is not uncommon for toddlers to rest a bit longer, or preschoolers to rest for a shorter time. However, children are allowed the two hours if needed.

## E. Children's Personal Belongings

Every child enrolled at Beacon Learning Academy is assigned a space for their personal belongings. *All personal belongings shall be labeled with the child's full name.* • Diapers and wipes for the younger children are stored in the specified diaper storage locations.

• Bottles and baby food for infants (i.e., provided by the parents) are stored in the classroom refrigerators, and must be labeled with the child's name and date. • For children in our Toddler and older programs food and drinks from home are *discouraged*. Exceptions are made for children with special restrictions and allergies;

However, the Director *must* approve these special arrangements *prior* to any food or drink entering the facility. Food or drink from home *must* be brought on a *daily* basis; food and drink *must* be labeled with the *child's full name and the date*; food and drink *must* be brought home nightly, as it will be thrown away if left overnight at Beacon.

The following items are required for each age group:

### 1. Infants:

- **Diapers**-Parents are encouraged to bring a large supply to store at the school, ensuring that their child always has diapers available. Staff members will remind parents when their child's diaper supply is low. If a child runs out of diapers and the supply is not replenished a "Diaper Fee" of \$25.00 will be applied to the Family Account. Diapers must still be replenished by the family.
- **Wipes**-Parents are encouraged to bring a large supply to store at the school, ensuring that their child always has wipes available. Staff members will remind parents when their child's wipes are low.
- **Change of Clothes**-Parents are encouraged to bring *at least two* complete changes of clothes for their child, that is, 2 pairs of pants, 2 shirts, 2 pairs of socks, and 2 undershirts/onesies. Beacon provides bibs for Infants and Toddlers, however, parents may bring bibs for their child, if they prefer.
- **Bottles**-Parents need to bring bottles daily. Each must be made at home and be labeled with the child's full name and the date on the bottle and the cap. Bottle must also be labeled with a "B" for Breast milk or "F" for Formula. All bottles (empty and full) are sent home nightly. Each bottle is stored in the classroom refrigerator.

- **Bottle Warmers**-Parents need to bring a single size bottle warmer for their child if their child is a breast fed baby. This keeps all bodily fluids separate from other areas and ensures sanitation guidelines are met.
- **Food**-Parents *must* bring food for their infant *if* their infant is not yet on table food. Once a child begins table food, Beacon Learning Academy will provide their meals. All food brought from home must be labeled with the child's full name and the date. No jar food that has been opened prior to arrival at Beacon will be served and all jars opened during the day at an Beacon location must be used in full or the remaining contents must be taken home at night.
- **Crib Sheets**-Parents should bring five crib sheets weekly for their child's crib. Crib sheets are changed daily, as cribs are sanitized and air-dried daily. No crib toys are allowed per North Carolina State guidelines.
- **Blankets**-Parents should provide blankets for their child (ages 12 months and above). Each blanket should be labeled with the child's name on the blanket or tag. Any blanket sent in should already be labeled.

**Note: All bedding and clothes are stored in the child's cubby. All bedding and clothes shall be brought home every Friday to be laundered.**

## 2. Toddlers:

- **Diapers**-Parents are encouraged to bring a large supply to store at the school, ensuring that their child always has diapers available. Staff members will remind parents when their child's diaper supply is low.
- **Wipes**-Parents are encouraged to bring a large supply to store at the school, ensuring that their child always has wipes available. Staff members will remind parents when their child's wipes are low.
- **Change of Clothes**-Parents are encouraged to bring *at least two* complete changes of clothes for their child, that is, 2 pairs of pants, 2 shirts, 2 pairs of socks, and 2 undershirts/onesies. Beacon provides bibs for the infants and ones, however, parents may bring bibs for their child, if they prefer.
- **Crib Sheet & Blankets**-Parents should bring a crib sheet and blanket for their child to use at rest time daily. Each blanket should be labeled with the child's name on the blanket or tag. Any blanket sent in should already be labeled.

**Note: Toddlers are encouraged to use sippy cups; therefore, bottle use is discouraged in the toddler rooms. As infants are preparing to transition into the toddler rooms, staff members work with each child and his/her parents to introduce sippy cups and encourage the development of her/his self-help skills. Beacon Learning Academy provides sippy cups for the Infants and Toddlers.**

**Note: Clothes, sheets, and blankets may be brought to school at the beginning of each week, and must be brought home for laundering every Friday, unless laundering is required sooner.**

3. Twos:

- **Diapers**-Parents are encouraged to bring a large supply to store at the school, ensuring that their child always has diapers available. Staff members will remind parents when their child's diaper supply is low.
- **Wipes**-Parents are encouraged to bring a large supply to store at the school, ensuring that their child always has wipes available. Staff members will remind parents when their child's wipes are low.
- **Change of Clothes**-Parents are encouraged to bring *at least three* complete changes of clothes for their child, that is, 3 pairs of pants, 3 shirts, 3 pairs of socks, 3 undershirts, and 3 pairs of underwear. As two-year-olds begin toilet training, additional extra clothing and shoes may be required.
- **Crib Sheet & Blanket**-Parents should bring a crib sheet and blanket for their child to use at rest time daily. This sheet as well as any blankets sent in should be labeled with the child's name.

**Note: Clothes, sheets, and blankets may be brought to school at the beginning of each week, and must be brought home for laundering every Friday, unless laundering is required sooner.**

4. Preschoolers & Prekindergartners:

- **Change of Clothes**-Parents are encouraged to bring *at least two* complete changes of clothes for their child, that is, 2 pairs of pants, 2 shirts, 2 pairs of socks, 2 undershirts, and 2 pairs of underwear.
- **Crib Sheet & Blanket**-Parents should bring a crib sheet and blanket for their child to use at rest time daily. This sheet as well as any blankets sent in should be labeled with the child's name.

**Note: Clothes, sheets, and blankets may be brought to school at the beginning of each week, and must be brought home for laundering every Friday, unless laundering is required sooner.**

**Note: Toys from home are discouraged, as they can be very distracting to the other children in the class. Each classroom teacher is responsible for deciding what, if any toys are allowed in her classroom, and when they are allowed. However, Beacon Learning Academy is not responsible for the loss or damage of any toy brought from home.**

## F. Special Events

### 1. Special Programs

Special Programs are scheduled for the children enrolled at Beacon Learning Academy. Visits are from local community organizations to educate and entertain the children, further enhancing the Beacon curriculum. Kidokinetics Physical Education Program is offered for 2 year olds and above, and Soccer Shots is a parent elective offered onsite for children 2 years and above. In addition, children visit the bookmobile monthly.

## **2. Birthdays**

Birthdays are an important part of a young child's life. Celebrating a birthday makes a child feel important, special, and loved. Classrooms are encouraged to celebrate birthdays. Monthly, the birthdays of the children and staff members are posted on the Birthday Board. Parents are encouraged to participate and may provide a special treat for their child's class. Parents are reminded that at Beacon Learning Academy, good health and nutrition is always reinforced. Therefore, sweets and other "junk food" should be limited, while other nutritious treats should be used. As per state regulations, foods and drinks not provided by Beacon must be provided from an approved source and store bought with an ingredients list intact. Homemade foods and drinks are not permitted. To comply with safety regulations, birthday candles should not be lit in the building or under the canopies on the playground and balloons are not allowed in Beacon locations. If providing goodie bags, please be sure that the items inside are age and developmentally appropriate for the children that will be receiving them.

*Note: All Beacon locations are peanut free environments. Due to the risk of peanut allergies in young children, no peanut products are to be brought into Beacon locations.*

## **3. Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled as needed at Beacon Learning Academy. Parents are encouraged to sign-up for a conference with their child's teacher. Conferences are scheduled at ½ hour increments on predetermined days. During the conference, teachers are available to answer any questions or concerns that parents may have, as well as discuss each child's development.

*Scheduling of the conference must be arranged by the Director, thus ensuring that the classroom teacher is available.* Parents are discouraged from meeting with teachers while teachers are supervising children. When a teacher is communicating with a parent for any extended period of time, her attention cannot be on the children, and therefore the safety of the children is jeopardized.

## **4. Prekindergarten Graduation**

Graduation is scheduled in May/June for those Prekindergartners who will be attending Kindergarten in July/August/September. The children prepare a special presentation for their parents, as well as receive diplomas for their achievements at Beacon Learning Academy.

## **V. Classroom Management**

### **A. Safety**

Ensuring the safety of the children at Beacon Learning Academy is extremely important to the entire Beacon team. The following safety procedures have been established at Beacon Learning Academy:

1. Beacon Learning Academy has a state-of-the-art security system, which includes the following components:
  - A monitoring system that allows the administration to view every classroom,

outdoor playing area, and parking area on Beacon property at all times.

- A pin entry system at the entrance to the facility. Only parents and staff are registered to use the system, thus denying access to Beacon for all other individuals. All other doors to the facility are locked at all times, as well.
- A check-in/out computer at the reception desk that monitors which children and parents are in the building at all times.
- Soliciting is forbidden; all tours are by appointment only.
- All staff members are required to successfully complete a criminal background check as a condition of their employment.

2. Safe arrival and departure procedures are posted in the lobby and are strictly enforced:

- Parents are required to bring their child into Beacon, walk their child to class, write the daily information on their child's info sheet, and leave their child with the teacher.
- At pick-up time, parents are required to walk to their child's class, pick-up their child's daily info sheet and other belongings, inform their child's teacher that they are picking up their child, and depart Beacon with their child.
- Parents are required to ensure that their child remains with them while arriving and departing from Beacon.
- Upon enrolling, parents are required to complete and sign a Pick-Up Authorization Form for their child. On this form, parents list only those individuals who they choose to be authorized to pick-up their child from Beacon. If an individual arrives to pick-up a child and the individual is not on the form, the child will NOT be released to the individual.
- Parents who have legal custody of their child should supply the administration with a copy of the court order, which states that one parent is prohibited from seeing the child. The information will be kept in the child's permanent file.

3. All Beacon staff members are required to receive certification in CPR and First Aid and must be kept current. **All staff members are required to renew their certification as required by the State and Beacon Learning Academy.** All staff working in the infant classroom are required to complete SIDS training every 2 years.

4. Every classroom is required to have a first aid bag. Staff members are required to bring the first aid bag with them when outdoors or on field trips. All minor injuries are treated at Beacon, while more serious injuries and medical emergencies may require medical attention by a child's physician or hospital.

## **B. Supervision**

All children are supervised by adults at **all** times. Low child-teacher ratios have been established to aid in the supervision of the children. Classroom teachers are required to supervise and participate during the Movement & Sports Programs ensuring lower ratios and thus a safer environment.

- Upon enrolling, all parents are required to sign a form giving or denying permission for their child to play outside of the fenced playground area. They are always accompanied by their teachers and are always under close adult supervision.
- There are several occasions when before and after school and summer camp children will take field trips, and permission must be provided for each field trip.

- Parents are required to complete and sign a permission form for each trip.

### **C. Behavior Management/ Discipline:**

Classroom management is a concern most parents have upon enrolling in a new school. At Beacon Learning Academy, it is believed that a safe, well-designed classroom; stimulating, challenging, and developmentally appropriate activities; and a well-trained and organized teacher, decreases classroom problems and difficulties. However, as young children are active learners, challenges are expected to arise. Beacon Learning Academy teachers use positive communication, positive praise, and redirection to help children learn pro-social behavior.

Teachers focus upon helping children to develop self-regulation. As they grow, children become emotionally ready to accept others' feelings, ideas, and opinions. Teachers help young children become self-disciplined and ultimately socially competent, by modeling pro-social behavior, allowing them to gradually accept more responsibility, and by teaching them acceptable alternatives to anti-social behavior(s).

Beacon Learning Academy strives to be the best Early Childhood experience for all children. The well-trained and loving teaching staff at Beacon Learning Academy is focused on promoting pro-social behavior in all children and will work with all parents and children to successfully achieve this.

## **V. Health & Safety Policies**

### **A. General Health**

Parents should **NOT** bring their child to school when:

- Their child is experiencing any of the following symptoms;
- Their child has experienced the following symptoms within 24 hours of coming to school; **or**
- Their child has not been symptom-free for 24 hours prior to returning to school.

If a child has the following symptoms, she must remain home:

- Fever of higher than 100 degrees. If temperature is taken under the arm, one degree will be added to the temperature total.
- Diarrhea (Runny, watery, or bloody stools.)
- Vomiting
- Unknown rash
- Sore throat with fever and swollen glands
- Severe coughing (Child becomes blue or red in the face, or makes a high-pitched whooping sound after coughing.)
- Eye discharge (Thick mucus or pus draining from the eye, or pink eye.) •
- Discharge from nose (Constant, thick, green mucus)
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Child is irritable, continuously crying, or requires more attention than staff members can provide without affecting the health and safety of the other children in the program

(Adapted from the guidelines set forth by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the U.S. Public Health Service, and the Department of Health and Human Services.)

**If a child experiences any of these symptoms while at Beacon, he/she will be sent home immediately.**

**A. A child may return to school when she has been symptom-free for at least 24 hours, without the aid of medication. \*\*\*New COVID guidelines will trump these rules until further notice. Refer to your COVID related policies first\*\*\***

### **B. Wellness Checks**

A wellness check is done on every child every morning, before her parents leave. This is a check to make sure the child is well enough to be at school.

Staff members ask parents several questions regarding their child (e.g., how their child slept the night before; what did their child eat for breakfast and how well did she eat; was their child ill the night before or that morning before school; etc.).

Staff members also check the child for any unknown rash; fever; continuously running nose (yellow/green discharge); discharge from the eyes; diarrhea; vomiting; severe coughing; yellowish skin or eyes; and/or behavior unlike the child (overly tired, crankiness, etc.).

**\*\*\*If a child was ill within 24 hours of that morning (i.e., vomiting, diarrhea, fever, unknown rash, discharge from the eyes, yellow/green nasal discharge) then the child must return home until symptom-free. Staff members doing the wellness checks are required to remind parents about this policy and will notify management if it is determined that a student is ill and needs to be sent home.**

### **C. Allergies & Restrictions**

Upon enrolling, parents are required to document their child's allergies and restrictions (this information is listed on the Enrollment Form and the Medical Form). The documentation is placed in their child's permanent file and listed on the Allergy/Restriction Forms posted throughout the facility.

*All* student allergies and restrictions are posted in *every* classroom (in the area where snacks and meals are served), as well as in the kitchen, office, and reception area.

Beacon Learning Academy does provide substitutions to those students who have food allergies and restrictions. The monthly menus list weekly substitutions. Parents of children with allergies and/or restrictions should review the Beacon Menus. They are encouraged to document (on the menu) all of the items that their child may or may not have. This list will be given to the classroom teachers and cook, as well as placed in the child's permanent file. In some instances, a child may be extremely allergic to many different foods. Unfortunately, providing appropriate substitutions may not be possible for Beacon. In such a situation, the child's parents would be asked to provide the child's meals, thus ensuring the safety of the child.



#### **D. Informing Parents of Illness & Injury**

1. If a child becomes ill during the day, parents will be notified to pick-up their child from Beacon immediately.
2. If a child becomes injured or involved in an incident while at Beacon, parents will be notified immediately.
3. Accident/Incident Form:  
In the event that a child becomes injured or involved in an incident while at Beacon, an *Accident/Incident Form* is completed by the staff member(s) present and the Director. This form is completed for the following accidents/incidents, but is not limited to these accidents/incidents:
  - Bumps, bruises, cuts, scrapes
  - Any biting incident involving another individual, self, or animal
  - Any injury requiring medical attention
  - Any aggressive behavior by a child (i.e., hitting, punching, spitting, scratching, etc.)

#### **E. Medication**

##### **1. Prescription Medications**

Beacon Learning Academy will allow prescription medications only to be administered if the Child Care Laws of the State permit it. In addition to any specific state requirements, the following procedures must be followed:

- Parents must complete the *Permission to Administer Medication Form*, which can be obtained at the reception desk. Parents must complete *one form for each* medication to be administered.
- Parents must provide the medication in its original container, ensuring the original label is intact. The child's full name must appear on the label. The name of the medication must also appear on the label. The dosage amount must appear on the label.
- Parents *must* give the Medication and the Permission to Administer Medication Form to the Director, Assistant Director, or Receptionist daily. Parents *must* take the medication home nightly.
- Only the Director, Assistant Director, or Receptionist administers prescription medications. They are required to complete the Permission to Administer Medication Form *every* time they administer the medication.
- All prescription medications are stored in a locked medicine box located at the front desk at each Beacon location. All refrigerated prescription medications are stored in a locked medicine box located in the school kitchen.
- Beacon will only administer medicine required to be given during school hours. If the medication can be given during at-home hours, it should not be brought to school. Beacon reserves the right to determine if the prescription required at school distribution.

## 2. Over-the-Counter Medications

No over-the-counter medications are administered at Beacon without a Doctor's written note. However, Beacon will allow the following to be administered (if individual State Child Care Laws permit): diaper cream or sunscreen. In addition to any specific state requirements, the following procedures must be implemented:

- Parents *must* complete the *Permission to Administer Medication Form*, which can be obtained at the reception desk.
- Parents *must* supply the medication(s). The medications must be labeled with the child's full name and be in the original container.
- Parents *must* give the medication *and* form to the Director, Assistant Director, or Office Assistant.
  - The classroom teachers may administer these medications once the Director ensures that all procedures and policies have been met.
- Staff members must complete the Permission to Administer Medication Form *every* time that they administer the medication.
  
- These medications are stored in a locked cabinet in the classroom OR as required by the State.

Note:

- Staff members are required to wash their hands before and after administering medication, and they must wear gloves while administering the medication.

## F. Suspected Child Abuse & Neglect

### Inside North Carolina

*Child Abuse and neglect rarely stop without help from outside the immediate family. All North Carolina citizens are mandated by law to report suspected child abuse and neglect to the Department of Social Services in the county where the child lives.* (Prevent Child Abuse: [www.childabusenc.org](http://www.childabusenc.org))

### Outside North Carolina

*In most states, reporting suspected abuse is required by law.* (US Department of Health & Human Services, 1996. *The ABCs of Safe and Healthy Child Care: A Handbook for Child Care Providers.* p. 7)

- All Beacon staff members are required to report suspected child abuse and neglect immediately to the Director or Assistant Director.
- All adults visiting Beacon (i.e., parents, visitors, volunteers, etc.) should report suspected child abuse and neglect to the Director or Assistant Director, as well. • The Director is required to 1.) Document the information and 2.) Notify the appropriate agencies.

## **G. Hand-washing**

The health, safety, and wellness of the staff members, children, and families of Beacon is very important. The following hand-washing policy is strictly enforced to ensure the health, safety, and wellness of everyone at Beacon.

### 1. Hand-washing:

Adults must wash their hands...

- Upon arrival
- Before and after preparing food, eating, or feeding a child
- After outdoor play, gym, art activities, and any messy activity
- After toileting self or a child and after handling body secretions (e.g., changing diapers, cleaning up a child who has vomited or spit up, wiping a child's nose, handling soiled clothing or other contaminated items)
- Anytime hands are soiled

Children must wash their hands...

- Upon arrival
- Before and after preparing and eating food
- Before and after playing at the sand & water table
- After any messy project
- After playing outdoors and in the gym
- After toileting
- After handling bodily secretions (e.g., wiping a nose, etc.)
- Anytime hands are soiled

### **How to properly wash hands...**

- Ensure a paper towel is available. Turn on water to a comfortable temperature
  - Moisten hands with water and apply heavy lather of *liquid* soap
  - Wash well under running water for at least 45 seconds
- Pay particular attention to areas between fingers, around nail beds, under fingernails, and backs of hands
- Rinse well under running water until free of soap and dirt. Hold hands so that water flows from wrist to fingertips
- Dry hands with paper towel
  - Use paper towel to turn off faucet; then discard towel
- Use soap and water at a sink.
  - If a baby is too heavy to hold for hand-washing at the sink, use disposable wipes or follow this procedure:
- Wipe the child's hands with a damp paper towel moistened with a drop of liquid soap
  - Wipe the child's hands with a paper towel wet with clear water
- Dry the child's hands with a paper towel
  - Teach older children to carry out the procedure themselves. Supervise younger children in carrying out this hand-washing procedure

## **H. Diapering**

The following diaper changing procedure is strictly enforced at Beacon to further ensure the health, safety, and wellness of everyone at Beacon:

- *Children shall be diapered at areas designated exclusively for diapering.*
  - *Diapering surfaces shall be smooth, nonabsorbent, and easy to clean.*
  - *The diaper area should be kept free of storage and shall be cleaned with a soap and water solution and then sanitized. The sanitizing solution shall be a combination of bleach and water in a spray bottle or an equivalent approved by the Environmental Health Specialist.*
  - *Disposable gloves are to be used by the caregiver during the diaper changing process. Gloves shall be discarded after use with each child.*
  - *Hand washing is a must before and after each diaper change.*
  - *Caregivers must put soiled diapers in a small plastic bag, tie the bag, and then dispose of it in a lined diaper pail.*
  - *Soiled clothing must be placed in a tightly closed bag and sent home to be laundered.*
  - *Pre-moistened diaper wipes are to be used to clean the child's bottom and then should be placed with soiled diaper.*
  - *Soiled diapers must be placed in a cleanable, plastic-lined, covered container.*
  - *After each diaper change, the caregiver's hands are to be thoroughly washed.*
  - *The child's hands are to be washed at the sink when diapering is done.*
  - *Finally, the diapering surface is to be prepared for the next child.*
- (Rules Governing the Sanitation of Child Care Centers 15A NCAC 18A.2800, 1991 & 1999, p. 11.)

## **I. Toilet Training**

At Beacon Learning Academy, toilet training begins at two years. As there are no diaper changing facilities in the preschool classrooms, children must be toilet trained before they are transitioned to the preschool and prekindergarten rooms. However, as all children develop at their own pace, Beacon staff members do not force or rush children. Staff members and parents work together to encourage children to have a successful potty training experience.

- Parents and teachers should look for signs that a child is ready to begin toilet training:
- 1) *The child is dry for long periods of time. The child may show facial expressions indicating she is ready to urinate or have a BM.*
  - 2) *The child has the language abilities to follow simple instructions: "Point to your hair," "Sit on the chair," etc. and can talk enough to indicate when she needs to be brought to the bathroom or needs help.*
  - 3) *The child has an understanding that certain things belong in certain places.*
  - 4) *The child has the ability to pull their own clothing up and down, and can reach the potty seat to sit upon independently.*

Tips for Toilet Training:

- Parents and staff members **MUST** communicate
  - Parents and staff members **MUST** work together
  - Consistency at home and at school is a key element to success
  - Parents should provide at least three changes of clothes daily for their child •
- Success may not be immediate; many accidents may occur; **BE PATIENT!** •  
Stress in the life of the child could deter toilet training as it will not be successful (i.e., a new sibling, an illness, new student, etc...)

## **J. Cleaning Responsibilities**

The professional appearance of Beacon Learning Academy is very important. Every Beacon facility has a cleaning crew who cleans the facility nightly. However, as young children play and create, they can be very messy. Therefore, staff members are required to ensure that their classrooms are neat and presentable at all times.

Beacon Learning Academy staff members work as a team. Therefore, everyone shares the cleaning responsibilities of the classrooms and center.

The cleaning of each classroom is the responsibility of the staff members using that particular classroom. Throughout the course of the day, the staff members share cleaning responsibilities, ensuring that at the close of the day, the classroom has been cleaned, organized, and arranged as if children have not played in the classroom. Staff members are required to complete a daily and weekly cleaning checklist, which details their responsibilities.

In addition, staff members are responsible for ensuring that the gym, playgrounds, and areas in which their class has used are neat, clean, and organized before their class leaves the area. Staff members are responsible for ensuring that the lounge is kept neat, clean, and organized, as well.

Administrators are responsible for ensuring that the lobby, hallways, reception area, conference room, and office are kept neat, clean, and organized at all times.

The Cook is responsible for ensuring that the kitchen is kept neat, clean, and organized at all times.

Beacon Learning Academy is a smoke-free and Tobacco free school. No such products may be used while on campus.

## **A. Contracted Cleaning Crew Responsibilities**

The following is a list of cleaning responsibilities for the professional cleaning crew who cleans the center nightly:

- Sweeping all floors
- Vacuuming all carpeted areas
- Trash removal (inside of the building and outside)
- Mopping all floors with a sanitizer
- Cleaning and sanitizing all bathrooms
- Shampooing the carpets regularly
- Windows (regularly); dusting window ledges regularly

## **B. Staff Responsibilities**

The following is a list of **DAILY** cleaning responsibilities for staff members

- Dusting: shelves, counters, cupboards, window sills
- Cleaning and Sanitizing: counters, cupboards, tables, chairs, toys, door knobs, doors, handles, classroom sinks, bathroom surfaces (as needed), mirrors, cubbies/lockers, sand & water tables (after each use)
- Sweeping the classroom floor (as needed)
- Organizing and arranging classroom toys and materials
- Empty and sanitizing diaper pails and trash cans regularly

The following is a list of **WEEKLY** cleaning responsibilities for staff members •

Sending all soft toys to the kitchen to be washed in the washing machine •

Cleaning/Sanitizing underneath tables

- Scrubbing/Deep cleaning all chairs and high chairs
- Dusting all heating/air vents and returns
- Review medication boxes and send home expired medications/creams

The following is a list of **MONTHLY** cleaning responsibilities for staff members •

Washing baseboards and cleaning “kid goo” and fingerprints off all doors and walls

- Sanitize rotational toys and replace existing toys
  - Clean out/ De-clutter underneath and inside cupboards
  - Send all personal belongings home and clean and sanitize children’s cubbies •
- Inspect classroom supplies such as markers, crayons, glue and dispose of old and request new materials as required

## **C. Administrative Responsibilities**

The following is a list of administrative/center cleaning responsibilities:

- Cleaning and Sanitizing: walls and windows (remove all "kid goo"), counters, shelves, bathroom surfaces (as needed), office furniture and equipment
- Dusting: counters, shelves, reception area, office and resource/conference room furniture and equipment

## VI. Parent Support & Involvement

### A. Communication

At Beacon, parent involvement is considered absolutely necessary for the successful development of young children. Parents are encouraged to become involved in the education of their children and their child care environment. At Beacon Learning Academy everyone works as a TEAM to ensure that all children receive the best education available. (TEAM-Together Everyone Achieves More)

Parent involvement opportunities are listed below. Please let the Director know if you are interested in helping with any of the listed items.

Parent Volunteers \*\*\*COVID restrictions prohibit classroom volunteers at this time.

Parents are encouraged to volunteer in any classroom in the center as often as they wish. Reading a story, assisting with an art project, laminating items for a teacher, cutting patterns, or even simply playing with a small group of children can make all of the difference in the world. Please let your center Director know if you would like to assist in any way in a classroom.

### Donation of Specific Items

All age groups need to have living things in their classrooms. This could be a fish, a non toxic plant, or even a classroom terrarium. If you would like to donate any of these items, please let the Center Director know.

### Parent Referral Program

For every family that you refer to Beacon you will receive the following discount:

Refer Full time enrollment: \$200

Refer Part time enrollment: \$100

\*\* Referral bonus will be given at the 3rd month (90 day) period once the referred child starts at Beacon.

### Special Events

Beacon hosts several Special Events throughout the year. These are wonderful opportunities for parents to volunteer. These events are listed below”

The Week of The Young Child (April)

Teacher Appreciation Week (May)

Staff Luncheon as needed

## **B. Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Parent-teacher conferences are held as needed. Parents are encouraged to sign-up for a conference with their child's teacher. At the conference, teachers discuss the development of the children, as well as address any questions or concerns that parents may have regarding their child.

## **C. Open Door Policy \*\*\*COVID restrictions prohibit in classroom visits**

Beacon promotes positive, effective, and open communication. Therefore, Beacon has an "open door" policy. Parents are encouraged to visit the school, their child's class, and/or the administration at any time.

## **D. Grievance Procedures**

Ensuring positive, effective, and open communication is an essential component of a professional organization. Beacon has implemented the following procedures for addressing concerns, questions, and grievances that parents may have:

1. All issues that relate to the child should first be addressed to the child's classroom teacher by the parent.
2. If the teacher cannot resolve the situation or concern, or does not resolve the situation or concern, the parent should address the Director.
3. If the Director cannot or does not resolve the situation or concern, the Owner should be addressed.

Any issues relating to Beacon policies and Procedures should be addressed to the Director.

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[www.childabusenc.org](http://www.childabusenc.org)

## VIII. Appendix

### A. Community Resources

#### Durham County Public School Contacts:

- Info 560-2000
- Parent Hotline 560-9129
- Child Nutrition Services 560-2370

#### Wake County Public School Contacts:

- Info: 850-1600
- Public Info: 850-1700
- Preschool Handicapped: 850-1839
- Preschool Speech: 850-1839

#### Chapel Hill Public Schools:

- General Info: 967-8211

#### Orange County Public Schools:

- General Info: 732-8126

#### Department of Health & Human Services

Division of Child Development

PO Box 29553

Raleigh, NC 27626-0553

(800) 859-0829/(919) 662-4527

#### Durham County Department of Social Services

1201 Briggs Ave., Suite 101

Durham, NC 27702

560-8000

#### Wake County Environmental Services

336 Fayetteville Street Mall

PO Box 550

Raleigh, NC 27602

#### Child Care Resource & Referral of Wake County

4 North Blount Street

Raleigh, NC 27601

(919) 832-7175

#### Head Start

568 East Lenoir Street

Raleigh, NC 27601

(919) 856-5220

#### Project Enlightenment

501 South Boylan Ave

Raleigh, NC 27603

(919) 856-7774

#### Wake County Dept of Social Services

325 North Salisbury Street

Raleigh, NC 27601

919- 733-9467

Emergency Contacts:

- Poison Control: (800) 848-6946
- Carolina Poison Control: (800)848-6946 •
- Duke Poison Control Center: 684-8111 • 911

Non-Emergency Contacts:

Raleigh fire Dept: 831-6115  
Raleigh Police Dept: 890-3635

- Apex Fire Dept:362-4001
- Apex Police Dept: 362-8661
- Durham Fire Dept: 560-4404
- Durham Police Dept: 560-0987
- Western Wake Hospital: 233-2330/ER 233-2338 •
- Wake Med: 350-8000/ER 350-8500 • UNC Hospital:  
966-4131
- Duke Hospital: 684-8111
- Durham Regional Hospital: 470-4000

Family Support Network  
(800) TLC-0042

Community Partnerships  
3522 Haworth Dr  
Raleigh, NC 27609  
(919) 782-8346

Parent Hot Line  
(800) 942-KIDS

Parks & Recreation:

- Apex: 387-3065
- Raleigh: 890-3285
- Orange County: 732-9361
- Durham County: 560-4355

Public Library

- Administrative Offices: 250-1200
- Durham Main Branch: 560-0100
- Apex Library: 387-2800

## Helpful Tidbits

- Please have your child wash their hands upon entering their classroom. Please be sure to use the food/ hand-washing sink to do this. The sinks will be labeled in your child's classroom.
- Remember that everything brought from home should fit in your child's cubby, neatly. Also, please remember to label everything that you send in for your child. • Food and drink to be shared with the class should be store bought instead of homemade due to state regulations.
- Please check all bags and children's pockets for diaper creams, medicines, lip balm, etc. These items are prohibited or must be in a locked area when at Beacon and the proper forms are to be filled out for each item.
- Please be aware of your child's classroom schedule and plan drop off, pick up and any special events around the daily activities.
- Please dress your child comfortably and in clothes that are school appropriate. Your child will be painting, playing, tumbling in the Gym, eating, etc. and we would not want to stain a favorite outfit. It is important to remember that all children 12 months and older play in the gym daily, so sneakers or tennis shoes are recommended.
- Please provide weather-appropriate clothes for your child. They do go outside year round. Shorts are recommended in summer months, hats and gloves in the cooler months.
- Bring in two changes of seasonal clothes (including socks) to be left in your child's cubby.
- Please remember to communicate with your child's teachers and always feel free to ask any questions or share any comments that you might have.