

LITTLE BELIEVER'S ACADEMY



STEM PRESCHOOL- SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, AND MATH

Parent Handbook

2017

Executive Director: Cassandra Brooks M.Ed.

600 Mial Street
Clayton, NC 27520
919-359-8939

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Garner, NC 27529
919-720-4773

Dear Families,

Welcome to Little Believer's Academy. We are blessed that you have taken the time today to consider us to care for and nurture your child.

We are a Christian child care center and we follow Biblical principles. Our goal is to provide loving care to your child. We understand the importance of providing a loving, clean, and secure environment where children can explore.

Our aim is to provide quality care for children from the age of 6 weeks through 12 years. We are experienced caring for young children with many years of experience. We believe in continuing education so we can provide the best education to our children.

At Little Believer's Academy, children will enjoy a balance of indoor and outdoor free play, group activities, learning center activities and individual attention. We equip and furnish our learning centers with age-appropriate materials and curriculum. Our programs include STEM - Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. As well as art, music, dramatic play, beginning reading, story time, and physical play to aid in large muscle development. We encourage them to learn as they play.

We want to work with you and serve you as your child grows and develops. You are welcome to participate in activities or observe at any time. Your involvement will enhance the experiences your child has and the progress he/she will make while attending Little Believer's Academy.

My door is always open and I would be happy to talk with you about any questions or concerns you may have.

Cassandra Brooks M.Ed.

Cassandra Brooks

Executive Director

The Goals and Philosophy OF Little Believer's Academy

We believe children learn best using a hands on approach to learning. When instruction utilizes Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math as an extension to learning a child is better prepared for school according to recent studies. We utilize the Higher Scope Learning curriculum which correlates with our philosophy.

We, the staff of Little Believer's Academy, will provide for the children:

- A pleasant and safe space to play and learn
- A variety of multicultural experiences
- A place to meet their emotional, physical, social and intellectual development
- A healthy environment

We will provide age appropriate resources for parents to help educate their children at home.

Ages Served and Hours of Operation

We serve children 6 weeks – 12 years old. We are licensed for first and second shift and we provide occasional Saturday care as needed by families. The hours of operation are Monday – Friday 6:30 a.m. – 11:00 p.m and Saturday 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Family Involvement at Little Believer's Academy

Parents are encouraged to visit and volunteer at Little Believer's Academy. We encourage open communication via phone calls, notes, or in person. We appreciate parent donations of toys or items no longer used at home. Special events will be planned and announced throughout the year and all families are invited. The events will be announced in the monthly newsletter.

Parent Teacher Conferences
Christmas Program

Enrollment

Services at Little Believer's Academy are available to all children regardless of race, color, creed, or national origin. To enroll, an application for child care must be completed and returned to the Center with 60.00 registration fee. This fee is due annually based on your child's enrollment. Admission is based upon availability of space in the program. If Little Believer's Academy is full, your child's name will be placed on a waiting list and we will notify you when we have an opening.

Tuition Payment Policy

All tuition payments are due on Friday for the following week. You must make your payment prior to dropping your child off at Little Believer's Academy on Monday morning. Payments can be made 2 weeks or a month in advance. Please see the director regarding this arrangement.

Payments can be made by cashiers check, money order, cash, or personal check, debit, credit and ACH. Please indicate your child's name on your payment. Please put your payment in the payment box. If you are paying with cash please use an envelope and put the child's name on it and seal it. There is a \$30.00 return check charge for all returned check items plus the amount of the check and we will no longer be able to accept your checks.

Please note full tuition is due in the event of child absence, holidays, and/or closings.

Failure to make payments is grounds for dismissing your child from the center.

Children 3 years old and older who are not potty trained will fall under the two year old tuition rate.

LATE PICK-UP

A child who is left at the center after the specified pick up time is considered late. A warning will be issued first time and then the second time the parent will be charged \$5100 per minute after the specified time. The parent will sign a form the teacher will provide that will state the time of arrival and amount due.

****Please have a backup plan for days you are running behind or stuck in traffic.**

FIRST DAY AT THE CENTER

Before your child begins attending Little Believer's Academy, set up an exact enrollment date. You may bring your child for a couple of hours to help them get acquainted with the center.

Children often cry the first few times they are left. Try a brief goodbye. Delaying departure is hard on the child and the parent, as both become more upset and reinforce each other's fear feelings. If your child is upset when you leave the center; feel free to call the center back after some time to check on your child's progress.

We will call you if your child does not settle down. Most children quiet down quickly once they are reassured by the teacher and become interested in the toys and other children.

Prior to the first day, you should bring the following items:

- The registration fee, check made payable to Little Believer's Academy, registration application packet, signed and complete.

On the first day, you should bring the following items:

- Two complete change of clothing, weather appropriate and blanket
- Bottles labeled with tops, diapers, wipes or extra training underwear

DO NOT BRING:

- Candy, gum, or popcorn
- Toys from home
- Clothing or shoes that is difficult to put on/take off
- Unlabeled clothing or Blankets

We want to ensure every child has access to the quality curriculum and lessons we provide. Please note children should arrive to school no later than 9:45 am. This helps with ensuring your child is taking

advantage of the full educational day. We also need to provide our kitchen staff with an accurate lunch count. If your child has a doctor's appointment please call and let the staff know what time your child will arrive. Please note breakfast is served from 7:30 am – 8:30 am, lunch from 11:00am – 12:00 pm, and snack from 2:45 pm – 3:30 pm.

YOUR REGISTRATION PACKET INCLUDES

1. Registration Information Forms- the first part of the packet is information we need in order to better care for your child, and emergency contacts. These forms are confidential and the contents will not be discussed with anyone but our staff.
2. Agreement for enrollment
3. Emergency Card filled out
4. Immunization Records – Due 30 days from the date of enrollment
5. Health Care Summary-it is best to have the health care summary on the first day but, if you are unable to get a doctor appointment you have 30 days from the date of enrollment to have it completed and signed by the child's physician.

Little Believer's Academy is not responsible for any omitted or incorrect information submitted in the registration packet. Parents are responsible for making address, phone number, and any other informational changes.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES AND REGULATIONS

Children are to be signed in upon arrival and released to staff. Any person picking up the child, other than the usual parent or guardian, must be on the list of approved individuals for picks, parents must provide advance notice by signed letter only. We require picture identification upon release. When you bring your child and when picking them up please see that teacher sees your child has arrived or departed.

If you must be late due to an emergency, please call the center as late charges will still apply.

DAILY SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

A copy of the daily schedule can be found in each classroom. Infants will receive multiple, supervised opportunities for "tummy time" either on a play mat or blanket with toys to reach for or look at. Toddlers will be given opportunities to walk outside as well as inside to practice walking on different surfaces. All children are encouraged to play with a variety of toys to master various skills. An ample supply of outdoor toys (balls, riding toys, and water play) will be provided. Outdoor time will consist of walks and play. Children will be encouraged to play with each other and to clean up at the end of play time. Preschoolers will have a set curriculum which prepares them for elementary school. The after-school children will be given homework to assist the learning strategies for a better school experience.

NAP TIME

Every effort is made to adjust to the individual needs of all children regarding the daily nap. Children are allowed to take a book to their cots at the beginning of their nap period. After at least 30 minutes of

quiet rest, those children still awake are able to play under the supervision of the teachers. Parents may provide the child with a special book or stuffed animal for naptime.

OUTDOOR PLAY TIME

Children will go outside daily as weather permits.

TOYS

The center requests that your child does not bring toys from home. A naptime cuddler may be used but only during naptime. Occasionally toys are used during the transition time and returned to the child's cubby after the child is settled into the school routine. The center does encourage Preschool children to bring interesting items from home for Show and Tell time on Friday. This is a great opportunity for children to practice talking in front of their peers. Please limit this to one item.

Food and Nutrition

The center provides breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack. The center participates in the federal food program which requires a healthy lunch that consists of the major food groups. Milk is always provided at breakfast and lunch. A menu will be posted weekly. Children with special diet needs will be discussed with the director upon enrollment. Parents are responsible for supplying the special diet needs and the meal must meet the federal food program guidelines. Children enjoy treating their classmates to a special snack for birthdays and other special occasions. We require everything brought to the center to be pre-packaged or fresh fruit. Please talk with the teachers on days you would like to bring a special treat into the center.

CHILDREN'S PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Children's belongings should be clearly labeled with their name. A complete change of clothing is needed at the center at all times (shirt, pants, underwear, socks) in case a child needs to change. Please send the children in clothing that will be comfortable and easy to take off for toileting purposes. They will get messy outside and during some of our projects. Little Believer's Academy is not responsible for any belongings getting lost. Please do not leave diaper bags or book bags as each child is assigned a cubby.

DIAPER PROCEDURE

Children should have an adequate daily supply of disposable diapers and wipes at the center. We will send you a note when your diaper supply is low. Please send the diapers or wipes immediately. If your child has diaper rash or any other condition that requires the use of a medication, written permission is needed. We follow the guidelines from our Health Consultant while changing diapers. The center will work with the parents on potty training routines that they wish us to follow. Please inform the teacher when your child is in training.

Hand washing Procedures

Staff will wash hands after bathroom use, after diaper changes, before serving foods, and frequently during the day (especially during the cold and flu season). Proper hand washing procedures will be posted at the bathroom sink for children and staff to follow.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Parents must inform the center of special needs for their child before enrollment so we can determine if the staff and program is suited for the child. The record of each child with special needs will have written documentation from a qualified consultant prior to the child's enrollment and annually thereafter. The consultation will cover program, equipment, facility, staff ratio or staff training recommendations suited to the needs of the particular child.

PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

We have many forms of communicating with the parents. Listed below are a number of ways the teachers, director and parents can be in communication with each other.

1. **Initial meeting with parents: Pre-enrollment Conference** -- When you enroll your child, the director or teacher in charge will show you through the center and answer any questions you may have. You may wish to share concerns about your child with the director, what you expect from the program, etc. Please tell us if your child is on medication, behaves in any unusual ways, or has special traits of which the teachers should be aware.

2. **Parent-Teacher Conferences** -- These conferences are very useful for the teacher and the parents. They are a great way to assess how each child is doing in the center. The conferences are held in the fall and in the spring.

3. **Parent Meetings** -- These informal get-togethers are held according to the needs and wishes of the parents. A teacher may give a short presentation, followed by time to discuss matters pertaining to Little Believer's Academy or childcare. Parent meetings give you a chance to meet the parents of other children and to voice concerns you have about the center or the children. If parents do not attend or wish for a meeting, the meetings will not be held. Parents may form a parent advisory board and meet separately if you wish.

4. **Parent Information Board** -- The parent information board, located on the left wall by the front door, serves as a place to post the monthly Newsletter for the parents.

5. **Weekly Lesson Plan Sheet** -- Posted in each classroom and describe the art projects, group time topics, science activities, and physical activities for the week.

6. **Daily Written Reports**- Notes are made for the parents of the toddlers, about the child's food intake, sleeping patterns, projects, and general behavior.

7. **Little Believer's Academy Newsletter** -- The center newsletter is published quarterly and placed in your child's cubbies. The newsletter contains information that is pertaining to every classroom.

8. **Daily Notes or Discussion** -- We suggest that you jot teachers a note if there is anything different for the day we should know about.

9. **Areas of Concern** -- Please discuss concerns with the Director Mrs. Cassandra Brooks. She can be reached at 919-359-8939 or you can contact her via email at thelittlebelievers@gmail.com.

10. **Mobile App**- We utilize a mobile app/web based system that will allow you to have communication with your child's teacher.

Please tell us if . . . your child had a bad night's sleep--he/she was ill recently--something upsetting happened--something fun or exciting happened--your child has been exposed to a contagious disease/illness , or if your child's behavior or mood is different than usual.

We will tell you . . . about your child's play--if your child didn't eat normally, didn't sleep well, or was out of sorts—if your child has an unusual bowel movement or any other unusual behavior--if your child got upset about something--anything else we feel you should know about your child's day.

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE

Little Believer's Academy has a philosophy that your children are important, and if given the opportunity, they will thrive emotionally, intellectually spiritually, socially, and creatively under the loving guidance of concerned parents and teachers.

In this spirit, our staff will:

- model positive acceptable behavior
- redirect children away from conflict to constructive activity
- teach children alternatives to problem behavior
- protect the safety of children
- provide immediate guidance/direction if a child behavior is unacceptable
- recognize the age appropriate development of the child
- not allow the children to act in a manner which will endanger them, another child, or the staff.

The following actions are prohibited by any staff person:

- subjection of a child to emotional or physical abuse
- punishment for lapses in toilet training
- withholding food, light, warmth, clothing, or medical care as a punishment for unacceptable behavior
- physical or mechanical restraint such as tying

Separation occurs when a child is removed from the group and is temporarily unable to participate in the programs activity. No child may be separated from the group unless the staff has tried less intrusive methods of guiding the child's behavior, which have been ineffective, and the child's behavior threatens the well-being of the child or other children in the center. All separations from the group must be noted on a daily log. The staff person making the note will state what other redirecting methods were used to guide the child's behavior and how the child's behavior continued to threaten the well being of the child or other children in care. If the child is separated from the group three times or more in one day, the child's parent will be notified.

ACCIDENT OR EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

If your child becomes injured at the center, the teacher in charge will administer simple first aid such as washing the injury, applying ice, and bandaging. The teacher will then fill out an injury report. One copy will go into the child's mailbox and one copy will go in the child's file. If the injury were serious, we would call the parent for instruction. If the child receives a serious injury that requires the services of a doctor, the following procedure will be followed:

1. Call parent or guardian.
2. Call one of the persons listed on the emergency card.
3. Call the child's physician for his/her advice.
4. In the case that the above three fail, we will call an ambulance or paramedic team and have the child taken to an emergency hospital with a staff person accompanying in the paramedics van or ambulance.

****Any and all expenses incurred under #4 will be borne by the child's family or guardian. If an injury is**

severe, procedures 1-3 will be waived, and 911 will be immediately summoned.

Safety -- The first teacher on duty in the morning will make a visual inspection of the room, and correct any potential hazards. Staff will use good judgment and prevention techniques to avoid injuries, burns, poisoning, choking, suffocation, traffic or pedestrian accidents.

Fire Prevention and Procedures

1. Monthly fire drills will be conducted; a log is kept for licensing
2. Primary exit of the building is out the front door. The second exit is the back door. The third exit is through the windows.
3. 911 will be called if needed.
4. Fire extinguishers are in each room.
5. All staff are trained in fire procedures at their orientation.

Weather Policy – In the event of adverse weather, we will follow the Johnston County Public Schools decision. There will also be a message on our school voice mail at 919-359-8939. We will also call and/or send an email in the event of an unscheduled closing. Please make sure that Little Believer's Academy always has a current email and/or phone number in the event of an unscheduled closing.

Fire Drills - Drills will be held monthly and recorded on file. All children will be evacuated at the same time through the closest exit and taken to the front of the building to wait for parents. Infants are evacuated in a Pack n Play bed, toddlers and older will walk and sit with staff until the Fire Department has given clearance.

Unauthorized Pick Up of a Child -- If an unauthorized person or one who is incapacitated or suspected of abuse attempts to pick up a child, the center will not release the child to that person. If the person attempts to use force, 911 will be called.

Missing Parent -- If the parent of a child does not appear to pick up their child, the staff member on duty will make attempts to reach the parents through the telephone numbers given and the contact persons authorized to pick up the child. If unable to contact anyone listed on the registration forms, the closing teacher will stay no longer than 20 minutes. After that time, the closing teacher will turn the child over to the Child Protection Unit; a note will be left on the center door, telling where the child was taken, and the Child Protection phone number.

Abuse/Neglect of a child -- Any child care operator or staff member who suspects a child has been abused or neglected must notify the proper authorities. This requirement applies regardless of where the abuse may have occurred. NC law requires any person who has reason to suspect child abuse or neglect to report the case to the local county Department of Social Services (DSS)

If parents suspect abuse or neglect they are encouraged to speak to the director of the child care center and report to the Division of Child Development.

Caring for a Sick Child Until a Parent Arrives -- The center will provide care for a child separate from the other children, who become ill until that child is picked up by the parent. Parents must pick up the child within one hour of being notified.

Disease -- If children are exposed or have a contagious reportable disease, this will be reported to all parents by the director in the form of a sick note.

Little Believer's Academy POLICY ON SICKNESS

Please ensure that your child receives appropriate medical care in the event of an illness. Please inform us if an infectious/contagious illness occurs in your family or household. If your child becomes ill after being in preschool, he/she may be sent home. The following illnesses constitute a call for you to come pick up your child: a temperature of 100 degrees or higher two or more episodes of vomiting onset of diarrhea and increased number of bowel movements red eye with or without discharge. A runny nose for five consecutive days at which point a doctor's note is needed after the 5th day to indicate the child is not contagious. A child with a fever must be fever free for 24 hours before returning. The child showing any of the symptoms mentioned in this document and attachment must be symptom-free for **24** hours before returning to the preschool. This helps cut down on the spread of contagious diseases and ensures the continued health of our children. Please reference policy at end of manual. Please make sure that your emergency information is kept up-to-date in the event of an emergency.

If your child become ill at the center

If the child becomes sick while at the center, the child must be isolated from other children in care and the parent called immediately. The license holder must exclude a child:

- has a reportable illness or condition that is contagious, (Parents must inform us within 24 hours if their child has a contagious disease.)
- with chicken pox until the child is no longer infectious or until the lesions are crusted over;
- who has vomited since arriving that day;
- who has had any abnormally loose stools since arriving that day;
- who has contagious conjunctivitis or pus draining from the eye (pink eye);
- who has a bacterial infection and has not completed 24 hours of antibiotics
- who has a 100 degree Fahrenheit temperature or above before fever reducing medication is given;
- whose temperature has not been below 100 degrees for 24 hours
- who has an undiagnosed rash or a rash attributable to a contagious illness or condition;
- who requires more care than the teacher can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children in care.

MEDICATIONS GIVEN AT THE CENTER

It is best practice to only administer medication for life threatening illness such as asthma and allergic reactions at school. These medicines will be given when accompanied by the following: The original prescription/and or doctor's note and Permission to Administer Medication form completed by parent.

Center staff will evacuate their children as follows:

Infants

The Infant Nursery Supervisor shall put infants in an evacuation crib and move to the designated evacuation assembly area. Upon arriving at the designated evacuation assembly area, all infants must be physically accounted for against the sign-in log and the results reported to the Director immediately.

The Infant Nursery Supervisor is responsible to bring all attendance sheets, child rosters, and information sheets. For inclement weather, if possible, take appropriate supplies to protect the infants.

Toddlers and Preschool

The Lead Teacher shall be responsible to gather their respective classes in a group and supervise an orderly evacuation to the designated assembly area.

The Lead Teacher is also responsible to bring all attendance sheets, child rosters, and information sheets. Upon arriving at the designated evacuation assembly area, all children must be physically accounted for against the sign-in log and the results reported to the Director immediately. For inclement weather, if possible, take appropriate supplies to protect the children.

PUBLICITY INFORMATION

If photos of your child are asked to be taken for publicity purposes, we will have you sign a release form for each separate publicity venture.

PARKING

For safety we should follow the traffic below listed below: Please enter the daycare parking lot from Moore St and pull to the end of the drive. Please exit onto Main St.

FIELD TRIPS

Each field trip we go on will need a separate permission form. All kids must be in a car seat according to safety regulations when transported to a field trip. Parent permission for walking field trips are filled out each year.

TERMINATION NOTICE AND/OR SCHEDULE CHANGES

When the time comes to withdraw your child from the center, three weeks written notice is required. Staff members will gather your child's possessions for you on the child's last day. Please pay your bill in full before your child's last day at the center. Changes in your child's schedule need to be made with the Director; if possible, two weeks in advance of the date you wish the change.

In rare cases the center staff may decide that a child is too young or too mature for our program. If any child shows severe adjustment problems or stress from being in a group situation, the director will give the parent two weeks notice to make other arrangements. In rare cases a child's parents cannot adjust to the schedule of the center or they have difficulty following some regulation. When this happens, the director will first verbally remind the parents of the regulation, if the parents continue to ignore or break the regulation, the director will give the parents 2 weeks to make other child care arrangements.

Staff

Each staff member has Lead Teacher qualifications given by the State of North Carolina. Staff members have various trainings including but not limited too CPR and First Aid, and more. We work with our staff to obtain trainings via class and/or one on one staff development.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

On the days when staff ratio is low or a staff member is ill or absent the director will call for a teacher substitute, assistant, or aide to assist in the daily activities.

ADMISSIONS: NON-DISCRIMINATION Little Believer's Academy may not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, religion, creed, color, national origin, or source of payment. All children are welcome here.